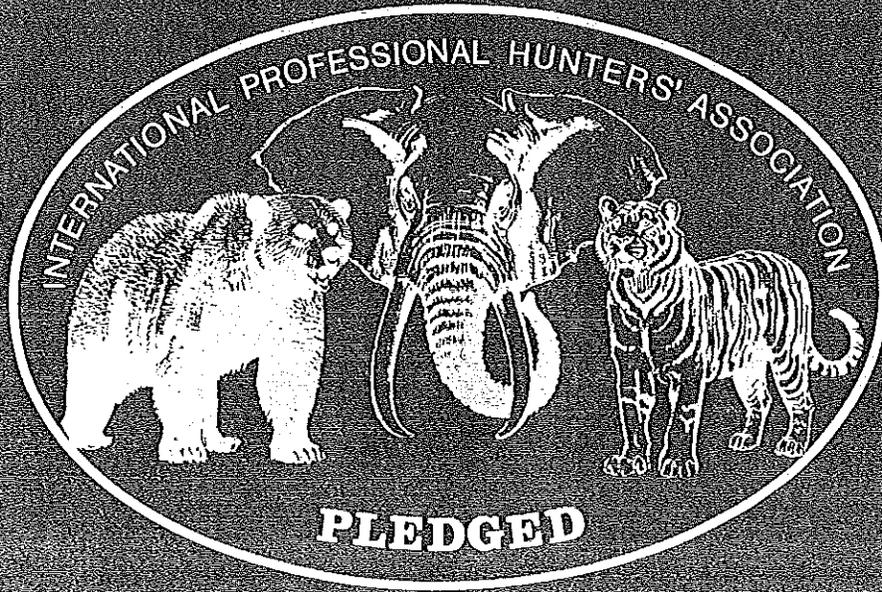


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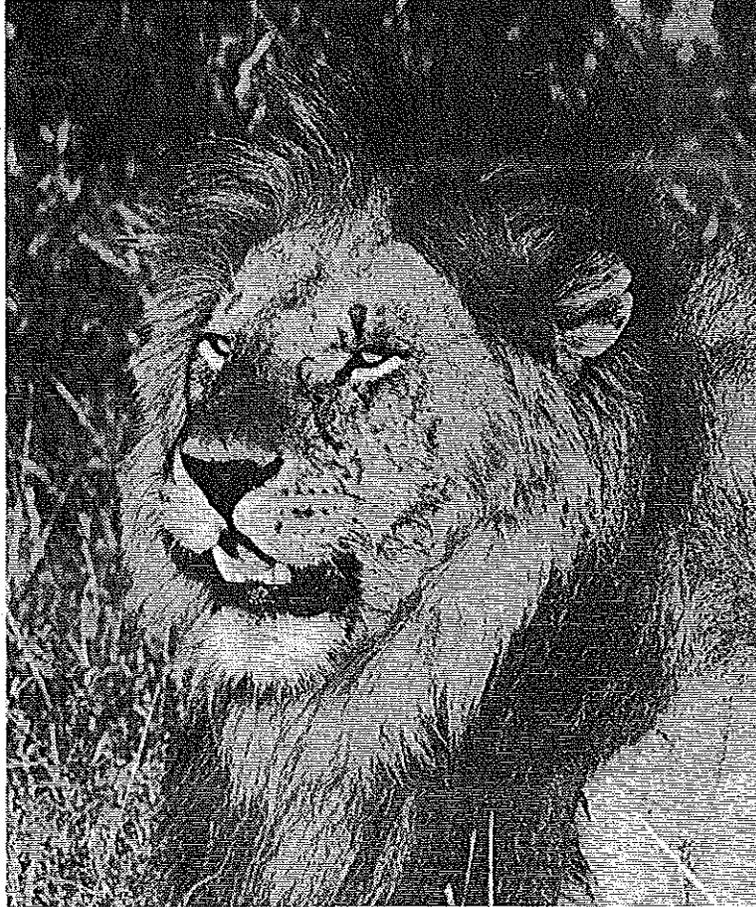


MAGAZINE

IN CO-OPERATION WITH:

THE ALASKA PROFESSIONAL HUNTERS' ASSOCIATION · THE EAST AFRICAN PROFESSIONAL HUNTERS' ASSOCIATION
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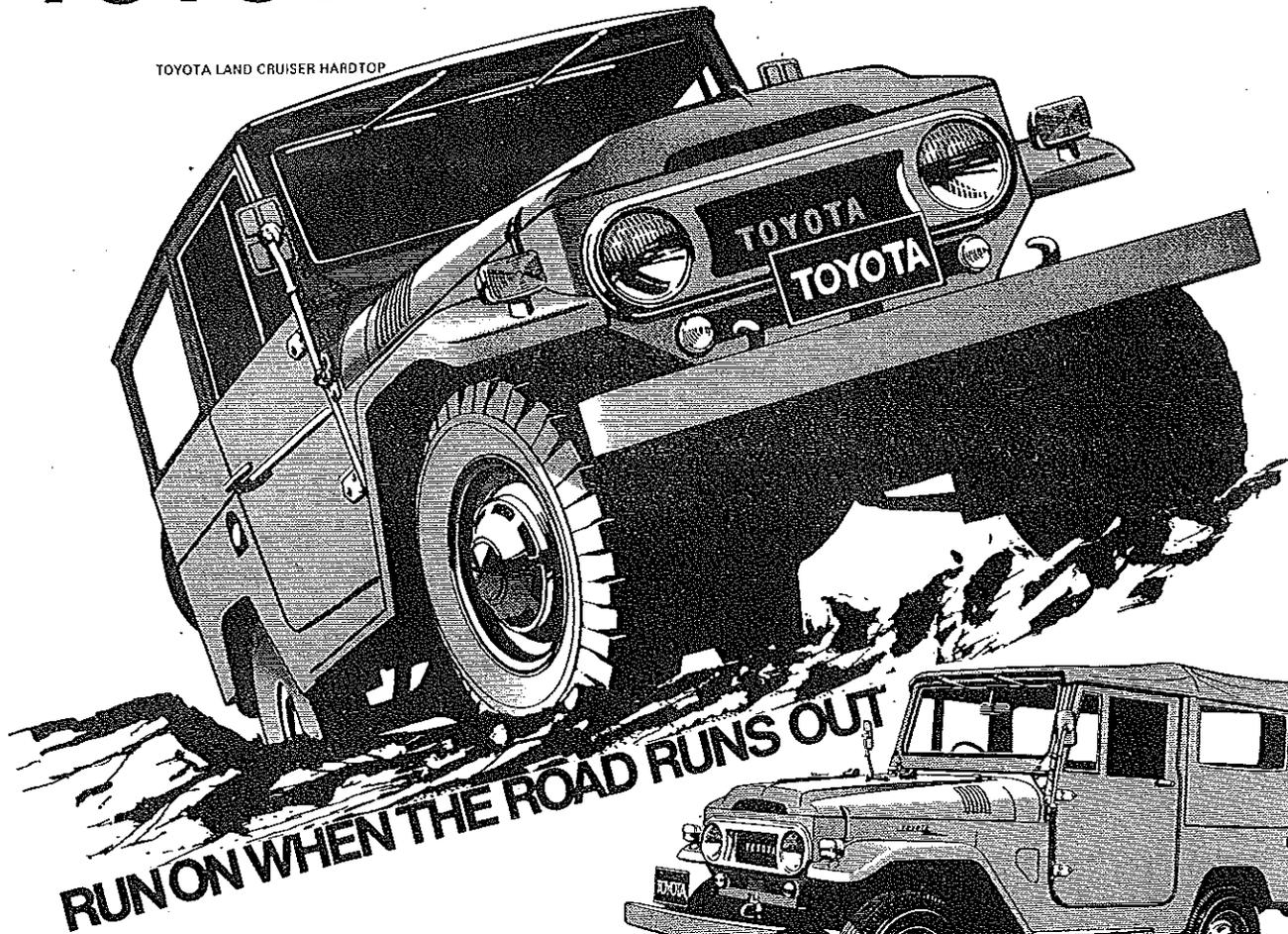
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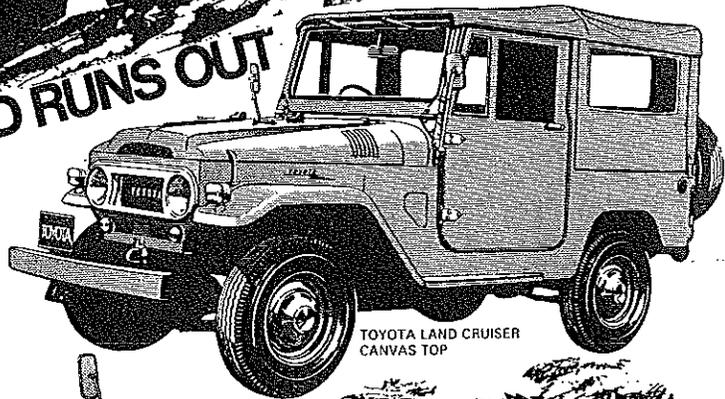
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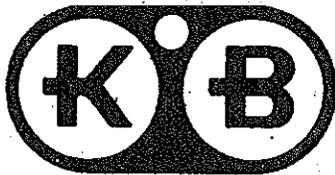
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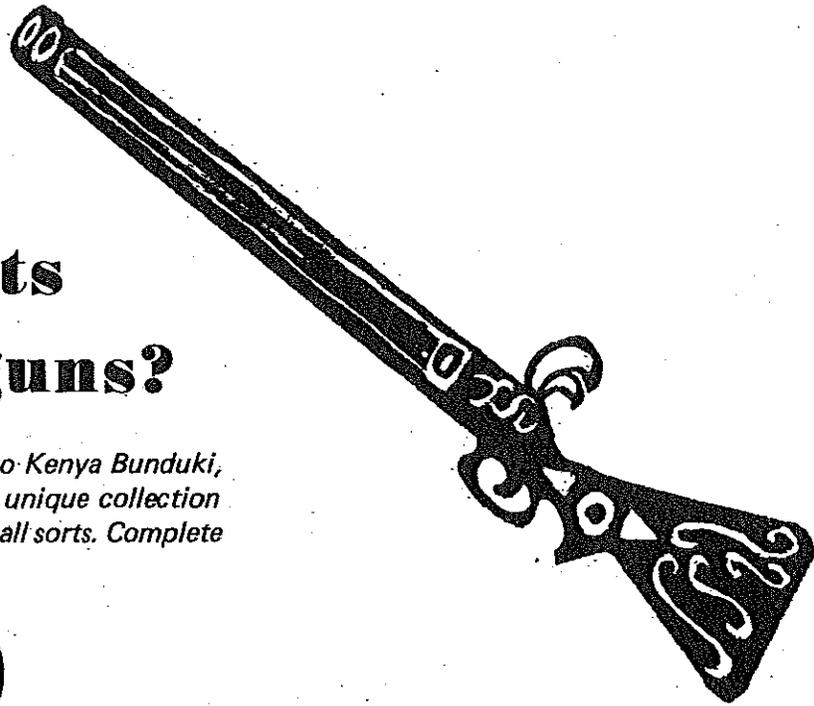
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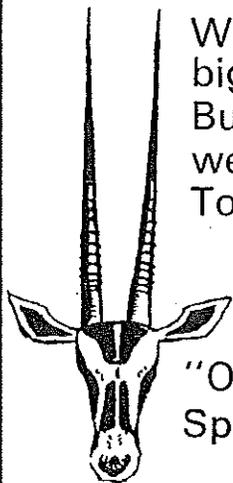
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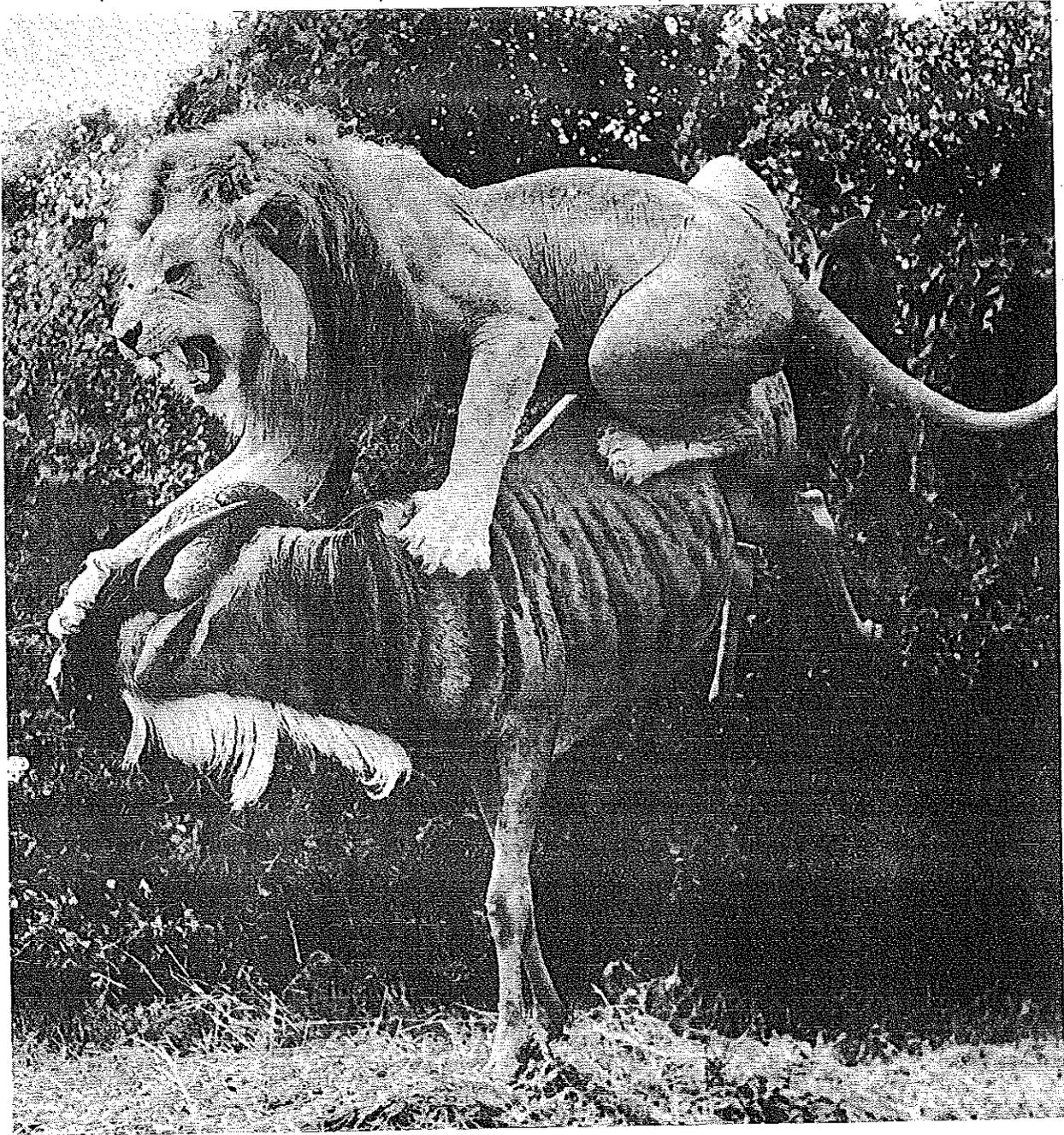
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message from the president of the international professional hunters' association

