

against those involved in hunting and trafficking.

Fauna and Flora News No. 10
(February 1999)

Elderly kakapos breed

Three kakapo (*Strigops habroptilus*) chicks hatched on Maud Island in the Marlborough Sounds, New Zealand, in March 1998, bringing the total number of this terrestrial parrot to 57. The chicks were the offspring of two elderly birds put on the island as a last resort in the hope that they might pair. The male was not known to have mated in 23 years, while the female had made no attempt to breed for 16 years. The probable stimulus for egg-laying was the female's shift from Little Barrier Island to Maud Island, where it had access to supplementary food.

The kakapo, the world's heaviest – and only flightless – parrot, was saved from almost certain extinction when, between 1987 and 1992, the surviving individuals were translocated to three offshore islands, Codfish, Maud and Little Barrier. Prior to the present breeding, reproduction had occurred on Codfish and Little Barrier, but never on Maud. The present success is especially encouraging in view of the age of the parents – most surviving kakapos are now 20 years old or more.

Oryx Vol. 33, No. 1 (January 1999), with additional background material compiled by Nicholas Gould

A setback for Mexican wolf reintroduction

Of the 11 Mexican wolves released into national forests along the Arizona–New Mexico border in March 1998, none remains in the wild. Five were shot; some believe that ranchers, angry about the return of this predator to their neighborhoods and

wishing to sabotage the program, are responsible. Another wolf is presumed dead, while five others have been recaptured. Despite this, the program showed evidence of success. The wolves hunted elk [*wapiti* (*Cervus elaphus*)] successfully, and a pup was born to one of the females. Determined to press ahead, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is preparing to release another ten to 15 wolves by the end of March this year. In addition, the service is investigating the killings thoroughly and is offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to a conviction for killing a member of an endangered species.

Zoogoer (Friends of the National Zoo, Washington, D.C.) Vol. 28, No. 1 (January/February 1999)

Increasing numbers of wild shoebills

Shoebills (*Balaeniceps rex*) rarely succeed in rearing both their chicks. Therefore, the Brehm Fund is supporting a programme aimed at increasing their numbers in Uganda by collecting and artificially rearing the second chicks. This will be done at the Wildlife Education Centre, which has been established in the grounds of the former Entebbe Zoo. The most difficult and costly part of the programme will be tracking down the birds' widely scattered nest sites in large tracts of papyrus and *Miscanthidium* swamp. This will be done using micro-light aircraft to locate and monitor the nests, so that the chicks can be collected three to ten days after hatching. To guard against the birds becoming imprinted, they will be fed using shoebill-head puppets, and will be walked by keepers dressed to look like shoebills. They will be trained to catch lungfish, the shoebill's favourite food. Prior to being released in suitable habitat,

the young birds will be fitted with radio transmitters so that their progress can be monitored. If the programme is a success in Uganda, the same techniques may be used in other African countries, such as Sudan and Zambia.

Flying Free (newsletter of the Brehm Fund for International Bird Conservation) Vol. 16, No. 1/2 (Summer/Autumn 1998)

Northern white rhino update

The latest count, made from the air, found that at least 20 northern white rhinoceroses, the most endangered rhino subspecies, have survived the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). Four young have been born since the conflict abated in May 1997. Congo's Garamba National Park contains the only northern white rhinos remaining in the wild; an estimated 27 to 30 lived there in 1996, up from 15 in 1984.

Wildlife News (African Wildlife Foundation), Vol. 33, No. 4

Western tragopan conservation

Westrag 2000 is a project with the objectives of setting up a captive population of western tragopans (*Tragopan melanocephalus*) in Pakistan for research and education purposes, and to support the continuation of the Pakistan Galliform Project. Owen Joiner has been appointed as overseer and arrived in Pakistan in October 1998. Two satyr tragopan hens and a pair of Temminck's tragopans were sent to Pakistan in July 1998 as part of an educational programme. The birds were kindly donated by Marwell Zoo, Gatwick Zoo and K. Chalmers-Watson.

A breeding centre has been estab-

lished at Shinkiari, North West Frontier Province. A hut and pens were completed during January 1999. The catching of the birds is to begin in February, when it is hoped that six pairs can be taken from Keyal Valley directly to the breeding pens. Any other species caught accidentally will be released immediately after taking feather samples for the DNA project.

Michael Cook in *WPA-UK Bulletin* No. 42 (February 1999)

Park extended for tamarin

Superagui National Park in Brazil has been increased in size from 21,400 to 34,254 ha by including the north of the island and the entire eastern coast, as well as part of the mainland immediately adjacent. This was deemed vital for the survival of the black-faced lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus caissara*), because the park was threatened by land speculation along the coast.

Oryx Vol. 33, No. 1 (January 1999)

Macaws seized in Bolivia

Park rangers seized 19 endangered red-fronted macaws (*Ara rubrogenys*) from traffickers in the Amboro National Park, Bolivia, in November 1998. The birds are currently housed in Santa Cruz Zoo, where it is hoped that they will be marked and registered as part of a new monitoring programme for all *Ara* species held in captivity in Bolivia. The new initiative has received widespread support and is regarded as a key opportunity to establish the marking and registration of macaws as a standard and obligatory procedure in Bolivian zoos.

World Birdwatch Vol. 21, No. 1 (March 1999)