



# ENDANGERED SPECIES TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Department of the Interior • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • Endangered Species Program, Washington, D.C. 20240

## CONVENTION NATIONS ADOPT REVISED APPENDICES, PROCEDURAL CHANGES

Delegates from 34 of the 51 nations party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) have concluded a 2-week meeting in Costa Rica at which they voted on proposals affecting implementation of the treaty and revised the lists of species it protects.

Held in San Jose, March 19-30, this Second Biennial Meeting of the Conference of CITES Parties was also attended by representatives of 16 other countries not yet party to the Convention (including a 5-man team from the People's Republic of China), several United Nations representatives, and observers from 55 non-governmental organizations (39 of which were from the United States).

[Negotiated in 1973, the Convention essentially prohibits commercial import and export of species listed under its Appendix I (those critically jeopardized by trade) and restricts export of those listed under Appendix II (potentially threatened species). Working together, a scientific and management authority in each nation must approve import and export permits for trade in species protected under the international treaty.]

### Appendices Revisions

Of the 251 proposals to amend the appendices considered by the parties, 103 changes were adopted (all by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting).

- 48 taxa were added to Appendix I or II, with all hawks and eagles, all owls, and all whales and porpoises (not on Appendix I) added to Appendix II.

- 15 taxa were removed from protection under the appendices, including the Mexican duck (*Anas diazi*), greater prairie chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido pinnatus*), and Mearn's quail (*Crytonyx motezumae mearnsi*).

- 9 taxa were moved from Appendix I to II, including the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*), Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrhynchus*), northern elephant seal (*Mirounga angustirostris*), and lechwe (*Kobus leche*).

- 18 taxa were moved from Appendix II to I, including the Guadalupe fur seal (*Arctocephalus townsendi*), Bolson tortoise (*Gopherus flavomarginatus*), and salt water crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), except for the Papua New Guinea population.

- The status of 13 species was clarified, with 9 U.S. populations being noted as listed in order to control trade in similar species or populations, and not because they are threatened with extinction.

Most U.S. proposals to change the listing status of species native to this country were adopted (see February 1979 BULLETIN). Of special significance is the transfer of the alligator to Appendix II, a classification that could permit controlled international commerce in the species and its products, *providing* a regulatory change now under consideration is made concerning the status of certain American alligator populations (and procedures for controlling trade in their products) under the Endangered Species Act (see November 1978 BULLETIN). No action was taken on a change in status for the bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), trumpeter swan (*Olor buccinator*), and southern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris nereis*) as these U.S. proposals were withdrawn

*Continued on page 4*

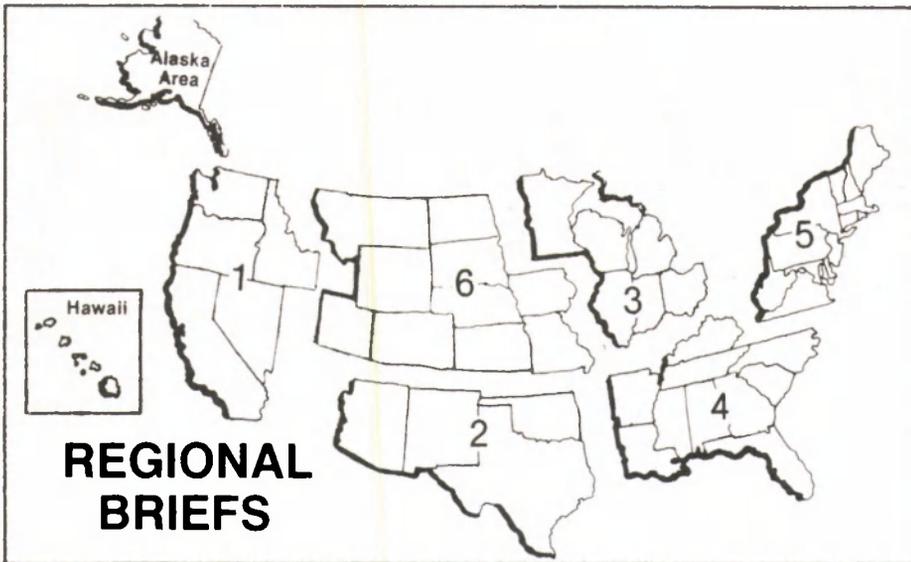


**CRIP,  
SYMBOL  
OF  
ENDANGERED  
WILDLIFE,  
DIES**

**See Story  
Page 6**

*Crip (foreground) with former mate, Rosie, at San Antonio Zoo.*

Photo by Ernest Roney



## REGIONAL BRIEFS

Endangered Species Program regional staffers have reported the following activities for the month of March.

