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THE APPEARANCE OF AN ITEM IN THIS NEWSLETTER DOES NOT CONSTITUTE PUBLICATION.

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Editor's note: the editor wishes to appeal to all Group members to submit items for the Newsletter. Owing to the scarcity of material, this issue has been deliberately delayed for as long as possible. However, in view of the time which has elapsed since our Ndumu meeting, it would seem that a slender Newsletter is better than none at all. Admittedly, our decision to circularize all correspondence has to a certain extent obviated the need for a Newsletter.

The editor wishes to particularly thank Rene Honegger, Bob Bustard, and Tony Pooley for their contributions to this issue.

GENERAL

Our congratulations to Wayne King on his selection as our new Group Chairman. Dr. King is a dynamic individual, and dynamic leadership in the Group is at present sorely needed. On behalf of the Group, the editor would also like to express appreciation to Hugh Cott on his retirement for the four years during which he headed our Group.

Likewise, our appreciation to Bob Bustard for consenting to continue as Group Secretary--a substantial commitment of time on the part of a very busy man. We all wish Bob the best with his new tropical research station, and the editor would be interested in any news items concerning it, regardless of whether or not these deal directly with crocodiles.

U. S. A.

Among the current crop of song hits on American juke boxes is a number entitled "Crocodile Rock".

FLORIDA

John Ogden, biologist with the Everglades National Park and a nominee for Consultant Membership in our Group, reports that he has collected about 100 more infrared photographs showing details of nest construction by Crocodylus acutus, and plans to use the cameras again this summer at one or two hatching nests. He is also ready to begin radio-tracking of juvenile crocodiles this summer, from which he hopes to learn something on their movements from nests to feeding sites. Such information will be

extremely useful in determining habitat requirements and for protecting this South Florida population of C. acutus.

The editor plans to leave for Florida in a few days to visit with Mr. Orden and observe his field work.

An account of Mr. Orden's recent article in Audubon appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

SOUTH AMERICA

Rene Honegger reports the following on the Manu National Park, Bolivia:

"The message, that the wardens of Manu National Park were withdrawn from the park, seems to be absolutely wrong. Dr. Hartmut Juncius, with whom I spoke over the phone on June 4, 1973, informed me on the actual situation (after his recent visit to Bolivia spring 73): One of the formerly seven wardens in Manu died recently, so that only six wardens are active. The budget for 1973 stands for 10 (ten) wardens. More guard-huts are to be constructed; one hut was destroyed by water. Funds for guards and huts are to be provided by WWF. (June 4, 1973)"

ITALY

Rene Honegger reports that he has received word from one of his contacts with much knowledge concerning the reptile leather industry that in Italy buying and dealing is going on at an increased rate; a new boom in crocodilian leather seems underway.

JERSEY WILDLIFE PRESERVATION TRUST, JERSEY, CHANNEL ISLANDS

Wayne King and Peter Brazaitis examined the photographs of the Crocodylus rhombifer specimens in Jersey--also photographs of the ones in Antwerp. From the pictures they would seem to be good rhombifer--not rhombifer-acutus hybrids.

AFRICA

Tony Pooley reports the following developments from Africa:

LESOTHO

"Some time ago the Government of Lesotho approached the Natal Parks Board for advice on rearing crocodiles and I was accordingly asked to visit Lesotho.

"The majority of the residents of this country are of the Ba-Koena tribe, the people of the crocodile, and although there are no known records of crocodiles having ever occurred in this country, the Ba-Koena originally

came from the Transvaal in the Republic of South Africa, where crocodiles did occur.

"The crocodile totem is still very strong and throughout the country carved wooden crocodiles are to be seen adorning dwellings; the blankets woven by the peasant women depict crocodiles and in the capital, Maseru, they have an enormous bronze statue of a crocodile.

"The Minister of Education and various other officials thought that it would be interesting to have a live crocodile on display in Maseru for the benefit of the people who have never even seen the creature which is so prominent in their folklore.

