



BULLETIN

< *Protégeons la Nature**Elle nous le rendra* >

The Serengeti National Park covers about 4,500 square miles near the northern border of Tanganyika, east of Lake Victoria. Its boundaries were defined in 1951, and it consists of open, rolling plains in the centre, impenetrable jungle — domain of the tsetse fly — in the west and, in the east, crater highlands which form important catchment areas. Some of the greatest abundance of game animals in the world are to be found there along with the native pastoral tribes, the Masai, and their cattle, but it is hardly surprising to learn that this co-existence of man and wildlife has posed several problems which became crucial a few years ago. On the one hand there are the Masai, and on the other there is the protected status of the reserve and of the seasonally migrating fauna in search of water pools, which the inhabitants jealously guard for their domestic animals whose increasing number has caused serious erosion in the Central Plains due to overgrazing and fires.

On learning of the Government of Tanganyika's intention to give way to the Masai appeals by breaking up the National Park, an American expedition — organized by Mr R. M. Arundel and led by Lee Talbot, at that time the ecologist attached to I.U.C.N. — made investigations on the spot and thereafter, with the aid of Lord Hurcomb, the Union's Vice-President, contacted the British colonial authorities to request that no decision should be taken on dividing the park until an ecological study of the present conditions of the region had been carried out. The matter was referred to the Union's General Assembly, which met in Edinburgh last June, and was then entrusted for examination to the Survival Service who proposed the resolution that was unanimously adopted by the participants (Bulletin, Vol. V, No. 4). The Fauna Preservation Society of Great Britain then agreed to follow up by organizing a scientific study of the area. This was entrusted to Professor W. H. Pearsall, of London University, who benefitted from the full support and collaboration of the Government and of the official scientists in Tanganyika. Professor Pearsall has just published his report (*) stressing very emphatically that the three areas of the Serengeti form an indivisible ecological whole and proposing that the park boundaries should be re-drawn so that the Masai have a region of their own outside the north-eastern boundary and elsewhere, and that systematic attempts be made to develop the Masai-occupied areas in regard to water, grassland and range management. The Central Plains and western regions would make up the National Park along with the craters in the east, especially that of Ngorongora, and be linked to the rest of the reserve by a corridor which, if the craters are to be maintained as a tourist attraction, should have limited human access. It would ultimately be essential to exclude the Masai from the pastureland in the centre of the reserve. In any case, attempts should be made now to persuade them of their duties and obligations towards the land. Grazing rights will have to be vested in heads of families or tribes who can be held responsible for the way in which the land is treated.

The Government of Tanganyika has agreed to put these conclusions of an objective ecologist to the committee in charge of the National Park's fate.

(*) Available from The Fauna Preservation Society, Regent's Park, London N.W. 1, price 5/-.

Translation of a letter from H. M. THE KING of the Belgians to Monsieur R. Lefebvre, Minister of Agriculture, on the occasion of the emplacement of the first boundary-stone of the Westhoek Nature Reserve.

Brussels, 17 December 1956.

MY DEAR MINISTER,

On the occasion of the emplacement of the first boundary-stone of the National Nature Reserve at Westhoek I am pleased to see the manner in which the Government is taking such effective measures for nature protection and to congratulate you on having so ably brought the first projects to fruition.

The incidence of built-up areas, the growing multiplicity of roadways, and the development of industry are encroaching more and more on such parts of our beautiful country as still remain intact. However, it is important to protect our most outstanding scenery. Though economic and aesthetic interests often clash, they do not seem to me to be incompatible, and a solution must be found before this magnificent and irreplaceable heritage vanishes for ever.

Together with problems of an aesthetic nature are those that are purely scientific. There are places where the soil has retained its primitive state, and these should be preserved in their integrity so that our scientists and research workers can study, on the spot, our country's original flora and fauna, its geological peculiarities and its characteristic forests.

Finally I cannot forget the interest which is aroused in tourists, and the pleasure which comes to people who are often overtaxed by the pace of modern life, in these oases of calm and verdure.

The preservation of the country's natural beauty cannot but enrich its aesthetic and scientific inheritance.

I am,

Yours affectionately,

(Signed) BAUDOIN.