**Region 1.** The first International Symposium on the Vultures, sponsored by the Western Foundation of Verte-

brate Zoology was held in Santa Barbara, California, March 23-26. There were two full days of formal papers and a field trip to California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) habitat. The conference was well attended, and there was an excellent exchange of

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### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regions

Region 1: California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Pacific Trust Territories. Region 2: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Region 3: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Region 4: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Region 5: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont; Virginia and West Virginia. Region 6: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. Alaska Area: Alaska.

The ENDANGERED SPECIES TECHNICAL BULLETIN is published monthly by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

information between American and African representatives.

The regional office has received the go ahead to inventory candidate Threatened and proposed Endangered plants on the Desert National Wildlife Refuge in southern Nevada. Status reports were completed on two northwestern plants, *Astragalus columbianus* (occurring in Washington) and *Aster curtus* (from Oregon and Washington), and both species may soon be recommended for listing.

**Region 2.** Ten Chihuahuan chubs (*Gila nigrescens*) were collected from the Mimbres River in New Mexico, where the population is estimated to be less than 20 individuals. The fish were placed in the Dexter National Fish Hatchery for propagation and restocking in the Mimbres River.

Over 500 headstarted Kemp's ridley sea turtles (*Lepidochelys kempii*) were released by the National Marine Fisheries Service off west Florida as part of the U.S./Mexican cooperative effort to prevent the species' extinction (see October 1978 BULLETIN). All of the turtles were tagged and 12 were fitted with transmitters. Upon release, the turtles exhibited evasive movements.

**Region 3.** On March 2, regional representatives met with the Forest Service concerning proposed land exchanges. The region believes major steps were made at the meeting toward the development of guidelines for forthcoming Section 7 consultations with the Forest Service on its exchange practices.

Regional staffers also met with representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to discuss consultation procedures between the two agencies on EPA discharge permits and grants for water treatment facilities.

**Region 4.** The acquisition of Blowing Wind Cave in northern Alabama has been completed and the entrance gated to prevent human entry. This is considered the most important maternity cave known for gray bats (*Myotis grisescens*). It also provides habitat for the Endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and several other species that are of special concern.

*Sagittaria fasciculata*, a plant known to occur in only two locations about 20 miles apart in the Carolinas, was proposed for Endangered status in 1976. An unconfirmed report indicates the North Carolina population may have been destroyed by recent work on an adjacent railroad bed. An onsite inspection is planned for April.

**Region 6.** The Service accepted three Labrador retrievers and one German shepherd that Region 2 and the New Mexico Game and Fish Commission contracted to have trained to "sniff out" black-footed ferrets (*Mus-*

*tela nigripes*). Two Service employees will be trained in April to handle the dogs. In May, field work will begin in Region 6.

On March 1 and 2, members of the Rocky Mountain/Southwest American Peregrine Falcon Recovery Team and representatives from eight States, three Federal agencies, and the Peregrine Fund met in Denver. A reintro-

duction plan was developed for peregrines produced at the Peregrine Fund's Fort Collins, Colorado, facility in 1979.

**Alaska Area.** The Alaska Area Office has initiated a fledgling banding and prey species pesticide sampling operation in Alaska. Since two trapping

and banding operations are in effect at Assateague Island, Virginia, and Padre Island, Texas, area personnel anticipate an opportunity to recover some of their falcons and get some indication of migratory routes, as well as pesticide information, through blood sampling. Planning efforts are underway to initiate field work for this summer.

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## BALD EAGLE RECOVERY DISCUSSED AT WORKSHOP

Bald eagle recovery planning was the subject of a workshop held at the Denver Regional Office in March. Attended by leaders from three of the four Service-appointed bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) recovery teams, regional endangered species coordinators, and Washington Office representatives, the workshop was a forum for discussion of problems that plague recovery for the species.