I am glad to see this magazine in print after so many months of discussing it. I am extremely grateful to those who have given so much time to its preparation, and above all to those who have provided the articles. Its purpose is primarily to give the sportsman a picture of wildlife from the point of view of the professional hunter and those in the field of wildlife management. This is our first issue: in the course of time we hope to make this a quarterly magazine giving a picture of wildlife management the world over.



PRINCE ALFRED VON AUERSPERG

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tony dyer

president of the east african professional hunters' association
vice president of the international professional hunters'
association introduces the first issue of
"the international professional hunters' association magazine"

The time has come to take a new look at "Man the Hunter". For a long time in this free-speaking century the hunter has been an object of criticism to many well-meaning lovers of wildlife. These critics have not been shown the evidence that proves the hunting sportsman to be a great benefactor to wildlife. Ducks Unlimited in North America raises two million dollars in a year to spend on the welfare of the Wild Duck. A great deal of other wildlife benefit from the immense conservation work done by this group of volunteer sportsmen. These sportsmen do not murder Duck. For years they have been content with a bag limit of four. But as these hunters see the teeming wildfowl that they have virtually created, they are amply rewarded.

There are many other parallels on a lesser scale where the hunter has been shown to be the greatest contributor in finance or muscle to conservation measures.

It is not the sportsman who has exterminated sixty two species of wildlife in the last hundred years. The exterminators are cynical and remorseless money-grubbers, who will continue their foul operations until they have exterminated their last prey.

Think of the Seal and the Salmon. Weep for the whale for it is too late. Hurry off to the furrier to buy the last Tiger skin while the stocks last.

Stocks of Leopard skins will last a little longer because a group of sportsmen gathered together in Monte Carlo and accepted some proposals that are putting the wild cat skin trade out of business.

Before emotions rise to the boil let us base this editorial on some of the facts of life.

Man has been a hunter since the beginning. Man has only just stopped living by hunting in the last moment of his evolutionary aeons.

This writer respects the argument of the complete vegetarian, who avoids killing even insects where possible. But there is always a but! My eyes stray down to his sandals and I wonder what animal died to provide them. The line is so difficult to draw between the rights and wrongs in this matter of who kills what and how.

It is generally agreed that the world is in a mess. Environment, ecology, pollution, population are words on every page. This editorial fortunately can narrow its scope away from these awful problems and concentrate on introducing the reader to this first publication of the I.P.H.A.

Professional hunters, guides, call them what you will, from twenty-three countries of the world have joined together to form an Association, with these Aims and Objects:—

The motto to the badge of the I.P.H.A. is the word: PLEDGED. The act of joining this Association includes the signature of the new member which pledges him to agreement with the Aims and Objects.

Membership of the I.P.H.A. has some distinct advantages. A state of affairs will arise when it will be financially profitable for a professional to be a member because clients will seek the services of such members that they may enjoy the real benefits of high standards of ethics, conduct and security.

The tourist all over the world will continue to grow. With this growth will be a parallel growth of competition and of employees' trade unions. Proper insurance cover will become a big problem. Interference by legislation, taxation, bureaucratic regulation and supervision will all grow *ad infinitum*. In all this it will be ever more necessary to have a parent body to turn to for advice and help.

There are three prime factors built into the constitution of the I.P.H.A. and they are put there to safeguard the interests of the professional, the client and the wildlife that has brought them together.

No organisation or association can exist purely for abstract reasons. There must be material advantages to such an association of people if the founders want to see their hopes and beliefs realised in the future. After the first inspired moment when we say: "Let us join together and do something about wildlife problems"; there follows the long slog. The Aims, the Objects, the Constitution, the Rules and By-Laws have to be drafted. Registration has to be sought. Members have to be found and subscriptions extorted from them. This does not produce enough finance to run an office and promote an ideal.

One business in the U.S.A. has already given us five thousand dollars and promised us another five thousand. The East African Professional Hunters' Association financed the very beginning of the I.P.H.A. They did not enter this long and expensive project for fun. They did so because they believe that many of the wildlife problems can only be solved by professional hunters and their clients. There is a great fund of experience, knowledge, administrative ability and financial resource among this group of sportsmen. But even all this is not enough. There is one more factor which is greater than all the others.

Sportsmen have a deep-rooted love of the wildlife they hunt or photograph. Hemingway writes at length of this love. Maybe only those that hunt can believe in this mystical relationship between man and his prey. There is no simple explanation to it. But it exists and it is a great and good force that draws the Hunters of the World together.

fastest mammal on four feet

(Reprinted from "My Adventures With African Animals" by Erwin A. Bauer, W. W. Norton, New York, Publishers)

Visitors to the Emperor's palace in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, are seldom prepared for the unique experience. It is like strolling into the dim exotic past—into Biblical chambers of the Queen of Sheba from whom the Emperor claims to be descended. But the biggest surprise of all comes when a large animal slinks out of the shadows and brushes against the back of the visitor's legs.

The animal—a cheetah, or African hunting leopard—seems to enjoy meeting people that way. Other cheetahs have been greeting palace visitors in the same manner for centuries. They are royal palace pets.

If this appears to be doglike behaviour, it is only because the cheetah is the most canine cat in creation. In fact some African tribesmen consider the cheetah a dog (which it isn't), and a dog with magic powers at that. To see a cheetah in the middle of the day is certain to be followed by great good luck. Unfortunately it grows less and less easy to see them all the time.

