

Oryx

The International Journal of Conservation

The original paper was published in the *Journal of the Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of the Empire* (1903-1925 and 1926-1950) or in *Oryx*, the journal of Fauna and Flora International (from 1951).

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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Doubtless as the Mallee country is opened up and settled, more of these birds will tend to gravitate into the shelter and protection afforded them. A recent addition to the area of the Park has, it is believed, included a fair amount of country favoured by the Lowan or Mallee Hen. With the spread of settlement this bird is doomed to extinction over large areas of country where it was once abundant.

The above are the principal forms of bird life afforded shelter and protection in the sanctuary, but in addition to those mentioned there is a large number of small and hardly noticed birds, which thrive in the locality. The late Dr. J. A. Leach, I think, identified more than ninety distinct species of birds on a visit some few years ago.

A fair number of Kangaroos also live in the Park, and probably a closer examination would show that opossums and some of the smaller fauna, such as Bandicoots, would also be found there.

MALAYA.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE GAME DEPARTMENT, FEDERATED MALAY STATES, FOR THE YEAR 1938.

In his Report for the year 1938, the Chief Game Warden, Mr. E. O. Shebbeare, apologizes for the brevity, and, as he suggests, dullness of his record by referring to the fact that he was appointed to his post only three months before the end of the year under report. Nevertheless, the following extracts from the Report are of interest :—

The Krau Game Reserve.—“ This Reserve is approximately 130,000 acres (203 sq. miles) in extent, and consists of practically the whole of the catchment area of the Krau River, a tributary of the Sungei Pahang. This Reserve has several small herds of Elephants and Seladang, as well as Rusa (*Cervus unicolor*) and Kijang (*Cervulus muntjac*),

Tapir, Bear, Tiger, Pig, and numerous smaller mammals. No trace of Rhinoceros has been observed for some years. The bird fauna are numerous, and the Post at Kuala Lumpur makes a very good bird watching station. The Elephants and Seladang in the Reserve can hardly be called permanent residents, as they prefer to move outside at will. Improvements in attractions to these animals within the confines of the Reserve are not only of benefit to these animals themselves, but assist in reducing depredations outside the Reserve.

“There are large herds of tame Buffalo in this Reserve said to be the descendants of refugees from the 1926 floods and to belong to the Sakai of Batin Sida’s tribe who are allowed certain privileges in the Reserve. The ownership of these animals is difficult to establish and will have to be investigated to prevent unauthorized grazing within the area.

“Towards the close of the year an artificial salt lick was made in *Padang Jelai*. Seladang have since made good use of this lick. Anything done to attract Seladang to stay in this Reserve can only prove useful in keeping them away from cultivated areas lying outside the Reserve.”

King George V National Park.—“Enactments to constitute the King George V National Park had not been passed before the close of the year, except in Kelantan where an enactment has been in force since July, 1938. As far as can be estimated now the total area of the Park will be about 1,700 sq. miles. During the year under report no patrolling of any part of the northern and eastern boundaries was possible and no posts had been established on them.

“The construction of Park Headquarters at Kuala Tahan was completed during the year.

“There is a resident superintendent at Kuala Tahan and thirteen Park Rangers employed at nine Rangers’ posts which have been established, from Merapoh on the western boundary as far as the Sungei Spia in the south. These posts are now almost all connected both by river and rentis, and paths have been cut from them towards the body of the Park, in most cases leading to and past salt licks and *padangs*. These paths are properly maintained and are used, without

exception, by all game in their vicinity. Such game has consequently been observed by the Superintendent and his staff from time to time, both in the salt licks and *padangs*, and in some instances on the paths themselves. This, together with careful observation of fresh tracks at all times, has resulted in the Department being able to get some idea of what game there is in the small proportion of the Park already opened up, and from this a very rough estimate of what the whole area contains can, at any rate, be guessed at. It would be out of the question, from such rough guessing, to make a definite statement as regards the number and nature of fauna in the Park, but from what has already been observed, one can be optimistic and confident in the future of this Park as regards wild life."

(In a letter accompanying a copy of this report we are informed by the Colonial Office that legislation establishing the Park has been enacted in Pahang and Trenggenu.)

Rhinoceros on Maxwell Hill.—"On the 1st of December, 1938, the caretaker of the 'Cottage', the most distant of the houses on Maxwell Hill, reported damage by Elephants to buildings. The superintendent of this hill-station, who was just leaving for Penang, had no time to investigate the report in person so passed the news on to the Deputy Game Warden, Perak, at Batu Gajah. The writer, who happened to be at Batu Gajah when the telephone message was received, decided to visit the spot and reached the 'Cottage' the following evening with an hour's daylight to spare. He was relieved and somewhat amused to see from the tracks that the 'Elephants' were apparently a Rhinoceros and her nearly full-grown calf, and that the 'building' was the tin shelter over one of the lovers' seats that are provided at intervals along the path. Fresh tracks showed the use which the animals had made of the numerous garden paths and hill-side stairways all round the cottage and how they had brushed between the hedge of the croquet-lawn and the servants' quarters. The caretaker, a Madrassi, and unaccustomed to Rhinoceros, had been genuinely alarmed, particularly as the animals in passing his bedroom at night

sometimes snuffled at the door. Once he had been assured of their harmlessness, however, he became eager to persuade them to stop as an attraction to visitors, asking what sort of food would be most acceptable to them. Unfortunately, though it was a moonlight night and both Rhinoceros passed within a few yards of us, it was on the lower path and they did not wake us. If they can be persuaded to pay an occasional visit to the caretaker's artificial salt-lick which he made in the vegetable garden close to the scene of the calf's depredations on the lovers' seat, they will become an object of interest that few hill-stations can boast."

NATAL.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1938, OF THE GAME CONSERVATOR FOR ZULULAND.

The report for the year 1938 of the Game Conservator of Zululand is encouraging. It is a report of steady progress due to the enlightened policy of the Provincial Administration. The Conservator refers with gratitude to the work of the Committee appointed to formulate a policy for the development of the Hluhluwe Game Reserve area, the St. Lucia area, and the Bird Sanctuaries, of whose report we published an extended résumé in Part XXXII of the *Journal* (October, 1937).

Hluhluwe Game Reserve.—Under the heading "Game Population" the Conservator reports, as a result of a careful count, eighteen adult and four young calves of the *White Rhinoceros* within the area and fourteen adults and three calves in "the Corridor" leading to the Umfolosi Reserve. *Black Rhinoceros* continue to increase and the population in the Reserve is put approximately at 130. There are approximately 300 each of *Nyala* and *Impala*, fifty-five of the former and 145 of the latter having been successfully transferred from the Mkuzi Reserve. The increase of the number of very young game animals, especially *Impala*, has been noticeable since a campaign of destruction of *Hyaenas* and *Baboons*, both regarded as vermin, was undertaken.