One issue of great concern raised at the workshop was banding protocol. The team leaders (Duane Rubink, Southwestern Team; Gary Taylor, Chesapeake Bay Team; and Tom Murphy, Southeastern Team) agreed that there is some confusion caused by what they consider to be unclear standards in protocol. They cited examples of similar or same color bands being issued to researchers in different areas of the country. This makes accurate counts difficult to maintain because the birds move over a wide range for wintering and other purposes. Also, numbers on the bands are usually too small to read. (The bands were designed to provide a minimum amount of discomfort and interference to the eagle in the course of its normal activities. It should also be noted that there are many more researchers banding birds than there are colors that can be easily distinguished by the human eye.)

According to William Clark, Director of the National Wildlife Federation's Raptor Information Center, who also attended the workshop, there is evidence that banding may have an effect on breeding. Clark cited a study that showed three birds to be unsuccessful in breeding after being patagially marked. Overall appearance seems to be a factor in pair bonding, according to Clark.

Also at issue was the requirement that eagles found dead be immediately turned over to the National Wildlife Health Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin, thus depriving the States of an

opportunity to analyze fresh carcasses.

It was agreed that the team leaders would coordinate their concerns and efforts by setting up a bald eagle "steering committee" similar to the coordinating committee for the peregrine falcon.

Team leaders and endangered species coordinators presented updates on team and recovery activities. Highlights:

(1) The Pacific Team, which has not yet been appointed, will include Idaho, which was formerly part of the Northern States Team.

(2) The Chesapeake Bay Team Leader reported that transplanting of captive-produced eaglets rather than captive-produced eggs seems to offer more success for continuing the productivity of eagle nests.

(3) Duane Rubink said that there are seven active nests, five of which are on cliffs, in the Southwestern Team's geographic area. There has been a problem with chicks falling out of these nests.

(4) The Southeastern Team was appointed in February and reports 300 active territories in Florida.

(5) The Northern States Team will hold its second meeting in Bangor, Maine, in April.

Standardization of criteria for addressing the unique needs of bald eagles when designating Critical Habitat as well as for determining what constitutes jeopardy to the species was also discussed. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that it is difficult to arrive at a standard because of the geographic differences of each population of the species, and their associated needs and threats. In fact, each Critical Habitat proposal and determination of jeopardy will ultimately have to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

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## LOGGERHEAD SEA TURTLES FOUND DEAD ALONG TEXAS COAST

More than 60 dead loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) have washed ashore along the Texas coast since the first reports were confirmed on March 9, according to Charles Fuss, Special Agent with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Of those, approximately 45-50 percent had apparent mutilations to the neck and some had cuts on the flippers or flippers removed.

Cooperating officials from NMFS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas Wildlife and Parks Department, and the U.S. Coast Guard have not

been able to trace the source of the mutilations. According to Fuss, the specimens (mostly juvenile females weighing 40-60 lbs.) are smaller than typical nesting turtles. This has led investigators to believe that the incidents occurred at sea.

Special Agent Edward M. Smith, also of NMFS, has reported findings for this particular series of incidents from the Rio Grande River up to Galveston. A few of the specimens were green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) and some others were unidentified.

Investigators are currently canvassing marinas, small boat operations, and commercial fisheries, and a patrol has been mounted off the coast. The Texas Shrimpers Association says it has advised its members of the protection afforded sea turtles and of the necessity of releasing sea turtles accidentally caught in their trawls.

Last year, a similar episode occurred off Cape Canaveral and investigators were never able to trace the source.

# Convention Nations

Continued from page 1

prior to the conference. (Final actions on U.S. proposals are indicated in the accompanying table.)

All adopted appendices revisions will enter into force on June 28, 1979 (except for any party nation that enters a specific reservation\*).

## Financing the Secretariat

Among the first items for consideration at the session was a resolution requesting the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) to establish a special trust fund for administration of the Convention Secretariat (for which UNEP support will begin to diminish in 1980). The parties agreed to interim financial arrangements involving voluntary party contributions to such a trust fund, and—although some nations would require an amendment to the Convention before making that kind of contribution—several parties (including the U.S.) indicated willingness to contribute without such budgetary provisions.