The cheetah is certainly one of East Africa's rarest jewels. It is as graceful as a greyhound and as swift as the wind. Few birds can fly as fast as a cheetah can run for two hundred yards or so. It is the fastest animal on earth.

At a distance it is easy to mistake a leopard for a cheetah and vice versa because there is a general resemblance; both are spotted and they are similar in size. But close-up they become unmistakably different. The first thing you notice is that the cheetah is lankier, has longer legs, is lighter (pale fawn) in colour, and has a smaller head in proportion to its body. It is somewhat swaybacked and, by carrying its head low, looks like a long-legged dog in profile.

Whereas a leopard's spots are really rosettes, a cheetah's spots are solid black. The two animals average the same length from nose to tip of tail, but the cheetah is higher at the front shoulder. A full-grown cheetah seldom weighs more than one hundred and fifteen pounds. It is not nearly as sinister-looking as the leopard. The eyes are yellow-brown and almost mild in appearance. Pronounced black "tear" lines extend from the front of the eyes to the muzzle. There is a short wiry mane behind the shoulder. The tail is ringed and has a white tip. Neither its jaws nor its bridgework are as powerful as the leopard's.

Although cheetahs are far less common than leopards, they can be more easily seen because they are diurnal in habit. Of all the world's large cats only the lion is more frequently observed.

The way a cheetah hunts is unique. Success depends on a combination of surprise and the species' great speed because it lives in open plains country where ambush is impossible. Cheetahs are never found in dense bush or jungle. First the animal tries to stalk as

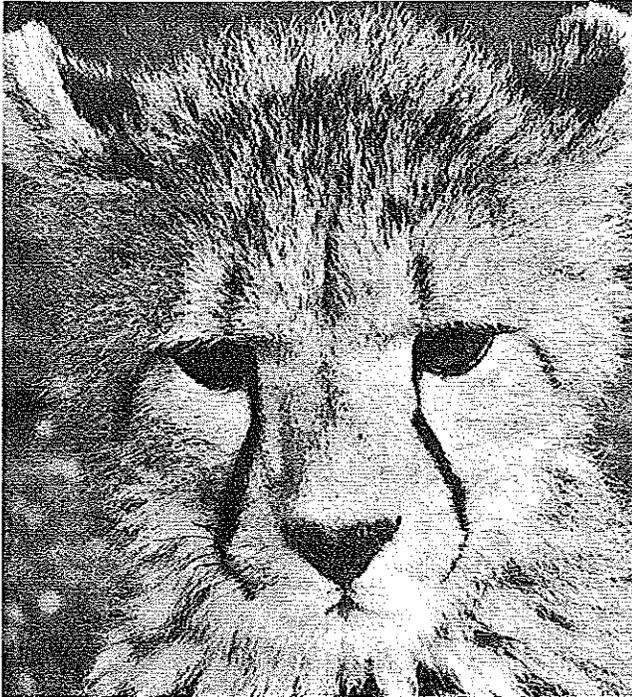


Author Erwin A. Bauer.

close as possible to its target, using tall grass or a drainage line or depression for concealment. Then it races for the victim, trips it up, seizes it by the throat, and strangles it to death. Many observers believe it does not stalk as close as it might before its deadly rush.

But the hunter is not always successful. Many of the small antelopes and gazelles on which the cheetah lives are also very fast. Unless they can be caught within two hundred or three hundred yards, they almost always outdistance the cat. Some of the very small antelopes such as dik-diks and steinbok, can elude a cheetah by dodging about as they flee.

I have never been able to watch cheetahs in action as much as I would like, but on one occasion I did have a ringside seat during an exciting though futile chase. The cheetah appeared to be a young one and after stalking to within about forty yards of a band of Grant's gazelles, made his spring toward the nearest. In less than one hundred yards he caught the gazelle, and the two rolled over and over together in the grass. That



Young cheetahs are vulnerable to any predators which happen to come along.

seemed to be the end. But suddenly the gazelle broke away and ran, and the cheetah gave up; it was too winded to follow.

Besides its lack of stamina, another great handicap is the lack of retractable claws. The cheetah's are blunt, like a dog's, and can be only partially withdrawn. If it weren't for the marks left by the cheetah's claws, it would be impossible to tell its pawprint from a leopard's. Both are the same size and shape.

Cheetahs have never had any conflict with man. There are no records of man-eaters and they never bother livestock. Even when wounded or cornered, they have not been known to retaliate, or do more than growl. The species is easily tamed. When captured at a very young age, they make fascinating, affectionate, and reliable pets. It is no wonder that there is considerable demand for cheetah pets today—at least from show-business people for whom such unique mascots are good publicity.

Unfortunately, cheetahs in the wild seem to be a vanishing breed. They have never been seriously hunted, as have the other cats, and they have been completely protected for a long time almost everywhere. Still their numbers decline and nobody can say exactly why. When full grown, cheetahs have no natural enemies, except packs of hunting dogs which have sometimes run them to exhaustion. But young cheetahs are vulnerable to any predators which happen to come along.

Two to four cubs, or kittens, are born at any time of year. At first they are plain smoky-grey balls of long, woolly fur. They utter a strange birdlike chirp which sounds unnatural if not impossible coming from a cat. As they grow older the chirp becomes a mew and purr. The grey colour gradually blends into pale yellow as spots begin to appear, first on the legs and later on the body.

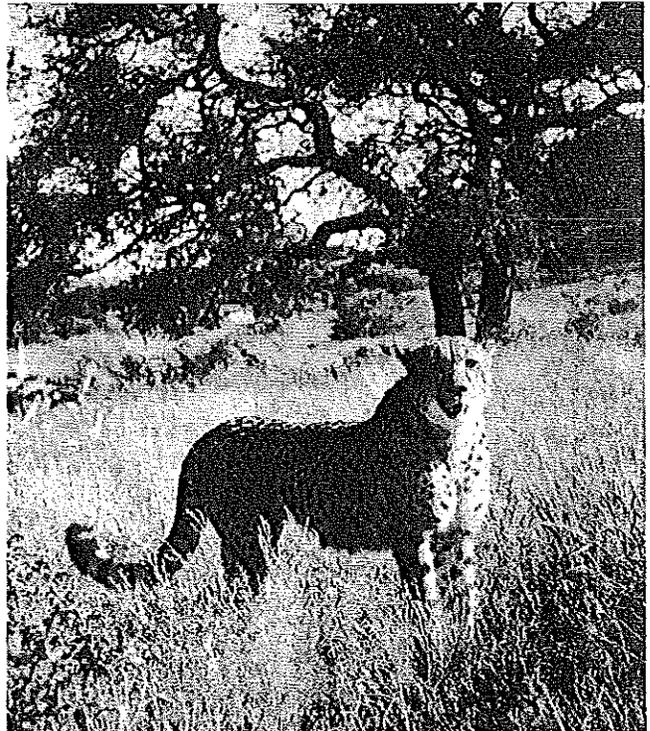
Although it seems completely contrary to their nature there have been instances of cannibalism among cheetahs. There are records of males killing and eating kittens, and there is also the case of a cheetah eating another which had been caught in a poacher's trap.

No cheetah is very well equipped for climbing, but it is not unusual to see them perched in low trees. I saw how they get up there by accident one day. It was early morning in the Karamoja and while glassing the landscape for a band of roan antelope which should have been in the vicinity, I spotted a cat walking at the base of a huge rockpile. There were several umbrella-shaped trees nearby. Because at that distance its spots blended into its body, I decided it was a lioness. I was surprised when the "lioness" made a mighty leap upward onto a branch directly over her head. It wasn't until I moved much closer that the cat in the tree became a cheetah. Unfortunately I didn't get close enough for a picture before the cat dropped down and vanished into the bush.

Just how fast can a cheetah run? Some natives swear it is so fast that the animal's feet never touch the ground. Estimates of its speed have been as much as one hundred miles an hour. But it remained for an experiment halfway around the world from the cheetah's natural range to find the truth.

The "laboratory" was a dog-racing track in the United States, in Florida. The cheetah used in the experiment had been born and raised in captivity, but had been kept in good physical condition by regular workouts. During a half-mile run, the cat briefly exceeded seventy miles per hour. That was faster than any greyhound had ever made the same run.

And faster than any other animal could ever do it.



The cheetah - the fastest animal on earth.

alaskan adventure

By Bud Branham

*Professional Guide President of the Alaska Professional Hunters' Association,
Vice President of the International Professional Hunters' Association.*



The huge Brownie slowly stood erect, towering over the four men crouched in thin cover some 40 feet away. The "Life" photographer snapped a picture, and started to rise up, but I pulled him down, for I saw the bear turn toward the sound. Another picture, the bear turned full and started to gather himself for the leap toward us. I shot him in the throat.

The picture taken that day appeared in "Life" in full colour. To the casual reader, it looked easy, just a bear standing up. But the preparation that went into it, the days and hours of stalking, the danger, those things remain untold.

In Anchorage, before the hunt, Nate Farbman, the photographer, told me and Art Thureson, the hunter, that the ultimate in pictures would be a big Brownie standing up. My reply made him feel that this was a goal that he might spend a lifetime and not see . . . but we were lucky. Art, whose hunt we were documenting, had taken a huge bear, (squared 10 feet 4 inches) a few days before and we got good pictures. Now, on Bruin Bay, on the Alaska Peninsula, we were making a last ditch try for that "ultimate" goal. We had watched this huge male, and a female half his size, at their conjugal antics half the morning. Now, at low tide, they started for the beach, she a hundred yards in the lead. We hurried to our place of vantage and concealment, about 40 feet from the well-used trail. Just as we gained it, the sow stalked slowly along the

trail and down over the bluff. I whispered that the male would be along soon and I could hear Nate suck in his breath when he appeared at the edge of the thicket 100 feet away. I was ready too, for I knew I'd have to kill him.

The Alaska Brown Bear is the largest carnivore on earth. In his largest size, like the male mentioned above, he will weigh three quarters of a ton and stand 10 feet high. Coupled with the Grizzly and the Polar Bear, he is among the most dangerous animals on earth. His range is the coastal islands and coastal fringes, from southeast Alaska to the beginning of the Aleutian Chain. His numbers are much reduced now, with a population somewhere between 7,500 and 10,000 animals. The annual legal kill is an average of 400 to 500, mostly on Kodiak Island and the Alaska Peninsula.