"Whilst in Maseru, I selected a suitable site for a small display pond and with an architect, drew up plans for an educational exhibit. Maseru is at an altitude of 5000 ft. a. s. l. and very cold in winter, so we needed to design a heated enclosure for the crocodiles.

"I suggested that they give their teachers and senior students a project of delving into the origins and past history of the Ba-Koena tribe so that illustrated text can be incorporated as part of the display and this idea was received with much enthusiasm. I am also supplying negatives and photographs from my own collection dealing with the biology, ecology and history of the Nile Crocodile, to make the exhibit interesting and plan to complete a series of colour slides which can be shown to school children in a nearby lecture hall under construction. The Parks Board have donated two crocodiles which I will be delivering when word is received that the enclosure has been completed. Unfortunately this tiny country has little finance available to build this type of educational exhibit, but hopefully it might be the start of a natural history venue for the 33,000 school children in and around Maseru."

BOTSWANA

"Newsletter No. 3 of the South African Hunters and Game Preservation Society, Pretoria, provides the following information:

"Botswana Game Industries has made crocodile hunting available to our members at their camp at Shakawe in Botswana. No general game license is required and a straight license can be purchased at R30,00 for one crocodile, R40,00 for two and R50,00 for three.

"Hunting can be done at night but members must make use of the services of this Organization who will provide accommodation, guides, skimmers, and

boats and a 10% discount will be allowed to our members, etc!"

Botswana Game Industries (Pty.) Ltd.

P/Bag 30, Francistown, Botswana."

FRANCE

"I recently received a letter from J. Ferret, 6 Rue Charles Joubpy, 93600 Aulnay s/Bois, France, who writes as follows:

"I am particularly interested in the results obtained by you in your crocodile rearing project. I am myself a specialist in the farming of reptile skins and your studies would be extremely helpful to me, in completing various Tannery projects which have been proposed to several African countries, etc., etc."

"A similar letter was received from a Frenchman via the South African Department of Commerce. He states that he recently returned from Louisiana in the U. S. A. where large crocodile 'farms' have been established in the last few years with financial aid from the American government. It is stated that crocodile skins from these farms are exported at \$50 per skin.

"He enquires whether a similar venture could not be set up in South Africa, as the demand in Europe for crocodile skins is virtually unlimited and he gives the assurance that his firm would be prepared to import our total production.

"The individual concerned is:

Mr. Grawitz,

Managing Director,

Gordon-Choisy,

52 rue J-P. Timbaud, Paris 11e, France."

SOUTH AFRICA

"I attended the Symposium on Wildlife Management held in Pretoria from 4th to 9th June, at which some sixty papers were presented, and delivered a paper titled 'Conservation Management of Crocodiles'.

"A symposium on Lake St. Lucia was held at Charters Creek 27th to 30th June, organized by the Royal Society of South Africa. A paper was delivered on the 'Movement of Crocodiles in the Lake System'. Reprints of these two papers will be circulated in due course.

ZAMBIA

"The following letter, dated 27/7/1973 has just been received from a Mr. J. J. Banda, P. O. Box 651, Lusaka Zambia:

"We are intending to start a crocodile farm. Would you be kind enough to furnish us with information regarding the construction of pens, feeding,

and any other relevant details'. Signed, J. J. Banda.

"One wonders if the Zambian Game Department have started issuing permits to private enterprise now?"

The following items were submitted by Bob Bustard. From the context of the accompanying correspondence, it would seem they have been circularized to all Group members. However, for completeness--and at the risk of redundancy--they are included below.

AUSTRALIA

"The State of Western Australia has listed 53 animals on its May 11, 1973 list of "Fauna Declared Rare and Likely to Become Extinct". This includes both the saltwater crocodile (Crocodylus porosus) and the freshwater crocodile (Crocodylus johnsoni). It should be noted that by declaring these species as "rare and likely to become extinct", the maximum penalty for illegally taking them is thereby increased from \$A400 to \$A1000. Hence, the purpose of the exercise is political/practical conservation and does not indicate that the Red Data Book type status of species has deteriorated.