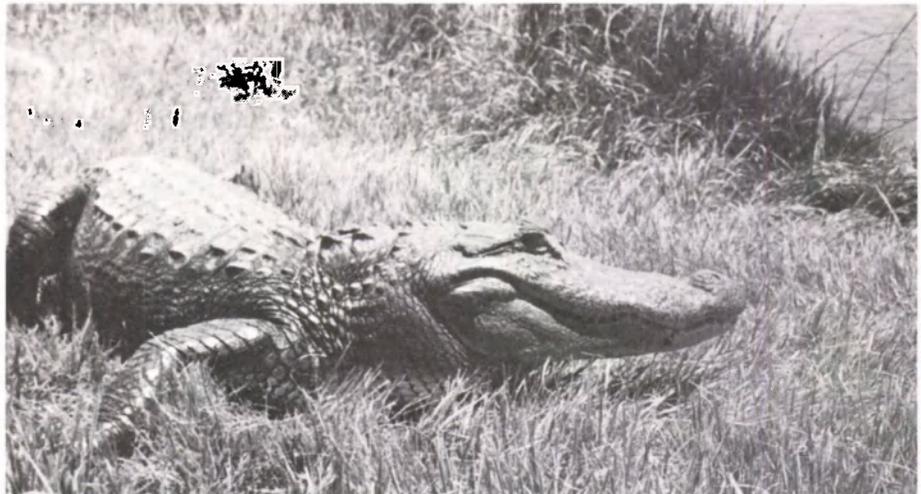
Parties in attendance adopted provisional financial procedures for the trust fund, with the U.S. pledging contributions through 1981. (The parties also agreed to an extraordinary conference of parties in June 1979 to amend the Convention and work out financial arrangements.)

## Significant Procedural Actions

Many proposals to revise procedural policy in implementing the Convention were submitted during the conference. Summaries of important changes and/or clarifications follow.

- adoption (with minor changes) of U.S. proposal to define the terms "bred in captivity" and "artificially propagated" (as applied to species in Appendix I, which shall then be commercially treated as Appendix II species). Bred in captivity is to refer only to "progeny, including eggs, born or otherwise produced in a controlled environment, either of parents that mated or otherwise transferred gametes in a

\*The Convention provides that any party nation may enter specific reservations before the amendments enter into force. The effect is that the nation would not be treated as a party for reserved species. While this might solve problems for that nation, it weakens the overall effectiveness of controls on world trade in the affected species. The Service does not favor the entering of reservations by the U.S. for this reason.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service photo

*Products of the American alligator, now moved to the less restrictive Appendix II, may enter into controlled international trade upon the revision of protective U.S. regulations.*

controlled environment, if reproduction is sexual, or of parents that were in a controlled environment when development of the progeny began, if reproduction is asexual."

Plants that are artificially propagated shall be only those "grown by man from seeds, cuttings, callus tissue, spores, or other propagules under controlled conditions." It is believed that uniform application of this exemption will limit the possible detrimental impact of captive breeding operations on wild populations of Appendix I and II species.

- adoption of a U.S. resolution stating (1) that hybrids may be specifically included in appendices when they form distinct, stable populations in the wild and (2) that hybrids not specifically included are covered under the Convention if one or both parents are so listed (when the more restrictive category shall apply).

- adoption of proposal to list for protection only those subspecies generally recognized as valid taxa and distinguishable from other subspecies as they occur in trade.

- adoption of a proposal to allow listing of taxa above species level only if inclusion of each member species is justified and if basis for inclusion of species is indicated (as actually threatened or as "look-alikes" for the purpose of controlling trade).

- agreement that "extremely rare" species should be included in Appendix I even if international trade is unlikely, because any trade in these species could be detrimental to their survival. (Rare species need not be so listed if addition would draw public attention to their rarity for the first time.)

- adoption of Australian recommendation that species not observed for at least 50 years, despite repeated surveys, be annotated in the appendices

as "p.e." (possibly extinct).

- adoption of clarification regarding trade in hunting trophies of Appendix I species to require that such specimens may enter into trade only when their export and purpose of import are not detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

- acceptance of an effective procedure easing the exchange of museum and herbarium specimens between scientific institutions (see related story).

- agreement that no permits for import, export, or introduction from the sea should be issued for commercial trade in stocks protected under the International Whaling Commission. (All cetaceans are now included on the appendices.)

