

Oryx

The International Journal of Conservation

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The Society was founded in 1903 as the Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of the Empire, and subsequently named the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society. Fauna & Flora International is conserving the planet's threatened species and ecosystems – with the people and communities who depend on them.

Oryx - The International Journal of Conservation, is now published quarterly by Cambridge University Press on behalf of Fauna & Flora International. It is a leading scientific journal of biodiversity conservation, conservation policy and sustainable use, with a particular interest in material that has the potential to improve conservation management and practice.

The website, <http://www.oryxthejournal.org/>, plays a vital role in the journal's capacity-building work. Amongst the site's many attributes is a compendium of sources of free software for researchers and details of how to access Oryx at reduced rates or for free in developing countries. The website also includes extracts from Oryx issues 10, 25 and 50 years ago, and a gallery of research photographs that provide a fascinating insight into the places, species and people described in the journal.

The [Rhino Resource Center](#) posted this PDF in June 2009. We are grateful for the permission.

STATEMENT SHOWING REVENUE COLLECTED DURING 1935.

	£
Revenue from game licences and from fees collected for game animals exported to Zoological Gardens	4,606
Revenue from sale of ivory, etc.	17,668
Total	£22,274

TABLE SHOWING REVENUE COLLECTED DURING THE PAST FOUR YEARS.

	1932.	1933.	1934.	1935.
	£	£	£	£
From game licences, etc.	5,885	5,829	4,865	4,606
From sale of ivory, etc.	22,444	14,842	20,653	17,668
Total	£28,329	£20,707	£25,518	£22,274

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE FROM 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1935.

	<i>Approved Estimates, 1935.</i>	<i>Total Expenditure.</i>
	£	£
Total for the Department	10,916	11,108

ZULULAND.

GAME RESERVE.

REPORT OF CONSERVATOR, 1935.

In common with other parts of North Zululand, a most serious drought has been experienced in the local game reserves. As will be seen from the subjoined rainfall return for 1935, less than 18 inches of rain fell for the twelve months as compared with 35 inches for 1933, and 34 inches for 1934. The conditions in the *Mkusi Area* from July to the end of the year gradually became worse, until at the end of December, the whole section was practically a desert. The game wandered out of the Reserve in all directions in a vain search for food but the state of affairs outside the Reserve was as bad as that inside. It is a marvel to me how any animal could live under such conditions, but the Impala especially were able to keep in fair condition. The acacia and other trees, no doubt, supplied the necessary food as there was certainly no grass. The trees were grazed off to the height the animals were able to reach and presented a quaint spectacle just

like so many open green umbrellas. The water in the Mkuzi River gave out in September and the only drinking water available was at the Insumu Pan. Fortunately the Mkuzi came down from bank to bank owing to the heavy rains farther north in November, so that the water shortage was then happily at an end. A number of nyala were found dead, also duiker and stembok and quite a few animals, in a very emaciated condition, were shot by the Game Guards. It was utterly impossible to keep the animals from straying outside. As a result hundreds of wildebeeste and, in lesser numbers, impala, nyala, and other game animals were killed by natives residing near the Reserve.

Seeing the Reserve in December, one would not have deemed it possible for the grass ever to come up again, but similar, if not quite so serious, droughts have occurred in the Mkuzi area before, and after heavy rains the grass has recovered to a luxuriant state.

The *Hluhluwe Reserve* suffered no water shortage as far as the animals were concerned; the water supply at headquarters was, however, taxed to its utmost towards the end of the year and, for the first time in the six years I have been here, we had to send to the Hluhluwe River, 4 miles away, for all water except for actual drinking purposes.

The conditions here too were serious from September onwards as regards good grazing. At the end of December matters gave rise to some concern especially as far as the white rhino and wart-hog were concerned. There was, however, always a certain amount of fair grazing, notably on the slopes, and most of the grass-feeding animals came at night to the hills for their food. The wart-hog, being purely grass feeders, suffered considerably and probably a fair number died from poverty, but as they usually retire to their holes to die, it is difficult to estimate their total losses.

No rhino have died as a *direct* result of the drought, but one white rhino strayed outside the Hluhluwe Reserve during August presumably in search of new grass and was shot by a European on his farm about 12 miles north of Hluhluwe Station.

One black rhino was also set upon by natives in their Reserve to the west of the Hluhluwe Reserve and was killed by them allegedly in self-defence.

Apart from these and a few other wandering rhino, very few if any of the bigger species of game have strayed from the Hluhluwe Reserve into the Settlement Areas during the year.

I would here like to stress the fact that the Hluhluwe Reserve has experienced one of the worst droughts ever known in these parts. The Reserve has shown that its water, grazing, etc., can be counted upon, even under such adverse circumstances.

