

TRAFFIC BULLETIN



OF THE WILDLIFE TRADE
MONITORING UNIT

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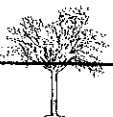
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and John A. Burton

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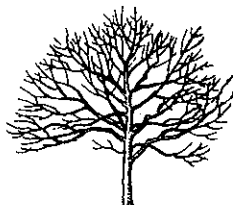
WTMU JOINS SCMU



At the beginning of 1981 the Wildlife Trade Monitoring Unit (WTMU) commenced operations alongside the IUCN Species Conservation Monitoring Unit (SCMU) at 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL. The WTMU has taken over the functions of the TRAFFIC (INTERNATIONAL) Secretariat, formerly based in London, with the staff of TRAFFIC now working for the new unit, and the Chairman of the Specialist Group being retained as consultant to the Unit. The name TRAFFIC will continue as the title of the Bulletin of WTMU which will be published bi-monthly.

The future of the IUCN/SSC TRAFFIC Specialist Group will be discussed at the SSC meeting to be held shortly in New Delhi. It is hoped that all Group members will become consultants to the Unit.

Clare McCormack joined WTMU at the beginning of January. She replaces Caroline Boydell, who unfortunately couldn't make the move to Cambridge.



RELEASE OF CROCODILES IN GULF PROVINCE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Minister for Environment and Conservation in Papua New Guinea, Mr Ibne Kor, said recently that the Government will be releasing 48 saltwater crocodiles *Crocodylus porosus* in the wild in Kikori area, Gulf Province in the first week of December 1980. The Gulf Provincial government and the Minister for Primary Industry, Mr Roy Evara who represents the people, have supported the move. This move is also in line with the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Since the 1960s when crocodile hunting was out of control the saltwater crocodile population in many parts of Gulf Province has shown little or no recovery. The people who rely on crocodiles as their sole source of income are concerned about this and have requested the National Crocodile Project of the Wildlife Division to restock one area on a trial basis. During early December 1980, 48 saltwater crocodiles of about two metres in length will be transported by ship to Kikori from the Moitaka Crocodile Farm in Port Moresby.

The crocodiles will be tagged with stainless steel tags such as those used on sea turtles and weighed and measured. The 24 female and 24 male crocodiles will be released in Anu Creek near Morere Village. The villagers have undertaken to take care of these crocodiles to make sure they will live to breed and restock the area. The people of the area have also signed agreements that should one of the crocodiles attack anyone the Government will not be held responsible.

This is the first crocodile release and restocking effort for Papua New Guinea. Similar programmes in India, Zimbabwe, USA and South Africa have met with great success.

Source: Statement made by Mr Ibne Kor, Minister for Environment and Conservation, PNG in November 1980.

LICENCES REQUIRED BY WILDLIFE IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS IN USA

Licences (which cost \$50) to import or export wild animals and their parts and derivatives are now required by the US Fish and Wildlife Services Division of Law Enforcement.

In 1974 temporary permission was granted to continue trade in wildlife, but this expired on December 31st 1980. A person filing an application after that date will be unable to engage in any wildlife importing or exporting of fish or wildlife until a licence has been issued.

PORTUGAL, ARGENTINA AND CHINA JOIN CITES

Portugal, who originally signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on 6th December 1974, ratified on 11th December 1980 and will therefore become the 65th party to CITES on 11th March 1981.

On 8th January 1981 Argentina ratified (they originally signed on 3rd March 1973) and China acceded; they become the 66th and 67th parties to the Convention on 8th April 1981.



TRADE IN MOLLUSCS AND LEECHES

by Susan M. Wells

Although invertebrate species make up well over 90% of the animal kingdom and are heavily exploited by man, only 5% of the taxa on CITES are invertebrates. Of the 51 invertebrate taxa listed, 32 are North American freshwater mussels, 4 are butterflies, including the birdwing groups, and the rest are other molluscs, mainly land snails. At the New Delhi CITES meeting* the UK is proposing Appendix II status for black corals (*Antipatharia*) on behalf of the British Virgin Islands, which declared this group of species endangered in 1979. It is only relatively recently that black coral has become a commercially valuable product in the western world, although it has long been accredited with magical properties in the East. It is now fished in considerable quantities in Indonesia, the Philippines and the Caribbean for use in jewellery, mainly for the souvenir trade, but it is also becoming popular in fashionable cities of North America and Europe. As with many invertebrates knowledge of the ecology, distribution and abundance of the species is scant, but they are clearly becoming increasingly difficult to find in areas where the coral has been heavily collected.