The range of the great Grizzly is much larger, embracing a good share of the huge state of Alaska (586,000 square miles). Although found over most of the state, even in the real Arctic, concentrations are spotty and hunting areas limited to the upper reaches of salmon streams and the lower slopes of the mountains, generally. If the great Brownie is to be called the number one trophy in Alaska, certainly the mighty Grizzly is a close second. Most professionals consider him more dangerous, more short-tempered and attack-prone, than the Brownie, your writer among them. He is considerably smaller, with the colour range about

Continued from Page 10

covered with timber. There are several sub species, such as the Grants of the Alaska Peninsula and the Stone of Rainy Pass (the largest in body size). Trophy bulls are really great to look at, especially the Stone, with a pure white mane and cape, almost black in the body. And they tax any hunter's skill, for they move rapidly, are often wary, especially the big bulls, (that's why they got big). It is safe to say that more record class trophies have come from the Rainy Pass area than any other in Alaska, but their range is greater than that of any of our game animals.

In numbers, the caribou is also greatest. Estimates vary from 2,000,000 to 3,500,000, with the larger figure being most likely nearest to the actual count. Some 25,000 to 30,000 are taken annually, for this animal feeds the native population most.

Our horned game is dominated by the beautiful White Sheep, the Dall. Certainly one of the greatest thrills on earth for the hunter is the sight of a big Ram skylined on the mountain. And one of the hardest to hunt too, because of his habitat and his wary nature, with the biggest Ram highest on the mountain, sheep hunting is never easy. In range they cover a good portion of central to northern Alaska, with some being found on isolated mountains very close to the Chuchi Seas on the north coast. Sheep are seldom found below the brush and timber line, and since all of their danger (except man) comes from below, when alerted they always go "up". So, to hunt them best, one must be above them, and that means really hard work. Let anyone who thinks sheep hunting is easy take another good look at it. Their numbers are estimated to be somewhere near 20,000, with an annual crop well within reason, something like 600 to 800 a year.

Let me tell you of an adventure that took place last August, in the Rainy Pass area. Bobby Burns (an internationally known hunter) and his son, Brad, with myself and Jim Earhart as the professionals, were hunting from our Valeska Lake Camp. We had been unsuccessful for a couple of days, saw some rams but not what we wanted, or not approachable. On this beautiful morning we left camp early, walked down the trail toward Bear Creek. As we went down the narrow valley we scanned the mountain slopes on both sides, for all of it is sheep country. About a mile from camp, I thought I caught a glimpse of a ram, high on the mountain to our right. I put my pack down, sat down with my back against a tree and looked again. Sure enough, on a high saddle two large rams were lying, with another sheep showing a white butt to the right, obviously another ram looking the other way, as is their habit. We put the spotting scope on them and both those showing were impressive. The climb was about 2,000 feet, up a talus slope through the timber up the edge of a slide, through a rock "chimney" and on around the outcrops. Took us the better part of three hours. Finally, with me in the lead, we came out mountains, again in the valleys and in any area not

where I could see the "saddle" which, when up close turned out to be a red shale like dip in an outcrop. No rams visible, so Bobby and Brad sat down, while Jim climbed to where he could see the basin to the right. No rams in that basin, so they moved left, for we could have seen them had they topped out. So we climbed again, higher.

We sat down for lunch. Across the valley groups of ewes and lambs were visible and a few rams. Thirst and impatience made us try our luck without enough rest. A cautious move to the left, a look over an escarpment . . . and there they were. The two big ones were laying down, side by side, about 165 yards across and below us. Picture the situation, two great rams in a basin, within range. A father who is proud to be hunting with his son, with a ready made, mossy rest just in front. I placed my pack for Bobby, Jim placed his for Brad. Jim dropped back with a movie camera and I called the shots. Brad shot first . . . and missed. His ram gone in one leap. Bobby shot, dead centre. I looked at him. Blood was running down his nose, off his chin . . . a "Weatherby Mark", but the most pleased grin on his face. Brad had jumped up, but I told him to get set again, for his ram had to come out in sight soon. He did and Brad made a good shot. Two fine rams down and two wonderful hunters that were very pleased.

The story of Alaska's big game would not be complete without mention of the other animals that are here for the trophy hunter. The Mountain Goat, the Walrus, the elusive and wary Wolf that often goes close to 200 pounds and many other lesser animals. It is a great land, the very name itself conjures up visions of vastness, of the true wilderness. Mostly it is well cared for, by a group (much too small) of dedicated young professional men who form the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Their base address is Juneau, Alaska 99u01. Granted some of our laws and regulations are archaic, certainly not embracing the most forward thinking in conservation. But we are a young country, with a very sparse population in a very large area and beset with all the problems that such a situation brings. We are slowly emerging into the light of true understanding of real conservation and management.

Mention must be made of the realistic approach one who desires to come to Alaska to hunt or fish should make. Like anywhere in the world, those who conduct others in to the wilderness are called professional hunters, or professional guides. In Alaska they are many, but like anywhere else too, those who are really "professional" and who are ethical and able are few. Check your prospective professional with care; contact those with whom he has hunted recently, check with the Department of Fish and Game, from whom a list of "Registered and Master" Guides may be obtained. The best advice I can give would be that the Alaska Professional Hunters' Association be contacted, at 835 Northern Lights Blvd., Anchorage, Alaska 99503.

Continued from Page 16

times ahead of us, but he was light, far lighter than we, and he quickly and instinctively hauled himself on to firm swamp. This was hell; what client would I ever persuade to do this? More astonishing, I discovered that the old man seemed to know exactly where to tread and if the swamp looked uncertain, he flung his spear longitudinally on to the ground ahead of him and would trip nimbly over the spear on to firmer swamp. After watching this procedure, my gunbearer asked him to do it for us and once ahead of us he would throw the spear on to the swamp and signal for us to follow. The spear had a diameter of $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches and unless you were a tightrope artist was not of much use; however, it helped since he usually had his hand on the spear and when you crashed through the swamp taking the spear with you, he still held the spear and, smiling silently, would offer it to you and help drag you on to the next piece of swamp.

After a short time I had doubts about the direction the old man was taking and after consulting the hillside through my sodden binoculars which were rapidly steaming up, I discovered my gunbearer signalling frantically with his flags some 800 yards away on the hillside. We had of course lost our bearings which does not sound as though this could be easy. The fact is that neither my gunbearer nor I had any exact idea of our position in relation to the magnificent Sitatunga we had seen from the hillside. No matter; the old man knew; he exuded confidence. We trudged on and soon the old man slowed down and his movements became cat-like; he kept pointing and turning round and waving ahead of him with his finger, indicating that he had seen something. He had indeed—a female was feeding quietly 40 yards ahead of us. How could she have failed to hear our noisy approach? Now I could see her, now I could not. When she stopped feeding and lifted her head, she seemed to be looking everywhere except at us. The old man pointed at his spear and I shook my head. I realised that this was how he hunted them—he speared them! Surely not? He seemed prepared to go ahead and make a final approach on his own, but I wagged my finger and he grinned helplessly.

About 50 yards ahead and to one side, I saw the tips of a pair of horns; here was a magnificent male. I tried to hold my foggy binoculars on him, but was unable to do so because he was moving and we were standing on a patch of swamp which began to sink under our weight, the water seeping up under our ankles. We moved forward slowly and I could see the top of his back, but he had heard us and he stood magnificently broadside and, although I could see very little of him, I could see all of his head and he was a truly magnificent creature and a fantastic trophy. We stared at each other for perhaps thirty seconds and finally he swung around and barking loudly splashed away and was engulfed in the swamp.

It took us almost two hours to get back to the canoe by a different route and the old man was downcast and depressed. We were wet, and bitten by leeches, and after an unpleasant experience where a hippo appeared almost at our feet through a blanket of swamp, scared

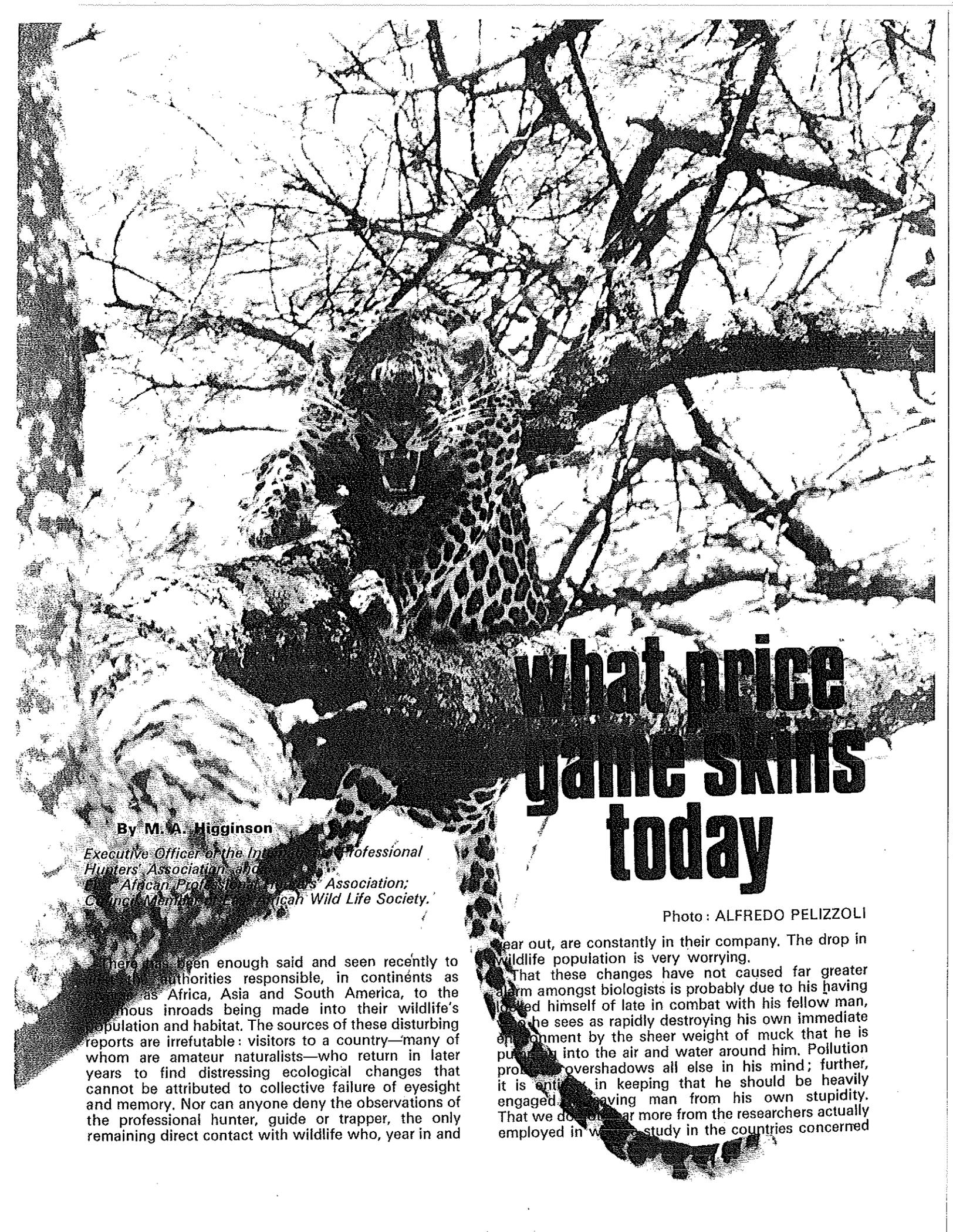
almost half out of our wits. We still had to swim two murky channels about thirty feet wide. This was terrible. I was convinced that no client would enjoy this. Why was our flagman on the hillside not signalling us correctly? He was doing nothing and where was that canoe? This did not seem to worry the old man in the slightest. He grinned, showing widely spaced teeth and he was really in his own environment. The swamp presented no problems whatsoever to him. My gunbearer and I were both exhausted by now and we finally hit the open water about one hundred yards from our canoe. It seemed easier for me to swim to the canoe than to carry on this remorseless pace through the swamp and my gunbearer agreed, but the old man would have none of it. I solemnly handed him my binoculars, dived into the brown, reedy water and struck out for the canoe, followed by my gunbearer, while the old man tripped noiselessly along the edge of the papyrus, darting in and out like a Sitatunga himself and, of course, he was at the canoe way ahead of us.