- acceptance of resolution allowing the exchange of confiscated Appendix I specimens between governments for scientific, educational, or training purposes.

- acceptance of detailed guidelines for humane shipment of living specimens (while reserving the option for parties to make future changes).

- agreement to develop an illustrated identification manual and standardized appendices taxonomy for vertebrate species, and to remove or clarify all taxonomic synonyms now on the appendices lists.

Two procedural proposals were defeated. One, sponsored by the U.S., recommended the suspension of criteria adopted at the 1976 Conference of the Parties in Berne for deleting species from Appendices I or II that had been added with little or no supporting data. Many of these species could not be placed on the list under present rules because there are no data available to show that they are threatened biologically or commercially. (However, they also cannot be removed because the Berne criteria

for deletion require even more such data on population status and the impact of trade.)

A second unsuccessful proposal (opposed by the U.S.) recommended the application of trade controls to a minimum list of animal parts and derivatives rather than to all such items. A similar list had been in effect for some time in the United Kingdom,

which issued export documents only for items on its national list. (This practice caused problems for U.S. tourists and business concerns who have exported items that are not controlled by the British, only to have them seized when they arrived in this country without proper documentation.)

The parties agreed to give the cur-

rent Convention Steering Committee more permanent standing, to include more nations and to provide for staggered membership. The United States, United Kingdom, Brazil, Zaire, Nepal, and Australia all agreed to serve on the Committee (based on geographic distribution), and U.S. alternate representative Richard Parsons (Chief of the Service's Wildlife Permit Office) was elected chairman. Switzerland (as depository nation) and hosts of the Berne and future meetings of the parties will also serve on the Committee.

India has tentatively offered to host the next biennial conference of the parties, scheduled for 1981.

## Blanket Permit to Ease International Exchange of Collectors' Specimens

In response to requests by museums and others in the scientific community, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed a "blanket" permit to facilitate the international scientific shipment, by U.S. scientists and institutions, of the preserved specimens of Endangered and Threatened species in their collections. This permit is available to all recognized educational or scientific institutions in the country. The primary difference between this type of permit and those issued in the past is the waiver of separate permits and separate notices in the *Federal Register* for each shipment.

The blanket permit does not authorize new acquisitions, collections from the wild, or loans from foreign institutions. A separate permit is still required for these activities. Only animal specimens can be covered under this blanket permit. (Plants are covered under a separate blanket permit issued in accordance with 50 CFR 17.62 and 17.72.) Shipments must be made through the designated ports of New York, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Seattle, or Honolulu.

Authority under this blanket permit does not preclude the institution from complying with other regulations, such as those issued under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act or the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Blanket permits under these laws have already been developed and can be used in conjunction with the Endangered species blanket permit to cover shipments of specimens protected by more than one law.

Applications and inquiries should be directed by mail to the Federal Wildlife Permit Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or by calling that office at 703/235-1903.

Species	U.S. proposal	Final action
Mexican duck	Delete from App. I	Accept proposal
Marsh hawk	Delete U.S. pop. from App. II	Retain in App. II for control purposes*
Trumpeter swan	Delete from App. II	Proposal withdrawn
Mearn's quail	Delete from App. II	Accept proposal
Sparrow hawk	Delete U.S. pop from App. II	Retain in App. II for control purposes*
Bobcat	Delete from App. II	Proposal withdrawn
Osprey	Delete U.S. pop. from App. II	Retain in App. II for control purposes*
Greater prairie chicken	Delete from App. II	Accept proposal
Atlantic sturgeon	Transfer from App. I to App. II	Accept proposal
American alligator	Transfer from App. I to App. II	Accept proposal
Southern sea otter	Transfer from App. I to App. II	Proposal withdrawn
Peale's peregrine falcon	Transfer from App. I to App. II	Retain in App. I for control purposes
Bald eagle	Transfer Alaska pop. from App. I to App. II	Retain in App. I for control purposes
Northern elephant seal	Transfer from App. I to App. II	Accept proposal
Golden eagle	Transfer eastern U.S. pop. from App. II to App. I	Proposal withdrawn
Guadalupe fur seal	Transfer from App. II to App. I	Accept proposal
American crocodile	Transfer U.S. pop. from App. II to App. I	Accept proposal
Bolson tortoise	Transfer from App. II to App. I	Accept proposal
Goshawk	List U.S. pop. in App. II for control purposes	Proposal withdrawn
Golden eagle	List western U.S. pop. in App. II for control purposes	Proposal withdrawn
Gray wolf	List Alaska pop. in App. II for control purposes	Accept proposal with* addition of Canada pop.
Puma	List U.S. and Canada pops. in App. II for control purposes	Accept proposal*
Bighorn sheep	List U.S. and Canada pops. in App. II for control purposes	Accept proposal*
Grizzly and brown bears	List Alaska and Canada pops. in App. II for control purposes	Accept proposal*

