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COVERS:

Front: Clouded leopard

Neofelis nebulosa nebulosa

Inside front: Double-wattled cassowary
Casuarius casuarius

Inside back: *Combretum coccineum*

Back: Dusky sunbird *Nectarinia fusca*

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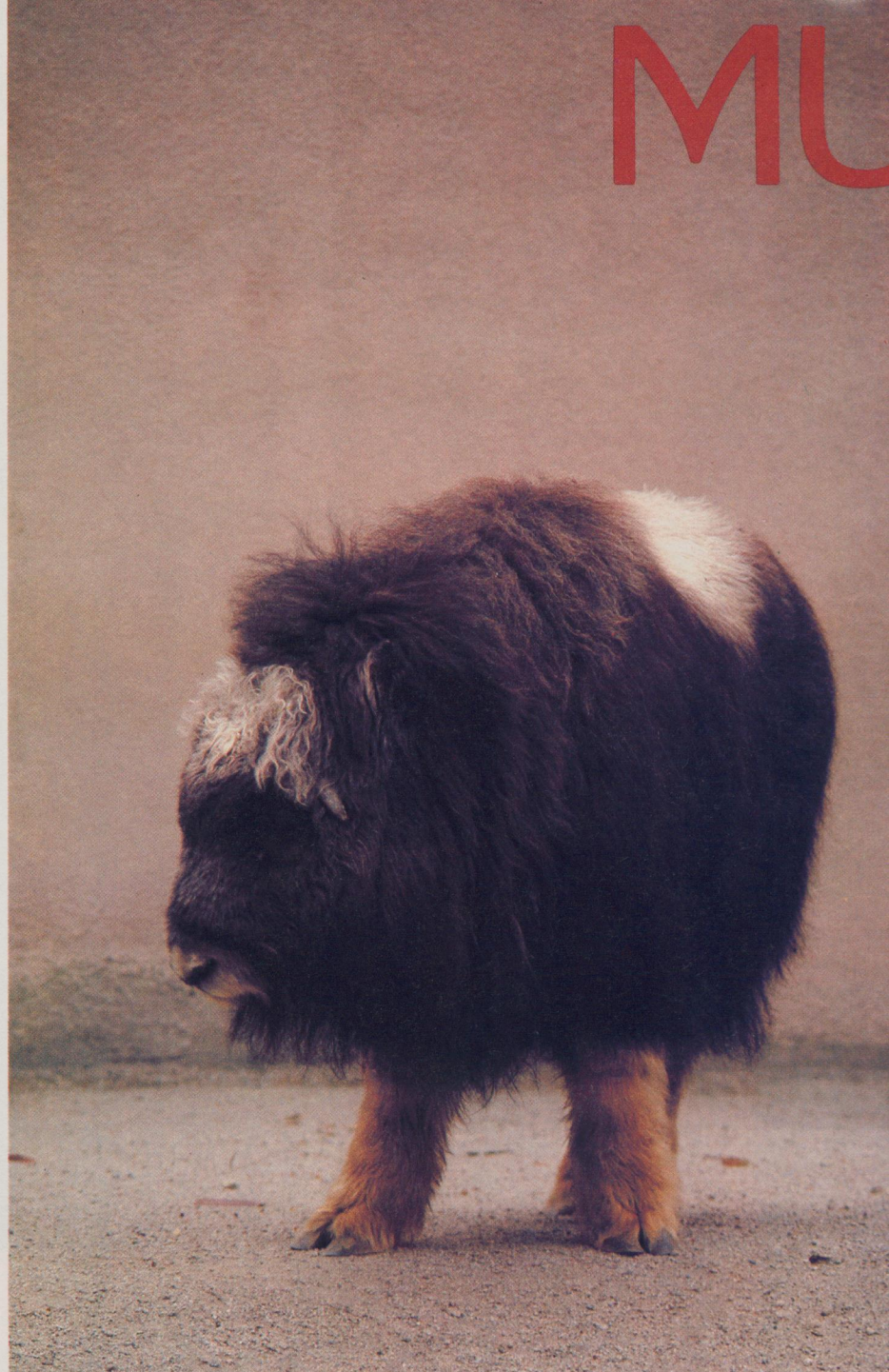
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Mark S. Rich



'Jebel' is Arabic for 'hill', and for southbound travelers on a Nile River stern-wheeler, Jebel Lado is the first visible mound of earth for several hundred miles.