We started the engine and noisily cruised back through the silent swamp seeing a Fish Eagle here and a Pied King Fisher there through the stumps and cabbage and as we approached the beach where our bedrolls lay in a heap, we saw the most enormous crocodile I had ever seen anywhere. He was quite calm and stayed alongside our boat for perhaps thirty yards. We thought about our foolhardy swim and remembered that we had been swimming on the beach the day before. We folded our kit and headed for the mainland two hours away, wet but happy.

We had seen that flags helped solve the approach problem. The old man was a great help, but there had to be a more efficient way, some way to get a client to this magnificent trophy. We decided that we would have to get a pair of walkie talkies. Without the old man we would certainly be lost in the swamps, probably never find the boat again and it was incredible how different the swamp looked once you were in it.

I wondered what client I could persuade to go into the swamps with me to try for this magnificent creature. None of the other professional hunters currently in Uganda at that time had been there; further, I would need the following requirements in a client: I would need great patience, somebody physically fit enough to attempt this and preferably somebody who had been out before and obtained most of the other species; in short, somebody who was specialising—Dr. Ed Chatwell from Los Angeles was my man, better still, he specifically requested a Sitatunga.

We hired a launch from Entebbe and I sent my vehicles round to Bukakata on the mainland opposite Bugala Island. These Ministry of Works launches are expertly manned with a crew of two; they are polite, efficient and very pleasant to be with. We arrived at our beach after six hours of sailing through very rough seas where most of my own safari crew were sick. We took only lightweight equipment. Once on the island we hunted for two days while we searched for the magnificent creature I had seen on my last trip. Finally we located a lovely bull and after three hours of toil



By M. A. Higginson

*Executive Officer of the International Professional Hunters' Association and
President of the African Professional Hunters' Association;
Council Member of the European Wild Life Society.*

There has been enough said and seen recently to make the authorities responsible, in continents as diverse as Africa, Asia and South America, to the numerous inroads being made into their wildlife's population and habitat. The sources of these disturbing reports are irrefutable: visitors to a country—many of whom are amateur naturalists—who return in later years to find distressing ecological changes that cannot be attributed to collective failure of eyesight and memory. Nor can anyone deny the observations of the professional hunter, guide or trapper, the only remaining direct contact with wildlife who, year in and

what price game skins today

Photo: ALFREDO PELIZZOLI

year out, are constantly in their company. The drop in wildlife population is very worrying. That these changes have not caused far greater alarm amongst biologists is probably due to his having locked himself of late in combat with his fellow man, who he sees as rapidly destroying his own immediate environment by the sheer weight of muck that he is pumping into the air and water around him. Pollution problems overshadow all else in his mind; further, it is entirely in keeping that he should be heavily engaged, leaving man from his own stupidity. That we do hear more from the researchers actually employed in wildlife study in the countries concerned

is probably due to the fact that his scope of operation in both area and time is so limited as to prevent him from making anything but the most general of observations. To this may be added the understandable lack of interest in the mere counting of heads and the belief that exposing the skeletons in other peoples' cupboards is uncharitable.

In the long term, the future of wildlife is predictable and hopeful. Two developments over the past years give rise to hope. In the more technically advanced countries, man has so thoroughly fouled his own nest that he is forced to do something about it in clearing up his own environment. In the course of time, he will discover that the only guarantee that he is on the right track is when wildlife returns to normal. The one can only lead to the appreciation of the other.

The second great discovery was that wildlife is a valuable resource: people will pay considerable amounts to come to view God's natural work to the extent that the income so derived is beginning to be of ever-increasing importance in many countries' economies. Further, never has so rich a natural resource been found to require so few overheads to exploit. Additionally, if properly managed, it is inexhaustible. The fullest and fastest exploitation of this resource can only be beneficial.

If this is so, why then the pessimism? There is a poison attacking the whole well-being of wildlife and threatening the survival of a number of species, in particular those of the great cat family, the world over, and in general all animals the trophies of which have *commercial* value. This danger is not understood by all, yet it is easily diagnosed and defined. Human nature being what it is, any commodity from which money can readily be made is in immediate demand. Was it not discovered that uncontrolled exploitation of the natural oyster beds of the world was leading very rapidly to their destruction? The same may be said for those wild animals whose furs and skins are in great demand commercially. That there is a direct relation between commerce and the depletion of wildlife populations is amply proved by the fact that those being most seriously depleted are those animals whose furs fetch the highest price on the market.

To remedy this situation requires efforts extending far beyond what can be achieved by the authorities and governments of the homes of wildlife. No amount of legislation prohibiting the killing and exportation of these valuable furs and skins will overcome so established a market. There is evidence to hand from the European and North American receivers that shows skins and furs imported to be far in excess of those authorized by the countries of origin. It can therefore be said with absolute certainty that the current market price of a wild animal's skin or fur proportionately endangers it as a species.

The commercial demand for a skin or fur is the basic cause of poaching. To the uninitiated, poaching probably conjures up no more than the somewhat romantic picture of the hardy native of the bush bent over his bow or illegally obtained musket, in dangerous proximity to the ferocious animal he intends to kill. In reality, of course, nothing could be further from the truth. The commonest way of killing game animals is the cheapest, which consists of stringing wire nooses by the hundreds in game paths. Little imagination is required to picture the result. This form of killing differentiates in no way between the ten or fifteen species of wild animals that may be in the area, nor does it discriminate between the sex and size. Thus, a wire noose intended for a leopard might cause suffering to an animal as large as a rhino or slow death to an unwanted antelope. Proof of this is a daily occurrence amongst hunters in certain parts of the world, many of the animals being found dead where they were trapped or bearing scars of their wounds when killed.

Those creating the market for the great cat skins from Africa, Asia and South America—chiefly buyers of coats and other apparel—are contributing towards both the devastation and suffering that goes with it. Since none of these animals are farmed, as are ostrich, it follows that they are being killed in their natural habitat in the coarsest and most brutal fashion by people who only see profit in what they are doing. Though he may not know it, the importer has no way of telling which skins and furs he receives are from a legal and which are from an illegal source. Like precious stones, if they are moved through enough countries, the documentation that lends the deal respectability is acquired. The importer's concern is first to satisfy the demand: the source is of secondary importance.

What then can be done to improve the situation in the short term? A great deal is being done already and it is gratifying to know that in the United States in particular, both the public and enlightened bodies are pressing for restrictions in import of and dealing in specified furs and skins. At the other end, one or two countries of origin are beginning to clamp down on the trading in them. The answer, however, lies in the end, as always, with public opinion. With the increased opportunities to visit the countries whose wildlife is yet part of its way of life, who can doubt that a new surge of feeling towards wild animals and their conservation will develop? If your thoughts should turn in these directions, let it not be towards the purchase of that beautiful leopard coat in the expensive shop window, but instead towards going to see the animal in the flesh in its natural habitat. You are guaranteed a reward far greater than any purchase you may make.

island sitatunga

By Brian Herne

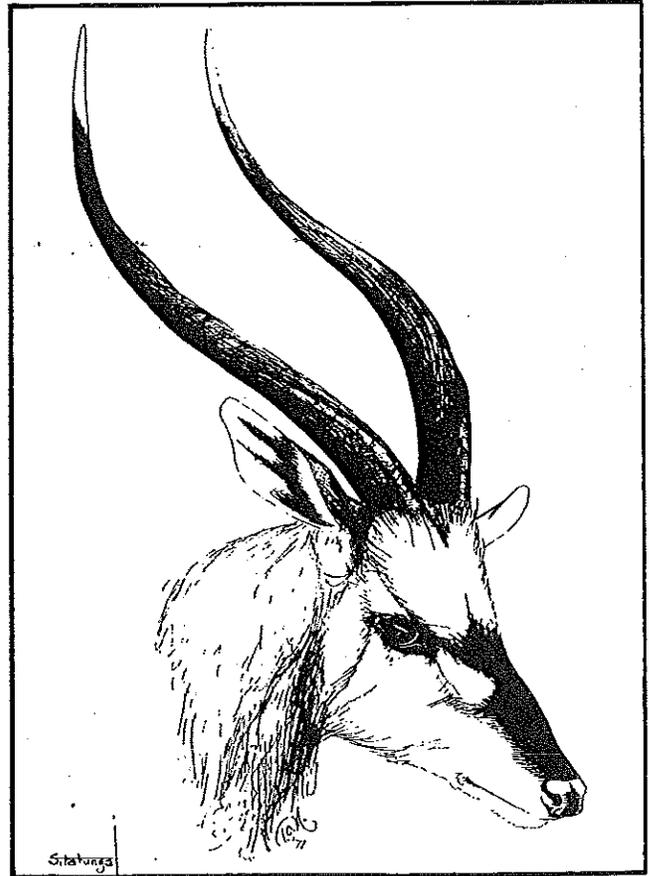
Professional Hunter-Kenya.