"I am just back from the Kimberleys area of Western Australia where I am happy to report that the saltwater crocodile situation appears to be encouraging. In the area which I examined there does not appear to have been any poaching subsequent to the ban on any shooting, imposed on January 1, 1970 and we were able to spot large individuals which we had seen prior to that time."

--Bob Bustard, in litt., 17 July 1973.

"Ord reserve for saltwater crocs. A 50,000-acre reserve has been created near Wyndham to protect saltwater crocodiles. The minister for Fisheries and Fauna, Mr. Rickerton, said yesterday that the reserve encompasses about 20 miles on both banks of the Ord River, north-east of the Wyndham townsite.

"He said that the reserved area was an excellent saltwater crocodile habitat and held a sizable population of crocodiles.

"The reserve had been set aside following a recommendation by Dr. H. R. Bustard of the Australian National University.

"Dr. Bustard's report on the status of crocodiles in W. A. had been responsible for having the saltwater crocodile protected in April, 1970.

"The freshwater crocodile had been protected for many years.

"Mr. Rickerton said that it was unfortunate that crocodiles were not protected in Queensland because this enabled shooters to poach crocodiles in W. A. and the Northern Territory.

"Poachers who illegally shot crocodiles in these areas could market them in Queensland.

"Shooters faced a fine of \$1,000 for taking crocodiles illegally in W. A.

"The new reserve would be patrolled by the Wyndham fauna warden."

--Xerox copy of newspaper clipping dated 24 May 1973; title of periodical not given.

In his accompanying letter Bob remarks that "the reserve is not as large as I would have wished but it is certainly a start."

"Crocodile ban to stay. Canberra: A total export ban on all crocodile skin products will not be lifted by the Federal Government, the Attorney-General, Senator Murphy, said today. 'There is absolutely no prospect of the ban being lifted' he told the Senate. He said crocodiles in Australia had been so over exploited they were on the point of extinction. Senator Milliner (Labor, Qld.) had asked Senator Murphy when he would lift the ban. Senator Murphy said the number of crocodiles in Australia had been reduced from five million to almost 5000. 'Crocodiles are very significant from many points of view', he said. 'From a scientific viewpoint they are, generally speaking, descendant directly from the dinosaur family and are extremely important. We will not relax this ban which applies to all crocodile products' he said. 'I am sure that everyone would agree with this except perhaps a handful who have been conducting the export trade' he said."

--From The Herald, Melbourne, 7 June 1973.

NEW GUINEA

Since returning from Africa, Max Downes has been travelling among the tribesmen of the Sepik area of New Guinea, advising clan leaders on the management of their crocodile skin industry.

UGANDA

"Crocodiles protected. Kampala: Ugandan fishermen on Lake Mobutu, formerly Lake Albert, have been told to stop catching crocodiles. The ban was ordered by the Animal Resources Ministry because of the dwindling number of crocodiles."

--From The Australian, 16 May 1973.

ETHIOPIA

Leslie Brown reports the following from his visit to Ethiopia in June

last year:

"I am informed that the Dofan Crocodile Company have now taken about 49,000 crocodiles in Ethiopia since they began operating. They have shot out their existing concessions and have been seeking fresh ones, while at the same time they are diversifying their tanning factory to include other skins, such as sheep and goat skins, of which there is an unlimited supply. Clearly the inevitable and forecast result, that they could not safely take enough crocodiles in Ethiopia to operate their factory at full strength, has already been borne out. Recently their Chief hunter toured the Lake Abaya area with Mr. Bolton and apparently decided that, although there were quite a number of large crocodiles in the area, it would not be economic to crop them. I have not discussed this in detail."