Lado Enclave and its



Jebel Lado as it looked in 1948.

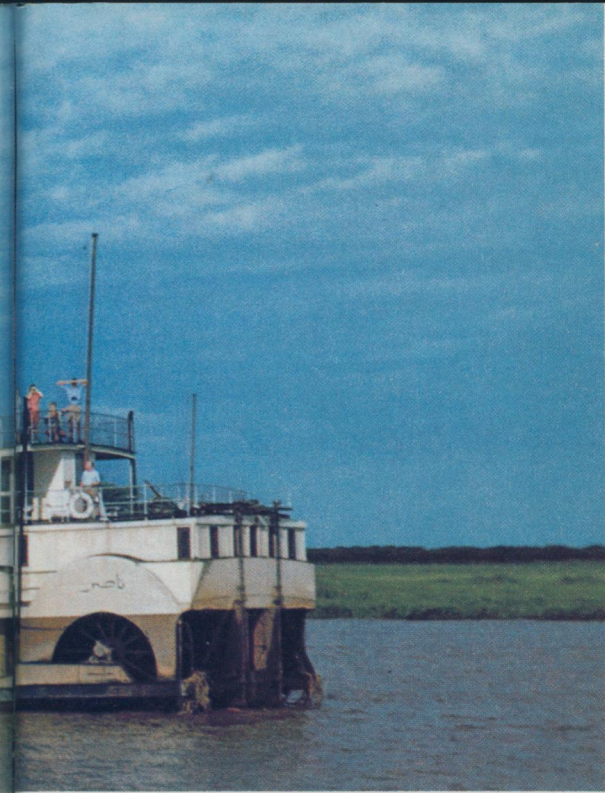
Kenhelm W. Stott

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RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

LADO ENCLAVE became a reality in 1894. In retrospect, it represents one of the more bizarre incidents in the mad scramble for African terrain by European powers during the 19th century. Encompassing some 15,000 square miles, the area was loaned by the British to Leopold II of Belgium to keep it from the French. At the time, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Portugal, Spain and Italy claimed vast blocks of Africa.

The Enclave consisted of a region west of the White Nile from Terakeka in the Sudan, south to the northern end of Lake Albert. Leopold II had already claimed the western shores of the lake; thus, the Enclave was adjacent to land already acquired by Belgium. The Lado treaty specified that its land would remain under Belgian rule until six months after the death of Leopold II. It would then be returned to Uganda and to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Leopold II died in 1909, and in 1910 the Enclave expired.

The village of Lado was, and probably still is, a pleasant spot a few miles north of Juba, Sudan. In 1874, General "Chinese" Gordon, then provincial commissioner, moved his capital from Gondokoro,



Kenhelm W. Stott



Dale Rice

Wildlife

across the river to Lado. Gondokoro, for all practical purposes, has since ceased to exist. It has vanished from most maps and survives only as the merest patch of rubble.

Both Gondokoro and Lado Enclave survive, however, as a matter of zoological record, sometimes causing perplexity as neither place is to be found on maps. Type specimens of many races or species of animals and plants have as their type locality, "Gondokoro," "Lado," or "Lado Enclave." The 1909 Smithsonian Expedition headed by Theodore Roosevelt produced many new forms that were scientifically described by Edmund Heller, mammalogist for the expedition. A number of the mammals collected are labeled "Lado Enclave" and were captured in the Rhino Camp region of West Nile Province, Uganda, some 200 miles south of Lado village. Edmund Heller saw two Sudanese cheetahs near Gondokoro and published this as the southernmost point in the range of that race. I have since seen three specimens of the distinctive Sudanese cheetah at the south end of Lake Turkana, formerly Lake Rudolf, in Kenya. This 1972 sighting occurred considerably farther east than Heller's specimens.

