

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.

Last year Sudanese rebels wanting money for arms invaded the Garamba National Park, in Congo Kinshasa, and slaughtered rhinoceros (the northern white, or square-lipped) almost to the point of extinction. This

**Disaster for
Congo's White
Rhinos**

was reported by Dr Jacques Verschuren, the eminent Belgian scientist and conservationist who has been appointed Director of National Parks in the Congo, at the SSC meeting in New Delhi in November. From over 1200 in 1963 numbers had dropped to a *maximum* of 50. Elephants, too, had been heavily depleted—from about 10,000 to some 5,000 and giraffes he estimated were down to about 300. Efforts are now being made to guard the survivors. Until recently the northern square-lipped rhino occurred in the southern Sudan, north-eastern Congo and the west Nile province of Uganda; in the last there are believed now to be 20–25 animals, all fully protected but vulnerable to poachers. It was from this population that eleven animals were taken, in two operations, to the greater safety of the Murchison Falls National Park in 1961 and 1964. The FPS has suggested that a third Operation Rhino should be mounted to bring more of these animals to Murchison.

Outside the national parks crocodiles have virtually disappeared in Uganda: this is the finding of an aerial survey by I. S. C. Parker and R. M. Watson made for the Fisheries Department and National Parks

**Crocodiles
Going in
Uganda**

Trustees. Their survey covered all the major waters of central and western Uganda; outside the Murchison Falls park fewer than 100 crocodiles were seen; inside they counted 1064 below the Falls and 433 above. The authors believe that hunting for skins is only partly responsible for the decline in crocodiles; the real cause is man's relentless occupation of crocodile habitats. All the sheltered beaches and bays preferred by crocodiles are also preferred by man. Here the fishing villages are built and fishing nets are set close inshore, often parallel to the shore for hundreds of metres. On Lake Albert alone there are over four million metres of licensed fishing nets quite apart from the illegal fishing which is common; judging by the number of illegal canoes the authors estimate that 5½ million metres is a more realistic figure. The fact that there are no complaints from the fishermen about crocodiles damaging nets confirms the crocodiles' absence. The results of the survey were not entirely unexpected, for since 1965 the crocodile trade has been dwindling, and whereas the skins used to come from mature animals (over seven feet), by 1965 they were from animals averaging three-and-a-half feet; in 1968 this had shrunk to two-and-a-half. What should be done? Reintroducing crocodiles into areas outside the reserves, the authors say, would be a waste of time and money. Crocodiles prey on humans, interfere with fishermen and compete with man for the best habitats; they will never be tolerated. But the largest single crocodile population in Uganda—on the Nile in the Murchison Falls park, between the falls and Lake Albert—is still small, and they recommend that efforts should be con-