WHERE NATURE IS PROTECTED

International Understanding. — The spectacular Karst formations to be seen in various parts of the world are the result of erosion which in its turn sometimes originated from deforestation in ancient times. Limestone formations of varying character, moulded by rain, climate, subterranean water and sedimentary deposits, as a result, assume the extraordinarily diverse forms that often compose remarkable natural landscapes. Although such phenomena may not be rare, their scientific value is enhanced by the fact that on such studies modern geographers and geologists base their estimations of the climatic conditions in different parts of the world and of the successive formations of the earth's surface. Japanese karst landscapes are thus closely related to those of Eastern Europe, although due to higher temperatures and greater moisture, their development is more akin to the cycle of the tropical karsts.

In Japan the Akiyoshi limestone Plateau is at the westernmost tip of Honshu. It is visited annually by 400,000 visitors and has become a quasi-National Park since the discovery of deposits containing fossils some years ago. The United Nations Naval Air Forces tentatively picked out this district as a bombing practice area. Of course this immediately aroused protest from the National Parks Association of Japan, strongly supported by the interested local authorities and by I.U.C.N. Mr. T. Tamura, the President of this Association, has just informed the Union of the successful outcome of their negotiations. The United Nations forces have decided to abandon the plan to use the area for military purposes, thus ending the danger that threatened it.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sarawak. — With commendable foresight, the authorities of the British colony of Sarawak have created the Bako National Park on the peninsula of that name, in the estuary of the River Kuching across from Mount Santubong. Everyone remembers those cloak-and-dagger adventures in the China Sea and on the island of Borneo which, in 1841, culminated in victory and in the Sultan of Borneo granting Sir James Brooke both the territory and the title of « Rajah of Sarawak ». The Brookes of Sarawak ruled for just over a hundred years. In 1946 this title ceased to exist when the territory was ceded to take its place as a colony of the British Commonwealth. The Bako National Park consists of a hilly region of some ten square miles where the soils overlie horizontal beds of sandstone. The resulting varied soils have given rise to extremely diverse vegetation, ranging from peat bog to mangrove (*Sonneratia* sp.), containing among others, varieties of insectivorous plants, such as the Droseras, and examples of the luxuriant epiphytes found only in dense tropical jungles. The role that fire has played is not yet clear, but obviously it has had some influence in shaping the botanical associations, including the typical species of Malayan « padang » vegetation that occur there. The remarkably interesting diversity of plants found in the area might well be claimed to indicate nitrogen deficiency in the soils. A well-equipped rest-house is available for those visitors and tourists who like to venture into the reserve.

Finland. — When the Nature Protection Act was passed recently a considerable step forward was made for nature conservation in Finland. This act assures the protection of a special number of areas from all threats of a technical or exploitative nature which might assail them. By 1938 such protection for selected sites had already been established after a thorough scientific examination and a prolonged eventful parliamentary debate by which ten areas were legally designated as strict reserves for scientific research and further areas as national parks for public recreation. But as a result of the war, and due to the loss of some of the designated areas, the naturalists of Finland submitted a new comprehensive plan which the State has just accepted. Provision is made for twelve nature reserves and seven national parks which have been chosen in such a manner as to include — even if in some cases they are very limited in size — examples covering the different landscape types characteristic of this part of the northern lands: peat bogs, forests and parklands. These reserves and parks also provide a varied fauna — birds of prey and aquatic birds are frequently seen there as well as the animals of the North: wild reindeer, arctic fox, badger, otter, marten. All these contribute in their fashion to the value and diversity of the nation's natural resources.

India. — The following information is extracted from the report presented to I.U.C.N's General Assembly in Edinburgh on the progress that India has made towards conserving its natural resources. Since private forests have been transferred to Government control, there has been a significant increase in the forest area that will be adequately protected. As a result of the annual festival of trees, over 200 million trees have been planted in the last five years. The idea seems to have fired the public's imagination and to have gained their support.

— Although there is no evidence of a reduction in poaching of wildlife there is undoubtedly a general awakening in favour of protecting wild animal life, such as the Indian rhinoceros and the lion. In several states the official Wild Life Boards, with support from the Central Government, have interesting plans for establishing national parks and improving existing game sanctuaries during the next five years.

— The Government of India has set up a Central Soil Conservation Board on which forestry, agriculture, irrigation, and engineering interests are represented in an advisory capacity. Under the second of two five-year plans which have been prepared for 1956-1957, the Governments, both in the States and at the Centre, have plans to spend over 25 million rupees on soil conservation programmes. In addition, a Desert Afforestation Research Station has been established at Jodhpur (Rajasthan) as well as six research and demonstration centres to develop methods of soil conservation that will be better adapted to the different soil conditions found in India. S.R.