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST (Reviews by the editor unless otherwise noted.)

John Ogden, with photographs by Caulion Singletary, "Night of the Crocodile." Audubon (Vol. 75, No. 3) May, 1973; pp. 32-37.

A very brief introduction to the American crocodile (Crocodylus acutus) in southern Florida by the man who has probably spent more time than anyone in recent years in studying the species in this region. I personally feel that Mr. Ogden underestimates the potential danger^{of} C. acutus to the individual rash enough to treat it with less than the respect due to any large carnivore. His observations are based exclusively on experience with the species in Florida, where it has had ample opportunity to learn to fear man. Less anthropomorphically, any Florida crocodile whose behavior pattern is not programmed for a "flight" rather than a "fight" reaction when confronted with man has long ago become a handbag. In former times, and in other parts of its range, C. acutus has been, and is, feared--though it has never exhibited the man-eating proclivities of its ecological counterparts, C. porosus and C. niloticus.

A splendid series of infra-red photographs accompany the text--the first to ever show the female crocodile at her nest at the time of hatching, transporting the hatchlings in her mouth from the nest to the water. Also included are color photographs of a hatchling emerging from the egg.

"World Croc Men Visit South Africa." African Wildlife (Vol. 27, No. 2) Winter, 1973; pp. 50-53.

A good account of our Group meeting at Ndumu. A color photograph of a

crocodile is also featured on the magazine cover. On page 53 a quotation from the editor's 1971 paper, "Crocodiles and Public Relations", is given without proper credit. Wasn't it Lord Byron who said, "'Tis pleasing, sure, to see one's name in print"?.....

George Reiger, "The World Shepards Its Wildlife." International Wildlife (Vol. 3, No. 4) July-August, 1973; pp. 4-13.

An excellent account of the endangered species treaty and the Washington conference that led to its signing. On page six is the all-important question, "Will the treaty be enforced?" The answer will determine whether this treaty is just another "scráp of paper"--or the most significant wildlife conservation document of the century. Already we have seen attempts within our own Group to weaken the treaty's impact by transferring certain crocodilian species from Appendix I to the less rigidly protected Appendix II.

Jack Denton Scott, "No Wonder the Crocodile Is Crying." International Wildlife (Vol. 3, No. 5) September-October, 1973; pp. 13-15.

A once-over-lightly introduction to crocodilians for the general reader, with a rather pessimistic prognosis of their future. The author sees the recent endangered species treaty as the main real hope of crocodilian survival. Unless we who have accepted the responsibility for these reptiles' preservation can agree among ourselves to save them for their intrinsic worth, rather than as an economic resource, he may well be right.

Uwe Richter, "Kreuzung zwischen Nil-und Spitzkrokodil (?)" Die Aquarien-und Terrarien Zeitschrift (Vol. 26, No. 6) 1973; pp. 210-211.

Reviewed by René Honegger.

"Hybridization between male Cr. acutus X female Cr. niloticus at Hagenbeck's Tierpark, Hamburg/W-Germany, - The question mark in the title was placed by the herpetological editor of the journal, Dr. Heinz Wernuth. The original crocodile collection consisted of 2 A. mississippiensis, 2 Cr. niloticus, 2 Cr. rhombifer, and one Cr. acutus. Until end 1967 the male niloticus was the dominant specimen in the group, from then on the male acutus was dominant, and finally succeeded in killing the male niloticus!

"In 1968 the female niloticus laid eggs, as it did in 1969, and 1970. In 1969 one egg was found fertile, in 1970 one young hatched after an incubation time of 83 days. Only in 1971 one copulation between male acutus X female niloticus was observed, but no fertile eggs were obtained. It might be very well possible that the young resulted from copulation of niloticus prior to 1967 or 1968, and that the sperms were stored by the female. (*Amphigonia retardata*)."

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--James Powell, editor
Plainview, Texas, U. S. A.
August 21, 1973