Similar reports are coming in for a number of other invertebrates, examples of which are two well known European species: the edible or Roman snail *Helix pomatia* and the medicinal leech *Hirudo medicinalis*.

The medicinal leech formerly extended throughout most of Europe from the Urals in the east to Spain and Portugal in the west, and in most areas it was abundant. Today it is thought to be extinct in a number of European countries such as Sweden, and only occurs abundantly at the eastern end of its range.

The use of leeches as a form of blood-letting therapy until the last century and the enormous scale of the trade which subsequently developed, contributed directly to its current status. By the beginning of the 19th century local sources were depleted in western Europe, especially in France, Britain and Germany. The trade then turned to the marshes of Hungary and the Balkan countries: in the 19th century over a thousand million leeches were imported into France alone. A number of countries implemented controls, and breeding was attempted but proved unsuccessful.

Although blood-letting has virtually ceased in Europe, there is now a new collecting pressure on this species. The medicinal leech secretes a powerful anti-coagulant named hirudin, which is currently used in research into the mechanism of blood-clotting in humans. Thousands of leeches must be used to obtain even small quantities of purified hirudin, and the pharmaceutical companies in Europe which supply it on a commercial basis, almost entirely from Hungarian leeches, are apparently unable to fulfill the needs of researchers in Europe and North America. When the structure of hirudin has been determined it is hoped that it will be possible to synthesise it, but in the meantime leeches in the wild are at risk.

Helix pomatia has been exploited on a large scale for food since the last century. In the early 1900s about 70 million snails were consumed in France per year and a tenfold increase in consumption was reported in the following 50 years. Poland exported 40 million between 1951 and 1961; Romania was exporting 40-60 million annually in the early 1970s; Hungary exported 40 million in 1974 and Germany 48 million between 1971 and 1973. In 1975 the Roman snail was being collected for export in Austria, Germany, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia.

Uncontrolled exploitation has almost certainly been a major cause in the decline of this species throughout much of its range. It occurs throughout

*25th February to 8th March 1981

central and eastern Europe but dispersal appears to be poor and its distribution is characterised by small isolated colonies. Its decline in Britain was noticed as early as 1909 and a comparison of pre- and post-1950 sites in France showed a marked decline.

Legislation controlling collection and export has been introduced in many countries where there is heavy exploitation. In Germany most states have passed laws to ensure that a site can only be exploited once in three years. Hungary and Switzerland have size restrictions, Holland has had a ban on collection since 1973 and other countries such as Italy and France have closed seasons. Attempts to farm *Helix pomatia* have been made a number of times but as far as is known have never been commercially successful.

Hope for the future survival of the Roman snail lies in the fact that there are a number of substitutes which, except possibly to the gourmet, are indistinguishable from the 'real' thing. *Helix aspersa* is a garden pest throughout much of Europe, and it can also be bred commercially (see TRAFFIC Bulletin Vol. II No. 8); it is being used increasingly instead of the Roman snail. The Giant African snail *Achatina fulica* is a major crop pest throughout much of the Far East and on many Pacific islands where it has been introduced. The Taiwanese hit upon the idea of using this species cut up into small pieces and sold canned with a bag of *Helicidae* shells attached, or actually put into *Helix* shells. In 1977 1 500 tons were sent to the western world, 90% of which went to France, and other countries in the Far East are now taking advantage of the situation. Other substitutes, including meat offal (lung), have alle been used.

Unlike vertebrates most invertebrate species are unlikely to be made extinct as a result of exploitation by man: their reproductive potential is greater and they are often so small it would be difficult, and certainly uneconomic, to collect the last one. Also marine species methods of dispersal through planktonic larvae tend to ensure that recolonisation of depleted sites may occur.