The northern white rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum cottoni* was first described by Lydekker in 1908 with "Lado Enclave" given as the type locality. In this case, the original or type specimen had come from the



Northern white rhino
*Ceratotherium
simum cottoni*

Shoebill
Balaeniceps rex

Karl W. Kenyon

“The intervening swamp consists mainly of enormous floating masses of papyrus, some of it high enough to reach the third deck of the river steamer.”

Sudan. All of the white rhino series collected by Theodore and Kermit Roosevelt, however, came from the Rhino Camp region in Uganda.

The photograph on page nine by biologist Dale Rice is one of few color stills I have seen of the form in West Nile Province and will shortly, and regrettably, hold only historical interest. The northern race verges on extinction. In 1974, the RED DATA BOOK of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature indicated that the total number in Sudan, Zaire and Uganda was “possibly less than 250.” Recent political events in southern Sudan and Uganda have almost certainly had a disastrous effect on that small number of geographically limited rhinos. The annihilation of the northern white rhino seems inevitable. Even specimens that had been translocated across the river from West Nile Province to what was Murchison Falls National Park have been severely poached.*

The eastern giant eland *Taurotragus derbianus gigas* was described by Heuglin in 1863, from specimens collected in the southern Sudan, west of the Nile. Until recent years, giant eland sporadically crossed the border into northwestern Uganda, sometimes in herds containing as many as 80 animals. I have neither heard nor read of such sightings in Uganda during the past 15 years.

Thirty-one years ago, that stretch of land along the west bank of the White Nile that had been the Lado Enclave was attractive country and abounded with wildlife — sitatunga, West Uganda kob, bushbuck, lelwel hartebeest, bohor reedbuck, defassa waterbuck, lions, leopards and cheetahs. In the north where the Sudd, the world’s largest swamp, ended near Terakeka, distinctive forms of elephant and buffalo could be seen, as well as Nile lechwes, white-eared kob,

and on higher ground, tiangs, the Sudani form of topi.

Birdlife, too, was plentiful, especially along the papyrus-choked banks of the Nile, where thousands of ducks and geese, hammerkops, herons, egrets, and the Sudanese crowned crane *Balearica pavonina ceceliae* congregated. But first place on any bird list for the area automatically goes to the grotesque shoebill or whale-head *Balaeniceps rex*. The photograph shown on page nine is one of the finest I have seen of a wild shoebill. It was taken in northern Uganda in 1963, by Zoo conservation medalist Karl W. Kenyon, when he and Dale Rice were en route to the white rhino reserves of West Nile Province.

From a topographical standpoint, Jebel Lado represents an outstanding feature of southern Sudan’s landscape. “Jebel” is Arabic for “hill,” and for south-bound travelers on a Nile River stern-wheeler, Jebel Lado is the first visible mound for several hundred miles. To the north, the Dolieb Hills on the other end of the Sudd are the last elevations passed on the White Nile. The intervening swamp consists mainly of enormous floating masses of papyrus, some of it high enough to reach the third deck of the river steamer.

When the river is in flood, the currents are so strong that the great blades of the stern wheel, running at full speed, allow the craft to make little headway. On the day we approached Lado, the memory that remains the strongest is that of a man who appeared on the horizon behind us in the early morning, sauntered past us at noon and disappeared over the southern horizon by nightfall. ■

***Editor’s note:** *The World Wildlife Fund recently announced that Uganda’s acting director of national parks, P. Tamukedde, has asked for help in rescuing the wildlife from this area. Tamukedde reported that Idi Amin’s retreating troops slaughtered animals and drove the game-keeping staff from Kabalega Falls National Park (formerly Murchison Falls). “Kabalega Falls, home of one of the only herds of rare white rhinos, is now completely empty of staff, leaving no one to protect species like the rhino, crocodile and elephant, and poachers are reported to be taking advantage of the situation,” he said. A story from United Press International said that the World Wildlife Fund is collaborating with the IUCN and other groups to save Kabalega Falls.*

Floating papyrus on the Nile.



Kenhelm W. Stott