

country and can therefore continue to exist in small numbers in the vast areas still available to it in the centre of Australia. The report urges that goats should be removed from Bernier as soon as possible in order to avoid damage to the habitat ; that no more alien species should be liberated on either island ; and that fire outbreaks should be prevented wherever possible.

The Charles Darwin Research Station, on the Galapagos Islands, was officially dedicated on 21st January, in the presence of four ambassadors, members of the Ecuadorean Government and armed services, officials, journalists, and sixty scientists assembled for the Galapagos International Scientific Project. The station was founded in 1960 and its present Director is the Oxford zoologist, David Snow. The scientific project began in January, when under the ægis of the University of California, sixty scientists attended at Berkeley, California, for five days of lectures, seminars, films, and exhibits. They then embarked in the *Golden Bear* for the Galapagos, where they spent five weeks engaged in independent research projects on the islands, returning at the beginning of March to Guayaquil, in Ecuador, for a two-day programme on the theme of " Scientific Conservation and Economic Development of the Galapagos Islands ". This last part of the project was designed particularly to focus public attention in Latin America on the islands and their great scientific importance, and Ecuadorean delegates urged the need for a national park in Galapagos. The results of the project will no doubt be seen in numerous scientific publications which should greatly enrich the literature on the islands. The new research ship, the brigantine *Beagle*, did not arrive in the Galapagos in time for the scientific project as had been hoped, owing to unforeseen delays. The ship was bought and fitted out for the Charles Darwin Research Station with the aid of substantial grants from the World Wildlife Fund and the Gulbenkian Foundation, and will be used to enable the scientists at the station to get about among the islands. She sailed from Plymouth with her volunteer crew of five, captained by Roger Jameson, a few days before Christmas, and was not expected to arrive before April. A picture of the *Beagle* appears on Plate 13, opposite page 188.

Oliver Milton's first investigations last year into the status of the orangutan and rhinoceros in Sumatra were made in the north of the island, and extracts from his report appear on p. 177. In May and June he made another survey, this time in east Sumatra, opposite Singapore (the smaller shaded area in the map on p. 178). This is where Sumatran rhinos were captured four years before by Ryhiner, Skafte, and others for the zoos at Basel, Bogor, and Copenhagen. He was able to make two journeys into the interior, one up the Siak river and the other 100 miles to the south, before his survey unfortunately had to be cut short as a result of an accident in which he all but cut off the tips of two fingers. Although accompanied by guides who had been with Skafte and who took him to the places where rhino could be expected, he found no trace of the animals at

all, and no evidence of poaching. What they did find was vast areas where the primary forest had been, and was still being, cut down, and many square miles of felled timber. His conclusion was that the rhinos had been driven by the loss of their habitat into remote areas well guarded by the extensive swamp forests in the low lying parts. On these two journeys he found no signs of orang-utans either. Tapir were common, and so were gibbon, sambhur, mouse deer, bear, pig, elephant, and tiger. At Rumbai, the headquarters of the Caltex Pacific Oil Company, whose officers were a great help to Mr. Milton, the tigers were becoming quite a pest. "Hardly a day passed without someone seeing one in the vicinity," he writes. "They entered people's gardens, and just before I left one actually entered a house by the front door, walked through the kitchen where an American lady was peeling potatoes, and then out of the back door. It was apparently searching for a dog which it had been eyeing for several days." The reaction of the American lady can be imagined.

In a report from eastern Madagascar at the end of last year, Dr. J. J. Petter says that the only hope of saving the few remaining aye aye, *Daubentonia madagascariensis*, one of the island's rare species of lemur, is to capture and transfer them to a small island where they can be protected. Their habitat in the coastal forest, to which they appear to be confined, has been almost completely destroyed, and in five years he thinks that none will remain. The small group of aye aye, which it had been hoped to protect in a small reserve, had been reduced to two animals, and they are doomed. Driven out of the forest, they raid the villagers' crops and are killed. The Survival Service Commission, at its meeting in January, gave special attention to the serious situation in Madagascar, as reported on p. 159.

The latest annual report of the Kenya Game Department (1962) pinpoints some of the problems that have emerged as a result of the conversion of over a million acres of European farm land, on much of which game had been conserved, into smallholdings for settling landless Africans. In some cases attempts have been made to remove the more valuable wild animals, such as Kenya's only herds of Thomas's kob of some 500 animals. Much more difficult is the problem of the small settlements on the edge of the forest reserves. Where formerly the farmers could leave a pastoral strip as a sort of buffer between the game and the sown crops, now, on the flanks of the Aberdares and the slopes of Mount Kenya, the small settlements come right to the edge of the forest, and form a positive attraction to the wild animals, "literally baiting them out of their sanctuary" as the report describes it. There are no funds for the construction of game-proof fences or ditches along the forest edge, or to supply extra wardens. Conversely, with the settlements so close to the forest and the two national parks they contain, there has been a marked increase in poaching. The value of helicopters to the game department's capture unit was proved when they had the help of the 8th Independent Recce Flight of