

Hornbill



July-September, 1999

about nature and us



BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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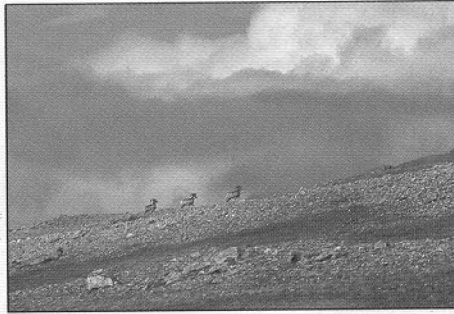
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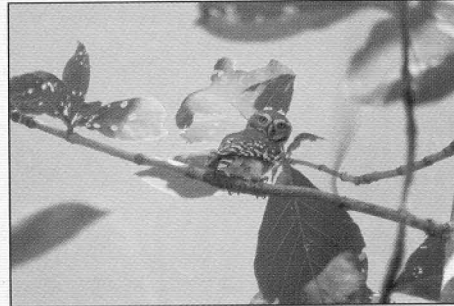
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4. Amidst Wildlife in Sikkim

— *Usha Ganguli-Lachungpa*

A brief visit to the little green gem of India — Sikkim, where nature's surprises never cease.



26. The Forest Spotted Owllet *Athene blewitti* — an Update

— *Farah Ishtiaq*

Distribution, habitat and breeding grounds of the once elusive bird, rediscovered two years ago.



28. Vulture Red Alert

— *Vibhu Prakash*

An entire population of sick vultures reported at Bharatpur point towards a complete wipe out in the Park.

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Intoxicated beauties



THIS refers to the *Hornbill* 1999(2) 'Moths attracted by tobacco smoke' by E.H. Aitken in *Miscellanea*. I am a member of the BNHS, studying the flora and fauna of Amravati and Yavatmal districts of Vidarbha. On July 4, 1999, I was trying to photograph some butterflies when I saw more than 100 butterflies flocking at a certain spot in a nullah in the Malkhed Game Reserve. I photographed

the same, and found that the spot had been used by country-liquor distillers a few days ago and smelt strongly of alcohol. The nearby stones looked bleached and unnaturally white.

To this I would like to add that when a drunken man was lying asleep on the outskirts of my town, the same butterflies flocked upon his body.

*Raju Kasambe
Amravati, Maharashtra*

Eds: Readers are invited to send in similar observations.

How does one milk snails?

IN 'Purple Pomp' (*Hornbill*, 1999(1)), Beefsea writes: The Mixtec Indians of Central America... milk the snails instead

of killing them to obtain the dye. How does one 'milk' snails?

*Jumana Paghdiwalla
Dahod.*

Beefsea replies: The snails can be 'milked' by pressing on the operculum of a live animal. A small quantity of the white fluid will then be discharged.

**Tracking the rhinoceros?
Share your experiences**

THERE are five species of rhinoceros which inhabit countries of Africa and Asia. In general, these are critically endangered in large parts of their range. I am in the process of reviewing the historical as well as current distribution and status of the rhinoceros all over the world. There are many possible sources of information, like published reports, specimens preserved in museums or private collections, and photographs in archives. However, there must be many tourists and local residents in the various countries who have seen or photographed rhinos during their travels into the more inaccessible parts of the globe. Any information of rhino sightings or shootings will be welcome, especially reports outside the normal tourist circuits or from dates before 1960. If at all possible, I would like to know when and where the animal was seen (as exactly as possible) and if any photographs would be available. All replies will be treated confidentially and, if requested, will be kept anonymous in any resulting publications. Please direct all replies to Dr Kees Rookmaaker P.O. Box 124, North Riding, South Africa. Fax: + 27 11 454 0559, email: maaker@mweb.co.za.

*Kees Rookmaaker
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