Invertebrates, like plants, have great potential value for man, providing food, drugs and material for scientific research. However, compared to vertebrates, almost nothing is known of their ecology, reproductive capacities and population dynamics which enable satisfactory management plans to be drawn up.

Listing species such as the medicinal leech and the Roman snail on CITES would have a number of benefits. It would provide much needed information on quantities involved in trade and trends that the trade is taking. At present such data is virtually unobtainable. It would encourage alternatives, such as the Giant African snail, to be sought and used and hopefully it would stimulate research into the ecology of these species.

Finally it would prevent over-exploitation to the point where the remaining populations, as in the cases of the medicinal leech and Roman snail, are seriously threatened by habitat loss, the use of pesticides and changes in farming practice.



COLOMBIA: ITS WILDLIFE, TRADERS, AND LAWS

An article entitled 'Flores de Capitolio' by Daniel Samper Pizano appeared in the Colombian newspaper 'El Tiempo' in September 1980. It bemoans the fact that Colombia has played an important part in reducing the world's wildlife (in this context see TRAFFIC Bulletins Vol. I Nos. 3 and 10, and Vol. II Nos. 5/6 and 9/10). It deplores that this has occurred, despite exemplary game reserves and various laws, decrees and resolutions prohibiting the hunting, internal trade and export of animals. Apparently there is an interminable flow of live animals and skins out of the country. Many are exported under false documents produced by certain pan-American authorities, others simply leave the country and get their papers elsewhere, and some shipments are exported with legal permission from INDERENA.

The article mentions how Peter Sand, Secretary General of CITES, has named countries which have received Colombian wildlife; in July 1980 he drew the attention of INDERENA to a batch of 71 export licences for CITES listed species. The licences were apparently issued in 1978 and 1979 and authorised the export to the Federal Republic of Germany of live caimans and 330 000 skins of dwarf caimans (*Palaeosuchus*), boas (*Boidae*), iguanas (*Iguana iguana*) and fur seals (*Arctocephalus*). The majority were exported by the firms 'Alfaro Angel y Cia', 'Exportadora LAO', Mendal Hermanos', and 'Prodelta Ltda' which are based in Bogota. The author ends with the fervent hope that the new manager of INDERENA will firmly control the situation.

RHINOCEROS HORN AND THE GEMMOLOGIST

Much concern has recently been expressed that the extinction of the rhinoceros is imminent, unless the illicit slaughter of this harmless mammal is controlled. Smuggling of rhinoceros products is currently rife. Dr. E. Martin, a consultant for the Wildlife Fund, has recently published the results of a study he conducted into the international trade in rhinoceros products. In his report he offered three rather startling findings:

- 1 Since 1975 2 500 rhinoceros have been slaughtered per year
- 2 Since 1975 the price of rhinoceros products has increased 2 000 per cent
- 3 Over the last 10 years 90 per cent of the rhinoceros population of Africa has been slaughtered.

At this rate of slaughter, it would appear that the African rhinoceroses will be extinct in 10 years.

The extent of current gemmological knowledge concerning rhino horn seems to be limited to three facts:

- 1 Rhinoceros horn is a form of matted hair derived from the skin of the rhinoceros
- 2 Rhinoceros horn is soft
- 3 Rhinoceros horn has a specific gravity of 1.29.

An investigation* by Grahame Brown of the Dental School at the University of Queensland, Australia has confirmed that rhinoceros horn is formed from a fused mass of keratinous, hair-like fibres; however he believes that his investigation has illustrated, for the first time, the histological characteristics of rhinoceros horn. If the gemmologist experiences difficulty identifying rhinoceros horn, as it shares gemmological properties in common with other keratoproteins, then the microscopic examination of a thin peeling from the specimen should provide histological characteristics which are unique to rhinoceros horn - should be sufficient to provide a positive

identification for this rarely encountered gem material.

The investigation concludes that positive identification of rhinoceros horn should not be difficult if the gemmologist familiarizes himself or herself with:

- * The characteristic surface striations of rhinoceros horn
- * The definitive histology that examination of a thin peeling of rhinoceros horn will reveal.

