

Oryx

The International Journal of Conservation

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The website of the journal is (from 2008):

<http://www.oryxthejournal.org/>

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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.

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within the confines of the Forest, and, indeed, the New Forest is well-known to botanists as the home of some of England's rarest plants.

Here I must close my brief survey on the New Forest and its wild life. I have endeavoured, inadequately I know, to give some idea of its unique character; but if my poor effort should help to arouse interest and action for the preservation of this lovely and historic region—and action is urgent if the Forest is to be saved—then my labour will not have been in vain.

CONSERVATION NOTES.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Report of the National Parks Board of Trustees for the year 1936.

This Report is an encouraging document. It deals concisely with problems of administration, but the most interesting part of the Report consists of extracts from the Report of the Warden, constituting a review of the fauna of the Kruger National Park. We learn that there are now 250 *Elephants* spending most of their time in the Park, as against 25 in 1912, and none in 1902.

There is a long report upon the number of *Black Rhinoceros* observed from time to time. The increase, if any, of this species has been mysteriously slow but there is evidence that it is present in the Park, and there is reason to believe that there may have been an increase which has been concealed by the habit of these animals, due, as is suggested, to a long period of intense persecution in the past, of hiding in almost impenetrable bush where visibility does not extend more than about ten yards in any direction. The Warden is inclined to think that they wander from time to time over the Lebombo and may thus get killed in Portuguese East Africa, but he points out that it must be borne in mind

that the dense part of the Sabi Bush, to which they resort, covers an area of some 250 square miles, and it may be that greater numbers are there than has been suspected.

There are about as many *Hippo* as the available river pools can contain. There has been a great increase in the number of *Giraffe*. In 1902 it was estimated that there were 15 south of the Sabi. In 1912 the number in the whole of the Park was estimated at 200 and it is now reported that they wander all over the country and are frequently observed north of the Letaba where, in 1903, they were practically non-existent.

Buffalo had a bad set-back in the drought of 1935, but are now again abundant.

Zebra, *Antelope*, and *Wild Pig* also suffered severely in the 1935-6 breeding season, but the last breeding season was extremely good and it is reported that "almost every female at the end of December had a young calf at foot". The Warden reports, however, that there is inadequate space for migration, especially in a bad season. In this connection he emphasizes the importance of natural enemies in every wild life sanctuary in order that all but young and healthy specimens may be killed off.

An increase is reported also of *Nyala* which has appeared in sections where it had not hitherto been noticed.

Of the carnivora, he reports that *Lions* seem to have reached their peak, having attained the limit of easily acquired food, and he doubts whether the net increase is on the scale it was during the first few years after the Park was opened.

Leopards and *Chitas* appear to be gaining greater confidence and were seen and photographed by visitors more frequently than in past years. *Wild Dogs* remain comparatively scarce.

Among birds, *Ostriches* seemed, at the time of the Report, to be having a good breeding season and a number of chicks had been noticed.

Owing to heavy rainfall and an increased amount of water during the spring, waterfowl were numerous. All ground nesting birds had had a good breeding season. "Considerable numbers of migratory white Storks were seen towards

the end of the year, having doubtless followed the flying locust swarms from Portuguese East Africa. One flock of Marabous, a very rare Stork in the Park, was also noticed."

The Warden reports an increasing number of animals killed by passing trains. This he attributes not only to the increasing number of animals, but to their greater confidence in the presence of motor cars and other vehicles.

Various improvements have been made in accommodation for visitors, of whom 30,000 passed through the Park during the 1936 season. Better provision has been made, by boreholes and other means, for keeping up a regular supply of water.

Growing interest in the study of wild life is evident by the increasing demand for the opening of the National Parks in Cape Province, particularly the Addo Elephant National Park and the Bredasdorp Bontebok National Park. The Board of Trustees favours the opening of these Parks when possible, particularly as they would be available to visitors to South Africa at times of the year when the danger of contracting malaria in the Kruger National Park is most serious.

At the end of the Report the Board express the confident hope that negotiations then in progress would lead to the acquisition of a sanctuary for Mountain Zebra which would ensure their safety for the future—a hope that has since been justified.

The growth of interest in the Kruger National Park revealed by this Report, and the steadily increasing stream of visitors should encourage other countries to follow suit, if only because of the evidence it affords that the establishment of such Parks is good business for the countries in which they are established.

Report of the Zululand Game Reserve and Parks Committee.

The main features of this interesting Report are produced on pages 50 to 60.