— The importance of water conservation and flood control has now been fully recognized. A vast programme for installing reservoirs is being carried out: large-scale tree planting along the banks of canals and tributaries is also planned.

— Special attention is given too to propaganda for nature conservation. The Indian Board for Wildlife, with assistance from State Boards, has carried out a successful press campaign accompanying it by lectures and publications, such as the brochure entitled *Why Preserve Wild Life* that is now being widely distributed throughout the country.

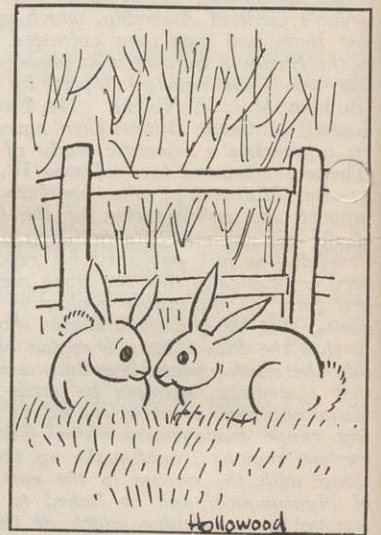
HIGHLIGHTS AND SIDELIGHTS

Myxomatosis. — Myxomatosis is no longer in itself enough to preserve Great Britain from damage by the wild rabbit. The Nature Conservancy's latest report warns against its return, for, little by little, the rabbit seems to be re-establishing itself in some parts of the country. If measures for its control are not undertaken immediately it will be extremely difficult to dislodge it again. The Nature Conservancy deplors the extermination of buzzards, stoats and other predators which can be such precious allies in the campaign against rabbits and field-mice.

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The Australian Department of Health has issued a permit for the importation of the rabbit flea, which it is hoped will intensify the spread of myxomatosis. Tests will be made to ensure that the parasite vector will not be harmful to native animals such as the koala and other marsupials. (*The New Scientist*, London, 14 March 1957.)

Population. — Communist China is not opposed to accepting birth control. In March a discussion was held in Peking on this subject between the country's Minister of Health and the assistant-director



« All the same, I should feel happier if we had them immunized. »
From *London Day by Day*, by kind permission of *The Daily Telegraph* (London).
Artist: B. HOLLOWOOD.

of the municipal Office of Health. In the first place they discussed the methods and possible methods that the population might apply to bring about birth control. China is trying to avoid the serious situation that could arise from the regular increase in its population; at present it is growing at the fantastic rate of 15 million a year. (*Le Figaro*, Paris, 18 March 1957.)

Insecticides. — Birds like the partridge (*Perdrix*), the quail (*Coturnix*), warblers (*Acrocephalus*), the Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla*) are known to abandon their eggs once these have been in contact with phytohormones that have been sprayed on fields of crops such as flax, rye, wheat, oats and sugar beet. After the use of these insecticides, shoots which were famous for their number of partridge have been found to have been denuded of them. (Contribution by Dr R. Verheyen, Belgium's delegate at the Sixth Meeting of the European section of the International Committee for the Protection of Birds, Netherlands, June 1956.)

Vanishing fauna. — In 1955 poaching was responsible for the death of 600 elephants in Kenya's Coast Province, and the total for the whole of Kenya is considerably higher. The Kenya Wild Life Society, which publishes these figures, emphasizes that lawful hunting (with a permit) does not destroy game and of itself would in no way

comes a danger of extermination.

Protests. — The National Parks Association of Japan, with I.U.C.N.'s support, has appealed to its Government requesting it to avoid exploiting the remarkable relics of the primitive forest of giant cedars (*Yagusugi* or Japanese cryptomerias) and to avoid constructing hydroelectric barrages in the Chubu-Sangaku National Park. Protests are also being made against the development of sulphur deposits that are found in the principal crater of Mount Daisetsu in the Daisetsuzan National Park.

Research and its value. — Research programmes carried out in agricultural colleges and on experimental farms in Canada are constantly contributing to the improvement of agriculture and to the soil conservation practice of Canadian farmers. The value of this research amounts annually to many million of dollars.