\*Inclusion in Appendix II for control purposes was agreed by the Parties, but it will not result in formal amendment of the appendices.

## IUCN's SURVIVAL SERVICE COMMISSION MEETS IN COSTA RICA

The Survival Service Commission (SSC) of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) held its 51st meeting in Costa Rica, March 12-18.

The SSC is one of six IUCN bodies "that serves as a primary source of the scientific and technical information required for the conservation of endangered and vulnerable species of fauna and flora, and recommends and promotes measures for their preservation. Its objective is to do all in its power to prevent the extinction of species, subspecies, and discrete populations of fauna and flora, thereby maintaining genetic diversity."

The SSC, chaired by Sir Peter Scott of Great Britain, consists of an executive committee, a red data book unit, and 34 specialist groups—each composed of experts on particular groups of animals, plants, or habitats. Each specialist group is responsible for developing world conservation priorities for its group, and recommending specific actions

to the SSC, either at its meetings or to its executive council.

At the recent meeting in Costa Rica, the Fish and Wildlife Service was represented by Earl Baysinger, who has served as the SSC's Executive Officer for 1½ years; Gerry Bertrand, Chief of International Affairs; Howard Campbell of the Division of Research; and Paul Opler, Chief of Biological Support in the Office of Endangered Species.

More than 40 persons attended the meeting, including representatives from Costa Rica, Canada, Oman, Colombia, Peru, the United Kingdom, Surinam, and West Germany.

Among the topics discussed were the IUCN's failure to provide financial support for the work of the Commission, the establishment of an expanded red data book unit (possibly in England), SSC positions for the CITES meeting (see accompanying story), and reports from a number of the specialist groups.

## CRIP DIES

"We've lost a national treasure," said Fish and Wildlife Service Director Lynn A. Greenwalt commenting on the death of Crip, at the time the oldest whooping crane (*Grus americana*) in captivity. Crip died unexpectedly on March 27, 1979, at the San Antonio Zoo where he was on loan from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Crip, called "a symbol of endangered wildlife" by Director Greenwalt, was named by Service biologists who found the whooper with an injured wing in 1949 at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. The refuge serves as the principal wintering area for the whooping crane population from late October or early November to the middle of April. An adult bird when captured, Crip was believed to be at least in his 30's when he died.

Crip's death lowers the world whooping crane population to 109. There are 74 whoopers in the flock which migrates from the Wood Buffalo National Park in Canada to the Aransas Refuge. Ten birds have been reared by sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*) foster parents at Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Idaho. These 10 cranes are the result of egg transplants from the Wood Buffalo National Park.

In captivity, there are 22 whoopers at the Service's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland. Sixteen of these birds were from eggs removed from Canadian nests. They in turn have produced and reared five additional whoopers.

Crip and his three mates (Josephine, Rosie, and Ektu) produced 10 chicks in captivity, but only 2 survive.

This extensive captive breeding program, a cooperative effort between U.S. and Canadian wildlife officials, is necessary to prevent the whooping crane's extinction. Without this boost to its population numbers, delayed sexual maturity and a small clutch size (normally two eggs) may have precluded the crane's ongoing recovery following its decline to only 13 adult birds and 2 young (at Aransas) in 1941.

Oppressive temperatures in the species' northern breeding range are also thought to hinder productivity. Because the ice-free period is only 4 months long, adults must incubate the eggs for 30 days and rear chicks to flight age in 3 months. This leaves little time to lay second clutches and fledge young if the first clutch fails.

Last year, the Patuxent whoopers produced 23 eggs, most of which were sent to Grays Lake. Crip and Ektu produced six eggs this season at the San Antonio Zoo.