**Rhinoceros Horn (Some observations of use to the gemmologist) by Grahame Brown.*

MORE NEWS FROM THE SEA

(See Bulletin Vol II No 8. We want this to become a regular feature as there are numerous examples of over-exploitation. Source: 'fishing news international')

ALBACORE TUNA

Further to an article in the September Bulletin on the extensive fishing of albacore tuna, it is reported that the French fleet has had a near disastrous albacore season this year. 2.7 million francs had been spent on promoting 'thon blanc' but the 9 000 tonnes catch estimates made by the Centre Oceanologique de Bretagne have proved to be excessive. Tuna fishermen have refused to make catch returns to the COB probably for fear of future catch restrictions. By the end of September the coastal fleet had landed only 3 278 tonnes compared to 5 646 tonnes at the same time last year - or to the bonanza landings of 1964 of 16 500 tonnes.

OCTOPUS

A Yamaha advertisement states that official Japanese government statistics reveal that the octopus catch in Japan totalled about 137 000 tonnes in 1978 with a breakdown of 42 000 tonnes from local fisheries, 21 000 tonnes from ocean fishing and 74 000 tons from imports. Octopus is the favourite sea food of Japan with extremely stable demand and consumption.

SHRIMP

Exports of marine products from India reached new heights in 1979: 92 184 tonnes valued at Rs 2 620.3 million (£142 million). Frozen shrimp exports were the highest on record and dominated the export trade, accounting for as much as 58 per cent in terms of quantity and 85 per cent in value.

MARINE TURTLES

Good news for marine turtles: the Government of Sind Province in Pakistan has extended legal protection to marine turtles under the Sind Wildlife Protection Ordinance of 1973. This provides for heavy penalties for killing turtles whose numbers have fallen so drastically that they are facing extinction in the region. The beaches around Karachi are one of the eleven main nesting grounds for the green turtle.

EXPORTS OF FROZEN FROGSLEGS FROM INDIA

Frozen froglegs exports increased to 3 764 tonnes, valued at Rs 87.2 million with 2 435 tonnes going to Western Europe, France and the Netherlands taking more than 1 100 tonnes each.



OBSERVATIONS ON THE WILDLIFE TRADE IN INDONESIA

Compiled by F.B.S. Antram

Indonesia acceded to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on 28th December 1978. However a large number of protected animals are still exported (see *TRAFFIC International Bulletin Vol. II No. 8, Vol. I No. 8 & 9 for example*). The following data are taken from an unofficial report by Fred Smiet, who is working for FAO in Ambon, and from information sent by a WTMU correspondent who has travelled widely in Indonesia.

Officially the export of all wildlife has to be registered. Permission to export animals/products (in limited quantities) is granted by the Perlindungan dan Pelestarian Alam (PPA), the government organisation dealing with nature conservation and the official management authority for issuing CITES licences. The Department of Fisheries also issues permits, thereby making nonsense of the PPA quotas. Most of the legal export is undertaken by professional animal dealers, although a certain amount is by private individuals who each take out small numbers of 'souvenirs'.

However, the unregistered and, hence, illegal trade is probably as large (by volume) as the registered trade, but of a much higher value as protected species are involved. Some of the animals involved (much in demand in overseas markets) are live Greater Sulphur-crested Cockatoos *Cacatua galerita* and Palm Cockatoos *Probosciger aterrimus*, and products of the Green turtle *Chelonia mydas*, Hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata*, Dugong *Dugong dugon* and Greater Bird of Paradise *Paradisaea apoda*. The official PPA figures (which are not necessarily very reliable) show that a total of 66 627 parrots Psittacidae of unprotected species were exported between 1976 and 1980 from Maluku alone. The PPA recently seized a shipment of 500 *Cacatua galerita* in Ambon, but, generally speaking, controls are negligible.

Throughout eastern Indonesia, most trading boats heading westwards carry a few parrots or cockatoos. At each stage the birds are sold for a profit, being passed from boat to boat at ports, until finally they are smuggled into Singapore. The town of Tanjung Pinang (Riau) is a real smugglers' centre for this and many other operations.

Birds of Paradise skins are freely on sale in the Aru Islands and in Irian Jaya. The birds are shot with bow and arrow and the skins are packed carefully in shoe boxes. Boats travelling west or north to Ternate carry them. They are often resold in Java and eventually smuggled to Singapore.