The first time I ever saw a Sitatunga was in May of 1962; a brown, dripping, woolly creature which barked loudly as he crashed through a papyrus thicket, dived into a narrow channel, swam frantically to the next clump of floating papyrus and disappeared. This was in a tiny area of swampland at the northern end of Bugala Island.

Bugala is a beautiful, irregularly rectangular-shaped island with large patches of equatorial rain forest and tracts of hilly, rolling, grassy savanna. Bugala is also the largest island in the Ssesse group in Lake Victoria and the home of the Island Sitatunga (*Spekii Sylvestris*), regarded only provisionally as a distinct sub-species by Rowland Ward.

It has been claimed that the Island Sitatunga swims from Bugala Island to the mainland. This is possible of course, but I have never heard of a reliable report of this being true: for one thing, the area where most of the Sitatunga dwell on Bugala is near the southwestern tip and in a straight line as the crow flies would mean a distance of some eighteen miles to the mainland. The northern end of the island is a good deal closer to the mainland, some five miles; however, this portion of the island is fairly well populated and there are no big Sitatunga swamps located there.

I was very excited about my brief encounter with the elusive and little known Island Sitatunga. There are many myths concerning this strange creature, although the Sitatunga as a species is far more common than one would suppose, including the other races; the southern and the mainland northern Sitatunga occur in most of the swamps in central and southern Uganda and the northern Sitatunga in the swamps around Bukoba in Tanzania and the Luganzo and Moyowosi areas in Tanzania.



T. O. MATHEWS

Because he is extremely highly strung, shy and elusive and being a member of the spiral-horned group of antelope, he bears many of the characteristics of the Bushbuck and Kudu. His gait on land is nervous and jumpy and he walks with his back hunched and his ears are always straight and alert. He is a jittery feeder and, like the Kudu, does not seem to masticate his food properly. Every muscle seems to be tensed, ready for an immediate get-away and his senses are extremely well-keyed.

In the swamps where he normally lives, he is more relaxed, but still highly strung and moves cautiously, and I have observed some strange habits. Contrary to popular belief, at least with the Island Sitatunga, and contrary to the usual run of his mainland cousins, the Sitatunga on the Ssesse Islands seems to favour a warm sun and I have seen more of them out feeding during the noonday hours than I have either in the early morning or evening. I theorise that this could be because he has a long, shaggy coat, much longer than any of the other spiral-horned antelopes, often covered with mud, and his feet are, of course, constantly wet. On very hot days I have observed them lying almost completely submerged in water with only their heads showing.

This first encounter was on the Ssesse Islands and I was on a five-day reconnaissance in a Ssesse Island canoe, powered by a 10 h.p. outboard. These are wonderful craft; fast, comparatively comfortable and very seaworthy. I was exploring the southern end of Bugala Island in preparation for a safari with Warren Page, Shooting Editor of "Field and Stream". I was a little apprehensive about this particular safari because I had heard many strange things about the Island Sitatunga, most of which I subsequently discovered to be untrue.

The day finally arrived when Warren Page and I left Bukakata on the Uganda mainland in a 40-foot cabin cruiser hired from the Ministry of Works. We went with the minimum of equipment and lived on board. We toured the islands at the northern end of Bugala and even hired some local Africans who assured us that there were "thousands" of Sitatunga, but not in the swamps, only in the thick rain forest bordering the swamps. We arranged a beat. After the third beat it became apparent that this method was a waste of time. I caught a glimpse of a female rushing for the papyrus. It also became apparent that most of the islanders hunted their own Sitatunga in this way; however, they used nets and dogs and drove the Sitatunga into the nets.

Unfamiliar as I was with the islands, we had not evolved a method, and experience is, of course, what pays off in hunting, with luck having a great deal to do with it. Warren and I were out of luck and short on the first two requirements for this particular animal.

Meantime, on the fifth day we received a radio message from Dave Williams, presently of Ker, Downey & Selby Safaris, who was hunting on the Katonga River in the Toro area of Uganda. Dave had seen a number of good Sitatunga in the swamps bordering the Katonga River and Warren immediately went up there and had a far better hunt than he had had with me.

Sitatunga hunting became a challenge for me. I determined to learn more about it. I obtained detailed maps of the Ssesse Island group, then, together with John Blower, at that time the Chief Game Warden of Uganda, we rented an aircraft flown by Paddy O'Riley who, with all his experience, could proceed to skim us low over swampland bordered by narrow valleys. We flew a two-hour reconnaissance over the Ssesse Islands and it soon became apparent that there were only two major swamps worth hunting, admittedly very large swamps, and these lay on the south-western side of Bugala Island. We saw four Sitatunga from the air.

This was very exciting and at the first opportunity I went back to the swamps with two gunbearers and spent 10 days walking over the islands and studying Sitatunga feeding in the swamps with the aid of a 20 power telescope. On one occasion I saw a magnificent bull about 400 yards from the shore and I estimated that his horns were in the record class of 30 inches. I was also astonished one morning to count nineteen Sitatunga in one swamp. They were scattered and not in herds, but singly or in twos, the females apart even from each other. I also discovered a method. All the trophy bulls seemed to be far out in the swamp, usually between 500 and 800 yards. Fortunately these two swamps are surrounded by reasonably high hills and it is possible to glass the swamps below. The tops of the hillsides are clear and you are nine hundred feet above the swamp. However, bordering the swamp for 200 yards and more there are thick equatorial rain forests, beautiful mahogany trees and palms. Therefore if you attempt to lessen the range or shoot from dry land by moving downhill your view is obstructed by the forest. Obviously from the top of the hill the range was too great. How then to get at the Sitatunga?

My first attempt without a rifle was to leave a gunbearer at the top of the hill with two make-shift white flags and after careful instructions the gunbearer was to direct me once I was in the swamp with the aid of the flags. First I attempted to walk through the forest which was infested with mosquitoes and then get on to the floating swamp which seemed to be much deeper than I had first anticipated and was probably around fifteen feet at the deepest point. There were thickets of papyrus and open swamp grass varying in height from two to fourteen feet. This method was impractical because I had to swim a short channel and then try to climb on to the floating swamp grass which seemed constantly to give way at my every effort. After three attempts I

gave up and, drenched and perspiring and covered with mud and not a little shaken from an unpleasant encounter with a hippo, I staggered on to dry land and felt even more determined than ever.

Finally, through the local fishermen, I discovered that there was a great Sitatunga hunter who lived in a tiny hut right in the middle of Bugala Island in a beautiful forest clearing where I saw large flocks of African Grey Parrots. When I appeared through a banana grove, I could see that I had caused great consternation. Two young men standing in front of the hut disappeared into the undergrowth and finally I saw an old woman. When I asked her about Kabano, she told me that he was out. I could see the reason for the fear of the two young men—in front of the hut lay the fresh skin of a female Sitatunga. Lying discarded in the banana grove was a pair of beautiful Sitatunga horns and I estimated them at 25 inches. Through my gunbearer, who speaks seven different dialects near perfectly, I informed the old Muganda woman that I wished to meet her husband. She was nervous at first and in a fluent stream of Luganda told us that we should wait. We sat outside the hut and settled down to wait while the old woman disappeared into the undergrowth.

After an hour she reappeared, smiling, and told us that her bwana would soon be along. I told my gunbearer that we would never see him and that we were wasting our time and the words were no sooner out of my mouth than the old man appeared with the two youths we had seen earlier. He was very uncommunicative at first, polite but reserved. There was much preliminary three-way dialogue and finally he gave us a chicken and a bunch of bananas and promised to come to our camp at dawn the following day.

We were sleeping on a sandy beach where the mosquitoes were terrible. We had no tents, only bed rolls and fortunately mosquito nets and repellent. In the early hours of the morning there was a tremendous electric storm, common in this area, and drenched and shivering, we crouched round our miserable, smoky fire and awaited the dawn. Sure enough, as the sun crept up over the hills, the old man and his two sons appeared and we trailed wearily up the hill to spot Sitatunga. With daylight the clouds disappeared and it became hot and sultry. I soon picked out a fine Sitatunga who appeared now, and then disappeared. He was feeding graceful, truly a beautiful animal, about 800 yards out in the swamp. How to get to him? I did not want to kill him, I only wanted to explore the possibilities of an approach. I wished I had a camera with which I could photograph him from where I was standing; surely you would need a 1000 mm. lens? Through my gunbearer I asked the old man how he would go about it. His answer was simple for he was a simple man, grey-haired, puny, thin and frail-looking, but he had seen the Sitatunga which I could barely discern with the naked eye and while he explained his eyes lit up; this was no amateur, this was a brilliant strategist, an experienced hunter and he had obviously done this

before. He took the grubby white kanzu over his head and wrapped it round his loins. He leant on his slender, wobbly, short spear, with a narrow blade no more than four inches long. He pointed to a small canal of open water leading into the swamp from the open lake. He told us to walk back to the beach, paddle our boat into the canal and then get out and walk!