## CRITICAL HABITAT DETERMINED FOR LEATHERBACK SEA TURTLE

In a final rulemaking, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has designated as Critical Habitat for the leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) the waters adjacent to Sandy Point Beach, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands (F.R. 3/23/79). The beach itself was previously designated as Critical Habitat for the leatherback by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (F.R. 9/26/78). (NMFS has jurisdiction over listed marine species while they are in the water and the Fish and Wildlife Service has jurisdiction while they are on land.) The NMFS ruling went into effect on March 31, 1979.

The designation was made to provide protection for the species during use of these waters for courting, breeding, and access to and from nesting areas on Sandy Point Beach. Although the leatherback spends most of its life in waters 150 feet deep or more, it comes ashore to nest and lay eggs. It is believed that courtship and mating occur in the waters adjacent to the nesting beaches just prior to egg

laying.

Under the 1978 amendments to the Endangered Species Act, the economic impact of a proposed Critical Habitat designation must be considered. To this end, notice of the proposed designation was published in Virgin Island newspapers, distributed to local government personnel, and written comments were solicited from the public. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands indicated that the proposed designation would not create any significant impacts.

At a public meeting to discuss the proposal (also required under the 1978 amendments), the issue of sand mining to alleviate the serious sand shortage in the Virgin Islands was raised. A two-year study to identify potential offshore sand mining sites is underway. It is possible that mining, if proposed for the Critical Habitat area, could be impacted.

# ALEUTIAN CANADA GOOSE RECOVERY PLAN APPROVED

A recovery plan with the prime objective of restoring the Aleutian Canada goose (*Branta canadensis leucopareia*) to a secure status within its historic range was approved by the Service on March 7, 1979. The recovery team has further defined this objective in terms of maintaining the wild population of Aleutian Canada geese at 1977 levels of 1,160 or greater, and reestablishing self-sustaining populations of geese on three of the species' former breeding areas.

The Aleutian Canada goose, which once bred from the eastern Aleutian Islands to the Kuril Islands, now only has one known breeding population, occurring on Buldir Island in the western Aleutians. This population appears to winter primarily in California and includes an estimated 150-200 breeding pairs.

According to the recovery plan, the decline in the Aleutian's population numbers and reduction in breeding range is due largely to predation by introduced arctic foxes (*Alopex lagopus*).

Foxes were first introduced in the Aleutians about 1836 by the Russian-American Company, and the practice was continued by U.S. citizens until about 1930. In the late Nineteenth Century, an observer on Agattu Island reported that the Aleutian Canada goose "is the most abundant bird on Agattu, where it breeds by thousands." Arctic foxes were first released on Agattu in 1923, and in 1937 an observer reported "only a few pairs of geese on Agattu Island—probably less than 6 pairs in 4 days of traveling over the island." By 1962 the only known breeding population of Aleutians was on Buldir Island, one of the few Aleutian Islands on which no foxes were released.

The Service-appointed recovery team, led by John L. Martin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has detailed what it considers to be the necessary tasks to meet its two-part objective. The team recommends a statistical estimate of the breeding population during 1979, to determine if the wild population is at the 1977 levels. It

suggests that the survey be conducted every 3 years to observe trends.

Marking Aleutian Canada geese will aid in identifying the birds away from their breeding area. Migration and wintering areas will be surveyed for marked geese, and life requirements for the geese in these areas will be studied. Each summer these data will be provided to Pacific Flyway officials for determining which areas should be closed to Canada goose hunting. (Singling out the Aleutian Canada goose from other subspecies of Canada goose, such as the Cackling Canada goose (*B. c. minima*) and Lesser Canada goose (*B. c. taverneri* and *parvipes*), is not easy, as there is currently no known characteristic which absolutely distinguishes the birds. Most Aleutians have a white neck ring, but so do some of the lessers and cacklers.)

The team also recommends the protection of Castle Rock, an islet off Crescent City, California, and nearby lands in Del Norte County as they are important areas for Aleutian geese during spring and fall migration.

As for reestablishing the geese in former breeding areas, the team cites successful efforts to remove arctic foxes from several islands, including Amchitka and Agattu. They recommend that similar fox control efforts be conducted on Kanaga Island, one of the proposed release sites for captive geese.

