

WILDLIFE

Saving Rare Animals

➤ TEN animals will soon be dead as the dodo unless man protects them, wildlife experts say.

Among these vanishing "living textbooks of scientific knowledge," the largest is a five-ton rhinoceros that lives in Java, and the strangest is a ten-inch rabbit-like creature from Australia called the pig-footed bandicoot.

The rhino, a one-horned type, was nearly wiped out during the Japanese occupation of Java. All that is saving the few survivors from immediate extinction is the natives' dread of the tigers that share the rhino's Javanese jungle.

The bandicoot's nemesis is not Japs but sheep. Sheep, rabbits, and bandicoots all eat the same thing, and the bandicoot is finishing a poor third. To make matters worse, the hungry bandicoot has himself become an item on the menu of dogs imported into Australia. Ironically, one of the bandicoot's native enemies, the Tasmanian wolf, is similarly being starved out by roaming dogs and cats which beat it to its food.

Two waning fur-bearers are the royal chinchilla of Peru and the wolverine. Although the swift and timorous, the chinchilla has not succeeded in eluding the law-breakers. Today only a remnant is believed to exist high in the inaccessible rocks of the Peruvian Andes. The ferocious wolverine, which was once so important a source of fur that Michigan became known as the Wolverine State, is now abundant only in Alaska.

The American Buffalo's continental cousin, the European wisent is going. So is the once-numerous Asiatic lion of which only about 200 survive. Some 500 giant sable antelope remain in Africa and of the brow-antlered deer there are "only a few hundred left in Burma." South African mountain zebra are down to a handful, mostly in zoos.

The ten vanishing animals were listed by Dr. Antoon de Vos, formerly of the Netherlands East Indies, now with the

Canadian Department of Lands and Forests. He is one of several hundred scientists invited to UNESCO's International Technical Conference on the Protection of Nature, held at Lake Success, which has just ended. The one-week conference has been considering such other problems as the effects of DDT and other insecticides on the balance of nature, and the consequences of introducing an animal into a new environment, in addition to the problem of vanishing species. Conservationists here are hopeful that by setting up wildlife preserves and by tightening and enforcing game laws, they will rescue these animals from the dodo's fate.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1949

ARCHAEOLOGY

Controversy Over Whether Tawide Made It

➤ "MADE in America" may some day start a scientific controversy, judging from this story of Danish scientists.

In 1947, a Danish peat digger uncovered a plain wooden box which has settled a dispute of long standing among students and experts of the Old Norse language.

The box with a sliding lid may have been used for keeping a razor, sewing needles, or perhaps bait for a fisherman. Archaeologists estimate its age to be at least 1,400 years.

On the side is carved "Hagiradar—Tawide." Hagiradar is a man's name. It means "one adept at giving advice."

"Tawide" appears here for the second time. It came to light the first time on the Little Gold Horn at Mogletonder, South Slesvig. This horn is engraved with pictures and the word "Tawido."

One school held that "Tawido," first person singular, was the name of the artist who made the engraving. Others maintained it was the name of the man who made the horn.

Because the small box uncovered at Stenmagle with the name contains no ornamental work, it is now conceded that "Tawido" means maker. Translated into modern English the inscription should read, "Made by Hagiradar."

Science News Letter, September 10, 1949

MEDICINE

Asthma Relief Follows Jaundice Infection

➤ DRAMATIC relief from asthma in three chronic sufferers followed jaundice infection, Dr. Nathan Gorin of Harvard Medical School and the Children's Medical Center in Boston reported.

The mechanism at work is unknown, al-

though fever and surgery have also been known to bring temporary relief from asthma, Dr. Gorin stated in the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (Sept. 3).

One patient had been a chronic asthma sufferer for 24 years, depending on drugs for relief. With the first signs of nausea and abdominal distress, which was later diagnosed as jaundice, the patient's asthma was milder. Relief lasted for 10 weeks.

Another patient, who is thought to have developed jaundice from a blood transfusion, was immediately free from the symptoms of asthma and hayfever. Eventually he was cured of the jaundice but the allergies did not return.

The third patient got little relief from her asthma in the medications she was taking until she suddenly developed jaundice stemming from a cancer of the liver. Her asthma then became milder than it had ever been since it first developed.

Dr. Gorin feels that these cases, and others in which jaundice has relieved arthritis, point to certain reparative powers within the person that are set free when changes occur in the liver. Animal experiments and clinical studies are being made to discover the mechanism behind this.

Science News Letter, September 10, 1949

MEDICINE

Convulsions Brought on By Some Allergy Drugs

➤ TWO anti-allergy drugs have shown that they can bring on convulsions in certain epileptic patients in tests reported by two Philadelphia physicians.

The drugs, benadryl and pyribenzamine, are known as antihistaminic because they check the action of histamine, a poison released by the tissues in allergic reactions.

The effect of the drugs on the patients was gaged by the electro-encephalogram, which measures the tiny electric current generated by the brain.

Both of the drugs increased the number of attacks in patients with focal lesions of the cerebral cortex, which is usually an uncontrollable jerking of one side of the body, Drs. John A. Churchill and George D. Gammon of the University of Pennsylvania stated in the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (Sept. 3).

Benadryl showed some promise as a remedy for patients with petit mal, a mild form of epilepsy, in that there was a slight improvement in the electrical wave pattern of these patients. Pyribenzamine had the opposite effect on petit mal patients. It excited a greater abnormal activity of the electrical impulses in the brain, the physicians stated.

Drs. Churchill and Gammon urge that antihistaminic drugs be used with care in the treatment of patients who suffer with convulsive disorders since the drugs have been proven to bring on attacks.

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