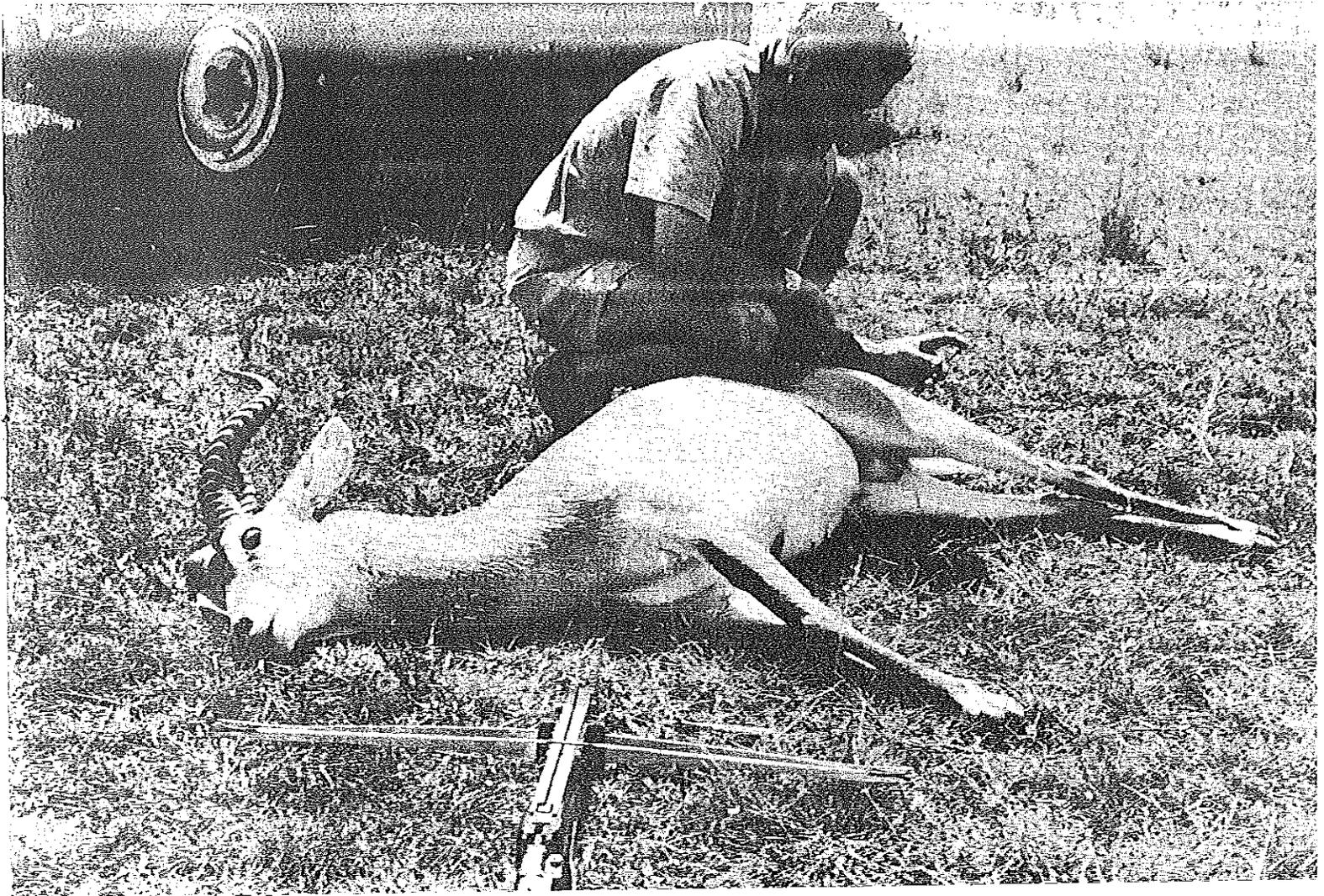
I was not happy about the idea and it had become very evident that most of the islanders and the fishermen were Sitatunga hunters and that almost all of them were hippo hunters. Certainly there were a fair number of hippo in the swamps and from past experience it could be reckoned that a fair number of these hippo had met with the local hunters or, worse, had spear wounds in them and a disposition to match. During my observations, I had seen that all the hippo went deep into the swamps during daylight; none was to be seen in really open patches of water. I heard them grunt and saw the occasional spout of water when they snorted far out in the swamp. This surely was a sign that they had been extensively hunted, and this old man wanted us to walk in the swamps? My Acholi gunbearer, although an experienced swimmer, was apprehensive, but the old man insisted. There was no other way, but how, I asked him, would we be able to see the Sitatunga when we were in the swamp? He had no answer and smiled knowingly.

Finally we were in the canal and tied up to a patch of floating papyrus. The old man was extremely nimble. I had a lot to learn, for the old man leapt on to the wobbly papyrus and beckoned for us to follow. Once through the papyrus we were in open swamp and there were Sitatunga tracks and droppings in the soft lettuce leaf everywhere. Stranger still was the sensation; you felt as if you were walking on a magic carpet, for we were, after all, walking on water. The swamp formed a thin blanket over the water, it was spongy and with every step weaved as though one were walking on floating foamrubber. A lovely feeling and quite easy.

We followed the old man who seemed to know exactly where he was going. Why hadn't I thought of this? My complacency was suddenly shattered and I fell through a soft patch and disappeared in mushy, filthy water. The swamp had given way and I was struggling frantically to keep my binoculars dry and the more I struggled in the water, together with my gunbearer who was also swimming now, and the more we tried to clamber back on to the floating lettuce, the more it broke away under our elbows each time. The old man was standing ahead of us, high and dry, and he held out the spear to help us on to a firm patch of swamp.

Finally, exhausted and filthy, with several leeches on us, we were again on moist swamp. This was not so easy after all and, sure enough, thereafter the going became worse. We had hit a tract of firm, spongy swamp and then going through tusset grass we suddenly collapsed again through the water and I was almost happy to see the old man plunge in several

Continued on Page 27



Administering a tranquilliser to a Uganda Kob captured for translocation

darting

By NEIL CASPERD
Department of Pharmacology,
Makerere University, Uganda

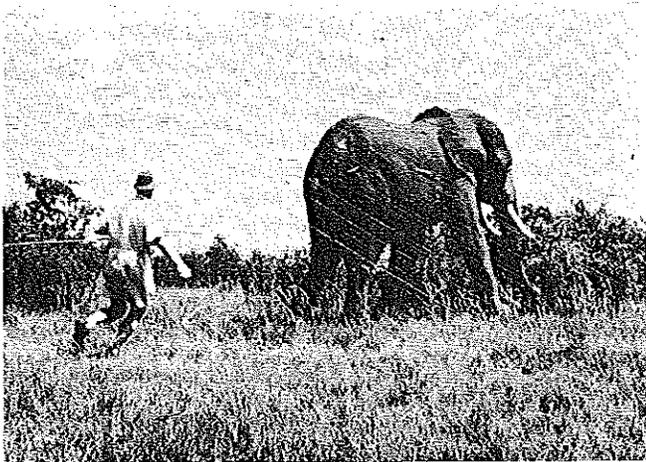
The technique of remote animal immobilisation by means of drugs was developed principally as a scientific and humanitarian tool which now has a wide variety of uses. The best known of these are animal rescue and translocation but equally important are the wide range of zoological and veterinary research projects which can now be carried out. Marking of animals followed by their subsequent release to study behaviour patterns, the collecting of specimens, body fluids, parasites etc., without killing the animal and, of course, euthanasia using drugs, are all now practical propositions and are being used extensively by the various scientific disciplines.

Although significant advances have been made over the last ten years in most aspects of darting, there is still considerable research needed to ensure that the most suitable drugs are used for different species of animals. Biological variation, that is, the variety of ways in which different animals react to the same stimuli, in this case drugs, is often difficult to explain, but knowledge of this, in terms of using the most suitable drug at the correct dose level for a specific animal often means the difference between a successful capture and a failure due to fatality or escape. Examples of biological variation can be shown with many drugs. Suxamethonium, which is used with almost 100 per cent success on Uganda Kob, is lethal when used for Hartebeest. The now famous M99 (Etorphine) which

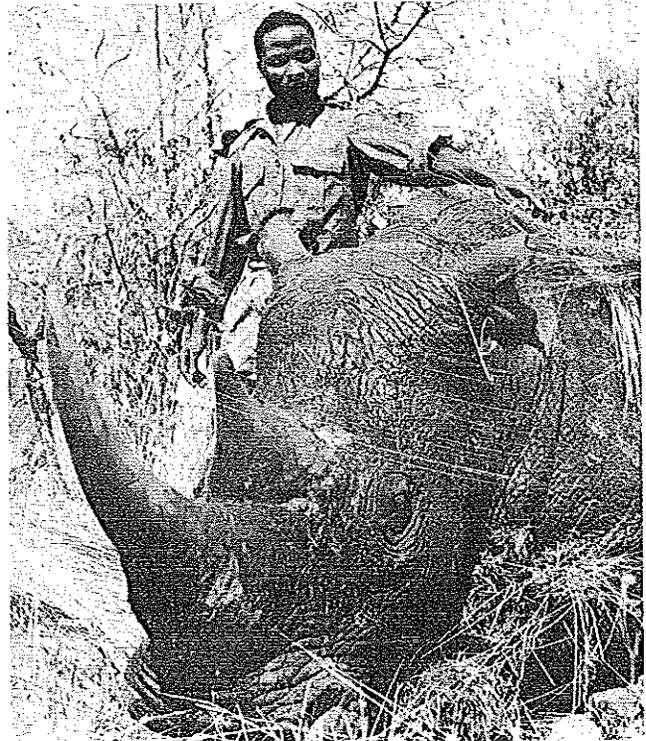
has been used so successfully on Rhino and Elephant is not suitable for most Antelope, and where one milligramme of M99 will bring down an adult Rhino it may take 4-6 mgms to immobilise an Oribi. It is obvious therefore that the correct drug and dose level for any given animal must be used.

At the present stage of development where effective drug doses are known for most of the larger African mammals and commercial firms are producing rifles capable of firing automatic syringes with reasonable accuracy up to 60-70 yards, the question arises whether trophy hunting could be carried out only with the use of drugs. This is already practised in certain states of America, where an overdose of a drug which does not spoil the meat and which is rendered harmless during cooking, is used. This method has the added advantage that the skin is not damaged by the needle, and consequently perfect trophies are obtainable. Certain preservationists have taken this form of hunting a stage further and have suggested that instead of inducing euthanasia with drugs, the correct immobilising dose should be given and photographic trophies collected. The animal should then be allowed to recover and be released.

This obviously poses many more problems and presupposes that the hunter has a fairly extensive knowledge of pharmacology! Many of the drugs used in animal capture are extremely dangerous to men as well and some can be absorbed through the intact skin. Consequently a knowledge of the drugs to be used together with the ability to measure them accurately, often to within 1/1000 part of a gramme, is essential if accidents are to be avoided. The quantity of drug required to immobilise an Elephant is enough to immobilise permanently a large number of people should a mishap occur, and certain drugs currently in use do not have antidotes! Nevertheless, given suitable conditions there is no doubt that certain of the plains game in Africa could be hunted in this manner. The major problem would be the time lag between



An Elephant immobilised for withdrawal of blood samples.



A White Rhino regaining consciousness after the removal of a wire snare

injection of the drug and immobilisation. This is generally in the range of 4-6 minutes. Obviously during this period any animal darted in bush country or long grass or even in hilly country can disappear completely well within this time. The hunter then has not only lost his trophy but his dart as well. Furthermore, the animal if not found may well die from the effects of the drug, especially if it is one which requires an antidote to reverse its action.