The team has set an initial target of providing at least 200 captive-raised birds per year. Two production facilities, one at the Service's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and the other on Amchitka, will help reach this goal. According to the plan, 40 breeding pairs will be needed at each center to achieve optimum production.

A holding facility has been set up on Amchitka to help the captive-raised geese develop a homing tradition for the Aleutian Islands and to condition them for survival in the wild. Patuxent-raised birds will be sent to Amchitka for a period of acclimatization before release.

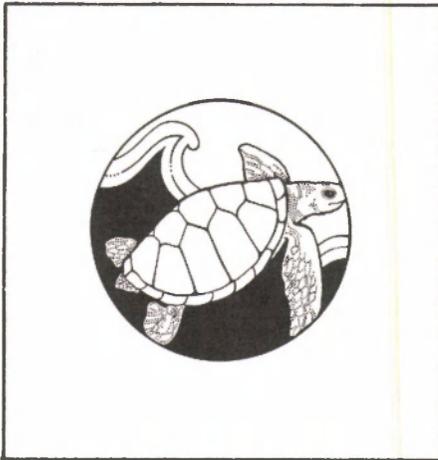
The team recommends a delisting of the species to Threatened status after self-sustaining populations (50 breeding pairs each) have been reestablished in two areas, and a complete delisting once the geese are reestablished on a third area.

The Aleutian Canada Goose Recovery Plan, as well as other Service recovery plans, will be made available within 6 months of Service approval from the Fish and Wildlife Reference Service of the Denver Public Library. For more information contact the library at this address: Fish and Wildlife Reference Service, 3840 York Street, Unit i, Denver, Colorado 80205.

The only known breeding population of Aleutian Canada geese occurs on Buldir Island in the western Aleutians.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service photo





## WORLD CONFERENCE ON SEA TURTLES

The World Wildlife Fund—U.S. along with other private organizations and Federal agencies will host the first World Conference on Sea Turtle Conservation at the State Department in Washington, D.C., November 26-30, 1979.

The Conference will assemble an international forum of conservationists, scientists, and government officials to address the many complicated aspects of sea turtle conservation. (The final agenda for the sessions will be announced when available.)

For registration information, write Vivian Silverstein, Conference Coordinator, 3rd Floor, 1244 - 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (or phone 202/659-9510).

## BOX SCORE OF SPECIES LISTINGS

Category	Number of Endangered Species			Number of Threatened Species		
	U.S.	Foreign	Total	U.S.	Foreign	Total
Mammals .....	33	227	260	3	18	21
Birds .....	67	144	211	3		3
Reptiles .....	11	47	58	10		10
Amphibians .....	5	9	14	2		2
Fishes .....	29	10	39	12		12
Snails .....	2	1	3	5		5
Clams .....	23	2	25			
Crustaceans .....	1		1			
Insects .....	6		6	2		2
Plants .....	20		20	2		2
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>57</b>

Number of species currently proposed: 158 animals  
1,850 plants (approx.)

Number of Critical Habitats listed: 34

Number of Recovery Teams appointed: 66

Number of Recovery Plans approved: 21

Number of Cooperative Agreements signed with States: 22

March 31, 1979

## WOLVES RETURN TO WISCONSIN

After being extirpated from the State for nearly 20 years, gray wolves (*Canis lupus*) are again present in northwestern Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Office of Endangered and Nongame Species reports that track and sight records indicate that two packs exist in Douglas County.

It is not yet known how many wolves make up the packs, but estimates range from four to eight wolves per

pack. The wolves are thought to be immigrants from Minnesota, which has the largest gray wolf population outside of Alaska.

Wolf reports from other areas of northern Wisconsin have prompted plans for a project to establish the statewide wolf status. The project may be in cooperation with Minnesota and Michigan.

In 1978, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reclassified the gray wolf as a Threatened species in Minnesota, and as Endangered in the remainder of its range.

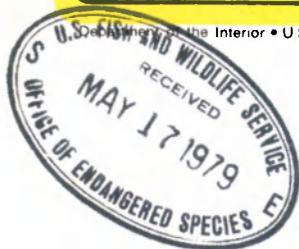


### ENDANGERED SPECIES TECHNICAL BULLETIN



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Int 423



April 1979, Vol. IV, No. 4

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