# Environment

## Transplanting species for survival

The Department of Interior has announced plans to relocate 40 musk oxen and perhaps stage a "Dunkirk-type evacuation" of red wolves to ensure survival of the species and extend their range.

In fulfillment of part of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Environmental Protection Agreement of 1972, Alaskan Eskimos will begin to round up musk oxen this spring for the flight to Russia. The animals originated in the steppes of Central Asia and migrated to North America and as far away as Greenland during the ice ages. In Alaska, they were hunted to extinction by the middle of the last century and were reestablished in the 1930's when 31 individuals were purchased from Greenland. Now they are extinct in their Asian homeland, partly because of changing climate and partly because of overhunting—their valuable coats consist of an inner layer of cashmere-like wool, protected by coarse outer hair that may grow three feet or more.

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The red wolf is one of the most endangered species in America, now ranging only over two east Texas counties. As settlers cleared forests and killed off many of the wolves, coyotes began to move into the red wolf's previous habitat. Interbreeding occurred so that most of the original range is now occupied by coyotes or hybrids.

The red wolf is the only one of its kind in the world—all other wolves are subspecies of the gray wolf—and a joint Federal-state recovery team has been set up to initiate conservation measures. These will probably include transplanting members of the species to new habitats, away from danger and coyotes.

## Two new tools against insects

When a 265-mile railroad was built to haul valuable iron ore in tropical northwestern Australia, engineers soon found that the most voracious termite known—*Mastotermes darwiniensis*—lived along the route and attacked the wooden ties (Aussies call them "timber sleepers") in regiments. The biggest problem was spotting ties that had been eaten from beneath and did not show visible damage. The Australian Atomic Energy Commission and the Mount Newman Mining Co. believe they have found a solution: a rail-mounted vehicle containing a radioactive cesium source, whose gamma rays reflect differently off of normal or damaged ties. Damaged ties can thus be quickly replaced.

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has just registered the first growth-regulating mosquito control pesticide. The pesticide, methoprene, with the trade name, Altosid, prevents mosquito larvae from maturing by a "specific" reaction that is relatively harmless to other creatures. Additional advantages include quick biodegradation and low application rate—the pesticide may be spread from a plane in quantities as small as three ounces per acre.

## Returning mine wastes underground

The National Academy of Sciences has announced that, based on a study of coal mines in Europe and the United States, technology is available to get rid of the waste piles of mine "tailings" that poison streams and blight scenery. The cost of "backfilling" the wastes into abandonded mines, the report concludes, would raise the cost of a ton of coal from $1 to $4, depending on conditions.

# Behavior

## How to make children generous

Does adult example or preaching make a child generous? Past studies have produced conflicting answers. In a new study J. Philippe Rushton of the University of London used 140 children. Each was shown prizes he could win in a bowling game. Near the game was a bowl that said "Save the Children Fund—Please Give." The subject was introduced to an adult who played the game with him. After starting the game, the adult donated part of his winnings to the fund or kept all for himself, meanwhile preaching generosity or selfishness or providing a neutral conversation. The subjects repeated the game eight weeks later.

Adult demonstration of generosity was highly effective in both the immediate and follow-up study, Rushton reports in the March JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY. Although preaching was not effective in the short run, it was in the long run as long as it coincided with generous behavior on the part of the adult. Children's reactions, however, did vary according to how mature they were in making moral judgments.

## Crime and beauty

Past studies have suggested that physically attractive persons have certain advantages over less attractive individuals. Do these advantages extend to receiving more lenient sentences when they are on trial for a crime? Harold Sigall and Nancy Ostrove, psychologists at the University of Maryland, set up a study to find out.

They had subjects read criminal cases and also view photographs of the defendants. The physical attractiveness of a defendant and the nature of the crime (attractiveness-related or attractiveness-unrelated) were varied. The results, reported in the March JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, show that when the crime was unrelated to attractiveness, such as burglary, subjects would assign more lenient sentence to the attractive defendant than to the unattractive defendant. When the offense was attractiveness-related, as in a swindle, however, the attractive defendant would receive harsher treatment.

## Glasses and intelligence

In a television program a few months ago, a youngster stowed away on a spaceship to the moon and ended up saving the astronauts and spaceship. Needless to say, the boy wore horn-rimmed glasses. After all, don't all geniuses?

That the public considers persons wearing spectacles more intelligent than those who do not was first reported by G. R. Thornton in the JOURNAL OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY in 1944. However, Thornton used still photographs of target persons in his test. So Roger Boshier of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver repeated the test using videotape.

Boshier made two five-minute videotapes of eight persons. If a person wore glasses in tape one, he appeared without them in tape two, or vice versa. Whenever the persons donned spectacles, it was the same pair of horn-rimmed glasses. Then Boshier told 18 subjects that they would see five-second frames of persons and that they should rate them on four scales—attractiveness, sociability, scholariness and intelligence.

As Boshier reports in the February PERCEPTUAL AND MOTOR SKILLS, the subjects rated all the target persons, except one, more intelligent while wearing spectacles. In four cases the mean differences were statistically significant.