During December the first attempt was made to catch impala in the Mkuzi Reserve and to transport same to the Hluhluwe Reserve. Through the kind offices of Mr. W. A. Campbell two nets were borrowed and fifty-four impala, three nyala, and two steinbok were successfully brought over by motor lorry during December. It is hoped to get about 200 impala and a hundred nyala into the Hluhluwe Reserve, also a few steinbok and Livingstone antelope by similar means.

The animals liberated have surely settled down in their new home and three baby impala were seen with their dams in the Christmas week in the Hluhluwe Reserve. "Jimmy," the pet impala ram, was taken from Headquarters and turned loose with five ewes from Mkuzi. He has been seen with "his herd" on several occasions since near the spot where he was let loose. This appears to do away with the popular fallacy that a wild animal domesticated from birth, as "Jimmy" was, will not afterwards mate with his own kind, nor they with him, in the veld.

The black rhino in the Hluhluwe Reserve are increasing satisfactorily. Several very young calves have recently been seen and the number of black rhino now totals just over a hundred. Seventeen white rhino have been counted in the Hluhluwe Reserve and this number includes three small calves.

159 wildebeeste, 85 wart-hog, 56 bush-buck, 2 crocodiles, 1 Natal duiker, and 218 baboons have been shot by the staff, mostly on the boundaries of the Reserve during the year.

Owing to the paucity of grazing and consequent excursions of game into the "Corridor" large numbers of wildebeeste, zebra, and wart-hog, and also a smaller number of waterbuck, kudu, and reedbuck were shot by shooting parties under licence. During the first month of the open season alone, 107 wildebeeste and 42 zebra were shot on a 7 mile front of the Game Reserve boundary on its southern side. Natives have also destroyed numbers of wildebeeste, reedbuck, etc., in the Native Reserves adjoining the Sanctuary.

The *Umfolosi Area* is policed by eight native Game Guards, whose duty it is to look after the white rhino in that section. Owing no doubt to the fact that very little burning of grass was possible in this Game Reserve on account of the danger of fire to the fly traps, the white rhino in particular were more outside than inside the Sanctuary for the greater part of the year. I regret having to state that four adult white rhino were killed during the year as a result of their wandering long distances from the Sanctuary. During December seventy-five white rhino were counted in the "Corridor", where grazing was more suitable than inside the Reserve. There can be little doubt that the "Corridor" is part of their natural habitat. They have been increasing satisfactorily and nineteen calves were seen during December.

Visitors to the Hluhluwe Reserve.—Seven hundred and two visitors are recorded as compared with three hundred odd in 1934. About half of this number stayed at the Rest Huts, the remainder being tourists from St. Lucia Lake and local people who came just for the day. Their Excellencies and staff paid a visit to the Reserve in June last and were accommodated at the Rest Huts. They also visited Mkuzi Reserve and False Bay.

The rhino—white and black—continue to be the chief sources of attraction to visitors. As the grass and vegetation have been less luxuriant than is usual this year owing to the drought, visitors have been able to see rhino and other game in fair numbers without getting out of their cars. No accidents have occurred and all have shown due regard to the regulations framed for their safety and enjoyment.

In order to entice animals to places where visitors may see them easier, several pans near the roads have been cleaned out and enlarged. After heavy rains it is hoped that these pans will hold water for the greater part of the year.

Roads.—About 12 miles of new track have been made available for motor traffic, thus opening up new parts of the Reserve for visitors.

Tsetse Fly.—One cannot but be impressed with the present apparent scarcity of fly in the Reserve. In places where it has been usual to encounter large numbers we have seen very few in the latter part of the year.

False Bay Area.—Owing largely to the fact that very little fresh water has flowed into the Bay this year, its waters became more saline than usual. Game animals, especially nyala, are in the habit of drinking the water in False Bay, and though in normal times no great harm comes to them by so doing, it has been noted that numbers of animals have died this year due in a large measure to their drinking this salt water. The grazing in this section was very bad during the last few months of the year.

Poaching has not been serious this year, fourteen cases—all natives.

Locusts.—All the Reserves have had periodical visitations by large swarms of locusts. In April last an unavoidable spraying from the air took place in the Mkusi Reserve, as a result of which approximately a hundred animals were poisoned. No other deaths from such a cause have come to my notice during the year as far as the game is concerned.

RAINFALL RETURN, 1935

January . . .	3.52	July . . .	0.56
February . . .	2.32	August . . .	0.30
March . . .	2.42	September . . .	0.30
April . . .	0.78	October . . .	1.00
May . . .	2.04	November . . .	1.38
June . . .	0.84	December . . .	1.96
Total . . .	17.42		