
**An Ecological Survey
of the
St. Floris National Park
Central African Republic**

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fundamental role in the preservation of the sudan savanna/flood plains region of the CAR.

Originally, St. Floris was established for the purposes of biotic preservation: protection of a region rich in wildlife with special consideration given to the hippopotamus. The northeastern region of the CAR is one of the last extensive areas in Africa remaining in a rather pristine natural state. Although animal numbers have declined due to the influence of man, only one large mammalian species, the white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum* Burchell), has been completely exterminated in the region in modern times. The incidence of fire has also had a marked influence on the vegetation. Nevertheless, the ecosystem is still in a healthy natural state and this condition should continue, given adequate protection.

St. Floris will play an even more important role in the protection of endemic flora and fauna when a greater human population in the region causes an expansion of the land area utilized for agricultural or pastoral pursuits. A decline in wildlife numbers can be expected due to hunting and loss of habitat. Moreover, the existence of many species of migratory birds common to St. Floris (herons, storks, ducks, geese, etc.) depends upon the protection of all their seasonal ranges. Due to the relatively high density of wildlife species and the fact that the soils in St. Floris are inherently of poor agricultural value (Quanton 1962), a national park is the most appropriate resource use of the area. Livestock husbandry is not a viable enterprise as cattle can only exploit a fraction of the park area. Because of the presence of the tse-tse fly in woodland areas, the plains can only be grazed during the dry season.