

Oryx

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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.

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as far as Silsagar. In this long strip of country he estimates that not more than 220 specimens survive to-day.

It is therefore evident that all the species of Indian Rhinoceros are approaching vanishing point and the recent Act passed by the Bengal Legislature and which affords special protection to this creature comes none too soon.

C. W. H.

UGANDA PROTECTORATE.

GAME DEPARTMENT REPORT, 1931.

Extracts from.

Expenditure and Revenue.

1. Figures for 1931 are as follows :—

	£	shs.	cts.
Expenditure	5,558	3	53
Revenue	18,074	18	21
Balance of revenue over expenditure	£12,516	14	68

The revenue was derived as follows :—

	£	shs.	cts.
(a) Sale of ivory, rhinoceros horns, and hippopotamus teeth	15,266	12	58
(b) Sale of buffalo hides and other trophies		2	19 13
(c) Game licences	2,805	6	50

2. There is a decrease in the total of practically all licences taken out during the year, the low price of ivory being the main reason where elephant licences are concerned, but bird licences have sold almost as readily as ever in spite of the depressing times.

Illegal Killing of Game and Breaches of Game Laws.

6. Convictions remain about the same in number as during 1930. Only one serious case came to light, that of a European sending out armed natives to kill his elephants. The bag was big, but the fine was bigger.

Game Ordinance, 1926.

7. Legislation dealing with methods of fishing and with the using of aeroplanes and motor cars for hunting was enacted during the year.

Game Reserves.

8. An important addition was made to the Lake George Game Reserve, as a result of which any one driving along the first class motor road now nearing completion at the foot of Ruwenzori Mountains, will be able to feast their eyes on enormous herds of buffalo. Elephants are plentiful also, and several varieties of antelope, while by walking along the banks of the Kazinga Channel hippopotamuses can be viewed at close quarters.

Elephant Control.

12. Although one ranger has had to be in charge of the Department for the whole year, the presence of all three of them in the country during 1931 has had its effect on the number of elephants killed, which considerably exceeds that for any similar period.

13. The year has not produced any outstanding development in connection with elephant control and it is not proposed to deal in detail with the year's operations in every area.

14. In Bunyoro the damage to cultivation remained negligible, and the number of elephants killed was about the same as usual. A rather marked irregularity in the movements of various herds was attributed to the presence of locusts over a lot of country.

15. *West Nile and West Madi.*—Although the numbers killed more than doubled this year, there remains a great deal to do, as this area is heavily overstocked.

16. *Lango.*—The elephants can no longer be considered a menace to cultivation and seldom appear, and operations against them have been discontinued for the present.

17. *Mengo.*—As the King's African Rifles Officers have been unable to devote adequate time to these elephants, other steps have had to be taken, resulting in a considerably increased killing.

18. *Masaka.*—This area has always yielded disproportionate ratios of males to females killed, but has

surpassed itself this year with 100 per cent males, 38 in all. This result is not due to any shortage of female stock, as Mr. Temple Perkins (a particularly accurate observer and possessor of much experience, who has recently taken over the administration of the district) wrote last November that accelerated killing of his elephants would be required before long, owing to their being so astonishingly prolific. It is true that the country is very open and prominent ivory is magnetic, but if our policy had been to kill males only, which it certainly has not been, it would still be remarkable that no cows had been killed, even if only in self-defence.

19. *Mubende*.—Results here have been particularly good, and a pleasant tribute to the native guards is paid by the District Commissioner, Major Lowth, M.C.: "The work of these guards has been most effective and complaints of marauding elephants have been adequately dealt with. There can be no doubt that the increase in the population of numerous Mirukas where marauding elephant previously roamed at will is due to the constant and untiring efforts of these guards and reflects the utmost credit on their training."

20. These guards have had but little supervision during the last two years, and afford ample evidence that a well-trained native guard, of the right stamp, will not rapidly deteriorate in his work merely because close supervision is withdrawn. Both numbers of elephants killed and weight of ivory are slightly higher, and a particularly good feature is that "found ivory" does not show any increase, as this means that no undue "hill-topping", otherwise long range shooting, has been indulged in.

21. *Toro*.—The Game Ranger, Mr. Banks, was convinced last year that his herds were increasing and that killing had to be accelerated. He was accordingly told to encourage his native staff to attack the elephants, in certain areas, upon every possible occasion. The results are shown very clearly by the increase from 156 elephants killed, giving 4,358 lb. of ivory, during 1930, to 307 elephants killed, giving 7,873 lb. ivory, during 1931.

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22. Ankole had a visit of immigrant marauders and several big bulls were killed.

30. The return of the elephants killed by Game Staff is as follows :—

TOTAL ELEPHANTS KILLED UGANDA PROTECTORATE, 1931.

Killed by Game Staff	1,211
Elephants killed by Licence Holders	105
Found Ivory. In uncontrolled areas. 16 tusks	8
In controlled areas, i.e. from elephants mortally wounded in control operations. 238 tusks	122
Total elephants killed, 1931	1,446

The return shows 319 more elephants killed and 9,242 lb. more ivory obtained than in the previous year, and exceeds by 178 elephants and nearly 8,000 lb. of ivory, the best previous results for any corresponding period. The weight per tusk is about 14½ lb. average, which is as good as ever and shows that control operations have certainly not caused any deterioration in the Uganda elephants.