Sharks' liver is likely to provide humanity with a cure (*The New Scientist*, London, 24 January 1957). About twenty years ago a Swedish woman doctor successfully treated patients, who suffered a serious reduction in the number of white cells in the blood as a result of radiation treatment for cancer, with an extract (batyl alcohol) from the bone-marrow. Difficulties then arose because relatively large supplies are needed for this treatment: large-scale extraction from bone-marrow is difficult, for the quantity present is small, and batyl alcohol prepared by synthetic methods in the laboratory is costly. Through a fortunate coincidence, Dr. Astrid Bohult's husband is the director of a research laboratory specializing in the chemistry of fats, and he was able to extract the product from the shark's liver. Batyl alcohol is also used for saving cows that have been poisoned by bracken — yet another good turn, even if an involuntary one — to the sharks' credit.



EDUCATION

The Japanese Association for the Protection of Birds informs us that every year in May a bird week is held in Japan. The propaganda is primarily directed at children, and all the classical methods of reaching a wide public are used such as publishing articles in the press, making appeals on the wireless and in the cinema. The public's interest seems to have been aroused, although previously they were apparently quite oblivious of the value and utility of birds.

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Since 1940 the godwit has been strictly protected in New Zealand. In order to draw the public's attention to this, a series of notices illustrating the bird and quoting the penalties for those who infringe the

law are displayed in post-offices and in the estuarine localities frequented by the birds. These notices, distributed by the Department of Internal Affairs, are produced in both English and in Maori.

Mr. N. D. Bachkheti, who, through I.U.C.N., was awarded a Unesco travel scholarship in 1954 to take part in the annual international youth camp for the study and protection of nature, is now superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, New Delhi, India. Last November he helped with the organization of an exhibition in New Delhi of works of art and photographs of wildlife. This event, to which the Union and its President sent their cordial greetings, had most satisfactory results by helping to stimulate the public's interest in the subject and by encouraging them to improve their knowledge and understanding of their country's wild animal life.

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Monsieur Plateau, Chief Engineer of the « Service des Eaux et Forêts » in Morocco has passed on a letter to the Union from which we now quote some extracts:

« During the summer holidays last year my father and I went to stay with my big brother, Abdelkader, who lives at Meknès.

On the way there I admired some work that had been done to counteract the destruction of cultivable soil. But it was particularly when I saw the great forest of Mamora that I said:

— Father, what are those trees for? I don't suppose they can be of use to man? Most of them don't give us fruit that we can eat!

— My son! The trees of the forest protect the soil which in turn allows us to live — a place where there are no trees will be entirely ruined by erosion.

The soil is always good where trees grow because they protect the earth from the heat of the sun, from the wind and from rain.

We must respect trees because they conserve the soil and accumulate water. A forest is the best means of protection against erosion.

Here is an example:

In a place where the ground has been denuded, the raindrops beat down violently on the ground, hollowing out and ruining the soil. After some years the good earth becomes sterile. But in the forest the raindrops do not hit the soil directly; first they fall on the branches of the trees, then they drop gently to the ground as if there were « banks » which opposed erosion and forced the water to filter into the soil to the benefit of the trees.

Much grass grows in the forest. Animals can find excellent pasture there.

Trees also give us the wood from which furniture is made and are useful for many other purposes; they provide us with coal, etc.

That is why Monsieur Plateau, Engineer of the « Service des Eaux et Forêts », has had many trees planted in Morocco.

— Goodness yes, father! From now on I resolve to love and help the people who do this protection work!

My father kissed me and said:

— I am proud of you, my son Ahmed, may Allah grant you his blessing! »

AHMED BEN HAMMOU, intermediate course,
2nd year, The Franco-Moslem School, Boujad.

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F.A.O. has started to publish a series of brochures which aim at informing the public of certain fundamental food and world agricultural problems. The first of these, *Food and Society*, is devoted to the masterly lecture delivered by the late Professor André Mayer. The booklet may be obtained from the agents for F.A.O. publications or from the organization's headquarters, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, Rome, Italy. One copy costs \$ 0,25; 10 copies — \$ 2; 25 copies — \$ 4; 100 copies — \$ 15.

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A. — Governments may obtain membership upon notification to the Secretary-General of their adhesion to the Constitution. Governmental subscriptions are based upon populations of countries.

B. — Public services and national or international organizations are admitted to Union membership by decision of the Executive Board and ratification by the General Assembly. The annual membership subscriptions are fixed at the rate of fifty (50) U.S.A. dollars.

Further information and copies of the statutes of I.U.C.N. can be obtained from the Secretariat, 31, rue Vautier, Brussels.