Butterflies of all the rare species of the Eastern Islands are caught (with no control) and shipped to Japan from Ternate (Maluku). Parrots also leave by this route on board the freezer ships taking tuna and prawns to Japan, or on board the big copra carriers. The butterflies are set in plastic and used for making table mats.

Thousands of Green turtles are brought into Bali each year from all parts of eastern Indonesia, usually by fast sailing boats especially adapted for the trade. The meat is turned into soup; the shells used for handicrafts, carvings, etc., and either smuggled out or sold to tourists,

Although Indonesia is now a party to CITES, tourists are still allowed to carry large numbers of turtles out of Bali without permits. The Leatherback turtle, *Dermochelys coriacea*, is the only species protected in Indonesia, in spite of the fact that all five species of marine turtle occurring in Indonesia are protected by CITES. There is, incidentally, no evidence of any trade in *Dermochelys coriacea*.

Apart from the export trade, the domestic market is substantial, particularly in birds and orchids. Many people, both rich and poor, keep birds in their houses. Officially protected species are freely available. The following table gives price indications for some animals and animal products on the Ambon market:

SPECIES	PRICE (IND. RUPIAH) (1 US dollar = 627 Rp. approx.)	ORIGIN
<i>Eos bornea</i> live	3 000 each	Ambon, Seram
<i>Lorius garrulus</i> live	10 000 - 15 000 each	North Maluku
<i>Cacatua moluccensis</i> live	20 000 each	Seram
<i>Probosciger aterrimus</i> live	35 000 each	Aru Islands
<i>Paradisaea apoda</i> prepared skins	40 000 - 50 000 each	Aru Islands
<i>Dugong dugon</i> teeth	3 000 per cm (for a pair of teeth with length of 10 cms: Rp. 60 000)	Aru Islands

Another WTMU correspondent recently visited Medan in Sumatra. He reports that on Jalan Jend A. Yani there is a row of about 8 or 10 souvenir shops. He visited a few at random; in 'Toko Batik' there were 9 stuffed Hawksbill turtles, priced between Rp. 70 000 and Rp. 100 000 each, plus numerous crocodile and python skin bags, while 'Toko Selatan' was selling stuffed pythons at Rp. 12 500 and also stuffed civets, monitors and terrapins. The year before (1979) this last shop had had more than 100 Hawksbill turtles on its shelves.

In brief, according to our informants, in Indonesia anything that makes a profit for someone is likely to happen, and there is negligible control. You can buy almost anything if you offer the right price and will probably only be caught smuggling because the officials also want their share of the profits.

CAMEROON IVORY

"All shipments of ivory or animal produce from the United Republic of Cameroon, the Authority to Export and Certificate of Origin of which are not signed by the Minister of Agriculture and the Director of Forestry Services, respectively, should be considered as illegal and confiscated."

This statement was communicated to all parties to the CITES by the Secretariat on 22nd December 1980 at the request of the Minister of Agriculture of the United Republic of Cameroon. Cameroon is not a party to the Convention.

CORRIGENDUM

(See *TRAFFIC Bulletin Vol. II Nos. 9 & 10, p.98*)

Rene Honegger, curator of herpetology at _____, pointed out to us that the word 'caret' in the article 'New Regulations Regarding Turtles', which we thought might refer to *Caretta caretta*, is in fact more likely to refer to



Linda Turrell, Animal Welfare Institute.



The photograph on the left was taken in north-eastern Mexico, near the border with Brownsville, Texas.

The man hiding his face is selling baby parrots - Yellow-headed and Red-headed Amazons.

It is illegal to capture or sell baby parrots in Mexico.



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The Bulletin is sent free to all group members, IUCN consultants, Government agencies, conservation organisations and other institutions in a position to further the conservation of threatened species. Donations to defray costs will continue to be welcomed. To commercial enterprises and private individuals the Bulletin subscription is \$10.00 (£5.00) to cover mailing.

FEEDBACK NEEDED



We welcome any feedback: criticisms, opinions, and in particular the results of any action which was taken as a consequence of any reports in the TRAFFIC Bulletin.

For instance, did the series of Discrepancies in CITES trade statistics analyses between different countries provide the basis for any action?