33. Our inability to kill approximately equal numbers of bulls and cows has continued, unfortunately. In fact we have lost ground in this direction. Opinions differ as to the respective numbers in the herds. Our most experienced Ranger, Mr. Banks, who is in charge of control in Toro, is quite emphatic that in his herds bulls preponderate by at least three to two. Toro was the Mecca of many good hunters during the years when Government sought to deal with the elephant problem by allowing planters 50 per cent value of the ivory they shot, with no restriction on size or sex and very little in numbers. Even after years of that pernicious system the bulls still appear to outnumber the cows by at least 50 per cent. Nowadays the elephants are shy and at the first alarm run to dense cover, which is available everywhere, as the country has innumerable marshes and swampy valleys, all covered with prodigiously tall grass. As a rule, when ranger or guard follows a herd from the vicinity of cultivation, he overtakes the bulls first as their tendency is to follow behind the main body when travelling. It is not uncommon for these bulls to wait in

dense cover and charge back on anyone disturbing them, which makes their killing a matter of urgency, and as their numbers are excessive it is a useful reduction. Bulls are almost invariably the real marauders and it is by their drastic shooting that damage has been so reduced.

34. Probably the Uganda elephants are more favourably situated to-day than they ever were, possessing as they do large areas of magnificent elephant land wherein to roam entirely unmolested. The rate of breeding in these closed areas will, in the not far distant future, create a menace to the surrounding country, and will call for action if the history of the Addo bush herd is not to be repeated. It is, unfortunately, a well-established fact that wild elephants running adjacent to cultivation, persist in garden raiding. In the open plains, years ago, before the days of Game Laws, extermination of the elephant was easy. Here, with high grass, extensive forests, jungles, and swamps, everything favours the animals, apart altogether from the protection afforded by law.

Our elephant control policy has led to the shooting off of great numbers of known marauders, but of course this type is always growing up, and although actual damage has been greatly reduced, these monsters continue to cause great alarm as they go lumbering through the patches of grass or forest between the gardens of the peasantry. A native going through the bush to call on a friend is always apt to meet with an elephant, while women and children, taking their jars to fill at the common reservoir, break many an earthenware vessel as they flee in alarm from a gigantic creature which has reached the water first.

67. *Lion Killing Crocodile.*—At the end of August, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a lion passed close to the Marine Superintendent's house at Butiaba, crossing the road to the lagoon on the north side, where it killed a crocodile 11 ft. 7 in. in length. It had a good feed, consuming the neck, shoulders, and flanks, though the legs were not touched. The skull was badly smashed, and the stomach looked as if it had been torn open in the first instance true to the lion's

custom of burying the intestines of the creatures it kills. This lion returned to the Waki area. Although crocodile-killing by lions is by no means unknown—it has been recorded as quite a normal occurrence on the western shores of Lake Rudolf—this appears to be the first occasion on which it has been brought to notice in Uganda.

68. *Crocodiles*.—A reliable observer has contributed further interesting comments on the feeding habits of crocodiles below the Murchison Falls. “The crocodiles spend the day-time asleep on the banks of the Victoria Nile. I have watched these creatures closely and am now convinced that they start feeding after sunset, from about 6.45 till 8.30 p.m., and then finish. Using a spot-lamp, I watched dozens of crocodiles eating fish. They rise right up out of the water, the great big jaws crushing a fish. It takes about one minute for the crocodile to swallow a fish. The average weight of the fish taken is about 15 pounds. It is a wonderful sight to see the red glowing eyes of the crocodile, and the red eyes of the fish sticking out between the former’s jaws. After 8.30 p.m. everything was quiet and crocodiles were neither seen nor heard. These crocodiles appear to have some sort of formation while feeding which can be detected at night with the aid of the spot-light. Suppose each crocodile eats 50 pounds of fish a night, we have thousands of these destroyers in this locality and I imagine they account for at least five tons of fish daily.”

69. *Animal Communities*.—Elephant, crocodile, and hippopotamus are quite at home together. Elephant have been observed watering in a pool with crocodiles lying on the bank asleep, and hippopotamus within 10 yards, basking in the sun—all apparently very contented with life.

Notes of General Interest.

72. *Economic Fisheries*.—(a) The Protectorate Government decided to adopt the suggestions of Dr. Worthington to utilize Lake Nabugabo as an experimental station in which to test the practicability of introducing the Nile Perch into the waters of Victoria Nyanza, and the necessary

operations are in train. No extension into Victoria Nyanza is contemplated until and unless it is satisfactorily established that the Nile Perch introduced into Nabugabo strike a natural balance with the fish already there.

(b) The promising little fishing industry at Ndaiga, at the southern end of Lake Albert, has been materially assisted by the provision of up-to-date nets.

74. *Trout*.—Plans for the introduction of trout into the suitable streams had to remain in abeyance during the year, but are to be carried out early in 1932.

NIGERIA.

PRESERVATION OF WILD LIFE.

REPORT BY COLONEL A. H. HAYWOOD, APRIL, 1932.

PREFACE.

As is hereafter described, I carried out an extensive tour in West Africa in the winter of 1931-2 at the request of the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire, being selected for the mission upon the recommendation of Sir Donald Cameron.

My personal acquaintance with Nigeria extends over twenty-five years, while I have travelled widely in the other three colonies during the past fifteen years. I have both studied and hunted game in all four colonies.

My varied service with the West African Frontier Force covering the above period has afforded me an opportunity of acquiring a good insight into the problems of the administration of West Africa generally.

Returning to West Africa after an absence of eight years without any official occupation, I venture to claim that I was able to arrive at an unbiassed view of the situation I had been asked to investigate; furthermore, the study of the subject was undertaken *con amore* for I have long been greatly interested in wild life.

Before leaving England I renewed acquaintance with the West African section of the Colonial Office, and desire to express my gratitude to the officials there who kindly allowed