

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.

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

We saw a group of seven goats on the lower slopes of the volcano—clear evidence that goats are now dispersing across the Perry Isthmus (or, much less likely, have come from elsewhere). Given their high reproductive rate and foraging habits, it is probable that they would drastically alter the vegetation and would remove forage and cover needed by the tortoises. The likely result would be major declines in the giant tortoise population on Alcedo.

My purpose in writing is to solicit advice regarding what might be done to control this problem. The Galápagos National Park is owned by Ecuador and managed on a rather small budget. Manpower, money and equipment will be serious constraints in attempts to control the goat population.

The following ideas have either occurred to me or have been pointed out to me by others. Comments on these, as well as other suggestions, will be appreciated.

1. Because the terrain is so rugged it appears unlikely that ground hunting could extirpate the goat population, but the possibility of aerial hunting from a helicopter, such as is done for deer and other species in New Zealand, would appear to be a possibility. However, there are currently no helicopters stationed in the Galápagos and neither money nor expertise appear to be available. Would New Zealand, as part of its international conservation efforts, consider sending a helicopter and expert team of shooters to eliminate the goats that have invaded the Alcedo region?

2. Another approach might be the introduction of disease-carrying sterilized male goats into the Alcedo region. While these animals themselves might have a small immediate impact, if they could transmit a fatal disease to other goats then this might, over a period of a few years, result in eradication of the goat population.

3. Perhaps even without the introduction of sterile males a disease could be introduced into the current goat population that would result in their demise.

4. Efforts to eradicate those goats that have already dispersed to Alcedo would also clearly have to be coupled with attempts to control

future dispersal into the area, perhaps by barrier fencing or changes in management practices in the southern portion of Isabela that would bring the source of the dispersing individuals under control or would physically block their dispersal.

Any steps taken would have to be part of an integrated management plan in which the potential impacts of any actions on all resident indigenous animals are taken into account. Agricultural activities in the southern portion of Isabela will also have to be considered. However, the problem seems to be of such importance and of such urgency that suggestions from and action by the international scientific community are needed. I shall appreciate hearing from anyone regarding suggested solutions.

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Rhinoceros poaching in Zimbabwe

I spent from November 1986 to November 1989 working in Zimbabwe for the department of Veterinary Services. I kept a very close eye on your magazine's details about the rhino poaching and unfortunately believe your figures of poached rhino to be way below the actual number of carcasses found. My last two weeks in that country were spent in Hwange National Park: during that period alone 10 black rhino were killed in the park by two different groups of Zambian poachers, and one Zimbabwe scout was shot (not fatally) by one of the Zambian poachers. Every time I stayed at Mana Pools National Park, the Zimbabwe anti-poaching units were out looking for Zambian poachers after butchered, dehorned carcasses of black rhino had been found.

If any of your authors are compiling information on Zimbabwe rhino poaching, I would be willing to supply names and addresses of people in authority in Zimbabwe who can provide details about numbers shot.

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