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INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE
AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Consequences of myxomatosis.

Proceedings and Papers of Theme II of the VIth Technical Meeting of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Edinburgh 20-28 June 1956.

Myxomatosis is a problem of major importance to every ecologist in the world. The direct and indirect effects of the disease have affected the balance of Nature throughout two continents. When will the disturbance caused by the disappearance of the rabbit be stabilised? Opinions differ. Because of the tremendous complexity of the problem, the I.U.C.N. devoted a special session to the subject at its Sixth Technical Meeting in Edinburgh last year at which the leading experts of all the countries affected were invited to speak. This was the first comparative study of its kind at an international level. The papers and the discussions have been described as unique. They have been published in a double number of *Terre et Vie*, « Revue de la Société Nationale d'Acclimatation et de Protection de la Nature de France ». Reprints have now been prepared for I.U.C.N. with a special cover. Bilingual edition: English and French. 168 pp., with maps and illustrations.

	Sterling.	U.S. dollars.	Belgian fr.	French fr.
Price	7s. 6d.	1.—	50	350
For members and friends of I.U.C.N.	7s.	0.90	45	215

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The Union has much pleasure in announcing the French edition of *Derniers Refuges*, an annotated Atlas of Nature Reserves throughout the World, produced by the publishing firm, Elsevier, of Brussels. The enclosed folder includes an order form which members and « Friends » of I.U.C.N. who wish to obtain the book may send direct to the Union; they will be allowed a reduction of 20% on the purchase price and their cheques should be made payable to I.U.C.N., or a transfer made to the account U.I.C.N. L. 358, Banque de Bruxelles, Agence du Luxembourg, 21, rue d'Arlon, Brussels. The book costs 395 Belgian francs or 2,900 French francs. For members and « Friends » the price is 316 Belgian francs or 2,320 French francs + 20 B. frs. for postage. Orders from France may be settled through I.U.C.N.'s Compte spécial (Marguerite Caram) no. 212.580 at « La Société Générale », 29, boulevard Haussman, Paris.

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I.U.C.N. has at its disposal a number of copies of an interesting brochure, *Introduced Mammals and their influence on native biota*, by Antoon de Vos, Richard H. Manville and Richard G. Van Gelder, reprinted from *Zoologica*, Scientific Contributions of the New York Zoological Society. Those wishing to obtain a copy should apply to the Union's Secretariat.

FRIENDS OF I.U.C.N.

Reminder. — 1957 subscriptions to the Friends of I.U.C.N. are now due, and members are kindly asked to send their contributions to the appropriate address, according to the country in which they live:

Great Britain:

Minimum contribution: Friends, 15s. per annum; Donors, £ 3.15.0 per annum; Benefactors, £ 35.0.0, to be paid to Miss Phyllis Barclay-Smith, c/o British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London S.W.7.

Holland:

Minimum contribution: Friends, 8 florins per annum; Donors, 40 florins per annum; Benefactors, 400 florins, to be paid to P.C.C. No 210.481 of the « Stichting voor Natuur- en Landschapsbescherming », Amsterdam.

France:

Minimum contribution: Friends, 700 Fr.Fr. per annum; Donors, 3,500 Fr.Fr. per annum; Benefactors, 35,000 Fr.Fr., to be paid to P.C.C. No 12 390.01 of Pierre Doignon, 21, rue le Primatice, Fontainebleau (Seine-et-Marne).

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Minimum contribution: Friends, 100 B.Fr. per annum; Donors, 500 B.Fr. per annum; Benefactors, 5,000 B.Fr., to be paid to the account of Marguerite Caram, L. 1045, Banque de Bruxelles, Agence du Luxembourg, 22, rue d'Arlon, Brussels or to C.C.P. 441 of Banque de Bruxelles, mentioning that the payment is destined for the Friends of I.U.C.N.

Other countries:

Minimum contribution equivalent of: Friends, 2 \$ or 15s. per annum; Donors, 10 \$ or £ 3.15.0 per annum; Benefactors, 100 \$ or £ 35.0.0, to be calculated in your national currency and paid to the account of Marguerite Caram, L. 1045, Banque de Bruxelles, Agence du Luxembourg, 22, rue d'Arlon, Brussels or to C.C.P. 441 of Banque de Bruxelles, mentioning that the payment is destined for the Friends of I.U.C.N.