Most game immobilisation, for rescue or scientific purposes, is carried out in Game Parks or Reserves, where the animals can be approached relatively easily and where there is generally plenty of help. Even so difficulties are inevitably encountered. Hippo will nearly always try to return to a swamp or river if darted and unless prevented will certainly drown. Antelope when darted may well join a herd, which in itself does not matter but if that herd then splits, each group taking a different direction, it is almost certain that the darted animal will not be in the group you decide to follow! This problem also occurs with Buffalo, who in addition will invariably make for long grass. It is therefore obvious that the darting technique, although an extremely useful tool, has to be used within its limitations and that until the day a drug is developed which will either paralyse or anaesthetise within a matter of seconds, the technique will probably be restricted to game conservation.

the elusive bongo

By Tony Sanchez-Arino
Professional Hunter-Zambia.

It is really surprising to read in hunting books, and even in specialised natural history ones, how little is known in general about the present Bongo distribution in Africa.

I do not think I need to do a wide introduction to "Mr. Bongo" because everybody more or less connected with big game knows he is one of the top trophies in the world, and the golden dream of many cheated hunters who have been on his tracks—without success. He is a member of the aristocratic sub-family 'Tragelaphinae', with relatives as famous as the Sitatunga, Greater and Lesser Kudu, Mountain Nyala, Bushbuck, Nyala and Giant Eland; the name of this sub-family, by the way, means 'Spiral-Horned Antelope'. The Bongo is a shy animal, living in the forests from West to East Africa, all along the Equatorial belt of rain forests, at the most varying altitudes from the low land up to ten thousand feet on Mount Kenya.

He is a very powerful antelope, the largest in the forest; both the male and female possess horns. In the thick forest where they are found it is difficult to make a fast distinction between male and female, but there are two points that help the hunter. The general body colour is chestnut, with the typical white stripe on the shoulders, flanks, and hindquarters, becoming darker in the bulls, against the bright red chestnut of the female, who is also smaller and slimmer. The horns of the bull are larger, straighter, and in the form of an open spiral, with the tips separated—the opposite of the female, whose horns are much thinner, turn a little over her back, with the tips very close to one another.

The height of a male Bongo up to his shoulder is from 1.20 metres to 1.25 metres, with a weight between 200 and 220 kilos. We can consider the female to be 30 per cent smaller on this measurement.

Four races of Bongo have been described: the typical *Boocerus Eurycerus* from West Africa, the *B.e. Isaaci* from Kenya and Sudan, the *B.e. Cooperi* from north-east ex-Belgian Congo, and the *B.e. Katanganus* from southern ex-Belgian Congo. I am not going to discuss the accuracy of these four varieties; the only thing I can say is that in my experience I found all the Bongo to be similar, with the exception of the East African one, which lives isolated from the rest in a mountainous area thousands of miles away from the next Bongo population and has his own cranial characteristics, with bigger and more massive horns, perhaps due to the feeding at these higher altitudes where they are found. Normally the sub-varieties come from the study of one or two old pairs of skulls and horns by someone who has never been on the spot, so I recommend the taking of this with the correspondent reserve.

From the hunter's point of view, there are only two Bongo: the one found in west-central Africa and the one in Kenya, nothing else. Perhaps after this statement some zoologist will protest and will say that I am a donkey and ignorant. Perhaps he will be right, but 20 years of my life have been spent in Africa out of a total of 41, and, together with elephant hunting, bongo

research has been my favourite activity, and I have been fortunate enough to visit all of the countries where he exists, obtained a few specimens, and have had a look at many more.

I do not know why the Bongo found in Sudan has been classified together with the Kenya one as Eastern Bongo (*B.e. Isaaci*), even in Rowland Ward's "Records of Big Game." You do not need to be a genius to see that there is no connection; by the geographical situation, the country where he is found, the general surroundings, feeding, etc., he is the north-eastern limit of the west-central African race, without any connection to his cousin in the Kenya mountains—more than 1,500 miles away. The Sudan Bongo are found along the border of the ex-Belgian Congo and Central African Republic (old Ubangui Choui), where the other race are found only passing the theoretical line of the frontier. When hunting Bongo in southern Sudan I used to put my camp only two or three miles from the Congo border, and frankly speaking, many times you do not know which side of the frontier you are on!

I am not going into detail about the Bongo's habits, etc., as it is out of the target of this article. But only let me explain one point: nearly all the works I have read about Bongo say that he lives in pairs or in small groups, seldom more than six or eight individuals. I do not know the basis of this statement, but it is not very accurate. I have seen Bongo in herds of up to fifteen head normally, but bigger ones are not unusual. Personally, I have counted thirty-one together on one occasion in Sudan, but in the Aberdare Mountains in Kenya, I have seen herds of over fifty!

It is difficult to find reliable and accurate literature about the Bongo, maybe because very few have the chance to observe this beautiful antelope in the forbidding nature of its habitat—very dense forests with poor light and thick undergrowth. For those interested in general information about the Bongo, I recommend the reading of the notes in the 1969 edition of Rowland Ward's "Records of Big Game", page 116, which is very informative.

Now, let us go into the main reason for this article: the present distribution of Bongo in Africa, going from west to east and having in the first place . . .

SIERRA LEONE

The Bongo population in this country has been reduced very much in the last 20 years, due especially to illegal hunting with traps and the opening of large areas to farming, etc. Today he is only found in the forest areas in the south-east, towards the Liberian border in the districts of Pendembu, Joru, Blama and Pujehun. He has been exterminated in the rest of the country and in those areas referred to above, his hunting is very difficult.

LIBERIA

Not very much is known about the Bongo situation here. I found them principally in two areas far from each other. In the west, close to Sierra Leone, in the

Kongwa Forest, south of Kolahun, along the Morro, Mano and Loffa Rivers; in the east near the Ivory Coast, from Tchien to Paluke and Webo, River Duabe, etc. In eastern Liberia it is not a rare animal and is well known by the local population. Fortunately, its number has not been affected by indiscriminate hunting.

IVORY COAST

The Bongo is well distributed in all the south-western part of the country, especially in Sinfra, Gagnoa, Subre, Buyo, Tai, Grabo and San Pedro, and is one of the most promising areas to the prospective hunter.

GHANA

As in the Sierra Leone, his number has been reduced due to the fast development of the country. Today he is found in the Kakum forest in the south-west and in parts of the Ashanti country, South Kumasi, like Nsinsim, Wiawso, etc., but is difficult to find and is decreasing in numbers.

TOGO

I do not have personal experience in this country, and all I can say is that according to some information, the Bongo was found in two small places: one is the forested mountain zone of Kluto and the other south of Sokode, in the forest of Lokulu. But, due to the heavy human population in such a small country, I doubt if any are left today.

CAMEROON

Widely distributed in all southern Cameroon, he is not really plentiful in any place and difficult to find. In my experience, the best areas to hunt Bongo in this country are Oveng, Yen, Djum, Lomie, Messamena, South Baturi, Yokaduma, Bangue, and Molundu—especially these last two places, but they are very far into the remote south-east corner and difficult to reach.

GABON

Here the Bongo are found only north of the Equator, in the great rain forest from Minvul to Makoku and Oyem to Mekambo, in a virtually deserted country only inhabited by pygmies.

CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE)

The ex-French Congo has one of the best Bongo areas in the whole of Central Africa. Found, as in Gabon, only north of the Equator, he is especially plentiful in the districts of Vesso and Bomassa. They are found in the semi-marshy rain forest, a very difficult country for humans to pass, but the Bongo is very abundant and with the help of Babinga pygmies, there is a chance to get them. Other good areas are: Suanke, Sufflay, Mamdzala and Epena.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Bongo are found here in two well separated parts of the country, in the forest districts of the west, M'Baikii, N'Gotto, Nola, Salo, and Bayanga, and beyond

Bangassu to the east of the country in the upper M'Bomu until the Sudan border, in the gallery forest along the rivers, where he is comparatively abundant.

CONGO (KINSHASA)

Plentiful in many parts of this big country, he is especially numerous in the following districts: Lake Leopold II, Lake Tumba, between Opala and Katakombé in the sources of the Tshuapa River, Gemena, Businga, Lisala, Buta, Monkoto, Banalia, Avakubi, Angumu, Walikale, Beni, along the Sudanese and the Central African Republic borders and in the Maniema district, along the Luama River, North Kabambare. The Congo Bongo are found still in numbers comparable with 20 years ago, with vast areas to their complete domain.

SUDAN

Only found in the south-western part of the country, along the Congo border, they are really abundant especially in Yambio, west of Nzara, Bengengai and south Li-Yubi. In my opinion, this part of the Sudan is one of the best places in Africa to hunt Bongo, with the gallery forest along the rivers and not too thick as in other places, with plenty of salt licks where the animals come.

KENYA

In this country they are only found in the highland forest areas, from the Mau Escarpment to the Aberdare Mountains and on Mount Kenya, at an altitude of up to 10,000 feet, in dense forest and bamboo, difficult to approach but still in fair number, especially in the Aberdares, where herds over 50 head have been seen.

From time to time there have been reports of Bongo found in Nigeria, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea (old Spanish Guinea) and Uganda, but this is pure fantasy. They are non-existent in these places, as has been demonstrated many times. The only places where it is still possible to find Bongo, although not yet proved, are some big and unexplored forests in south-west Ethiopia, between the Baro and Omo Rivers, something still left to the fortunate person with sufficient time and money to undertake the task!!

To end this article I would like to give one piece of advice to the prospective hunter. When hunting Bongo, forget all about the light rifles with very high muzzle velocity, etc., and use a heavy one. In the thick bush where the Bongo are found, small bullets can be deflected easily by branches, etc., and not reach the target. The heavy ones always keep the trajectory much better and have more resistance to deflection. I found my Holland .375 Magnum with 300 grs. silver tipped bullets perfect for this work.

There are still plenty of Bongo in Africa awaiting the real hunter who wants to bag one, but it will require great effort, sacrifice and steadiness, three conditions not too easy to find together nowadays, unfortunately

"Buena Suerte, Amigos!"

future of wildlife in india

By Giri Raj Singh

Professional Guide;

*Founder Member of the Indian Shikar
Outfitters Association.*

No one can dispute the fact that India's wild life has suffered a considerable setback and has been badly depleted in the past twenty years. To give only a couple of examples: gone are the vast herds of Black Buck of yesteryear that once roamed the plains of India in their thousands. From some areas, gone also are the Swamp Deer that were a common sight in herds of five hundred or more. Even eight or ten years back, it was not uncommon to see herds of Black Buck within 10 to 15 miles of Delhi. But that's all water under the bridge and nothing can be done about it now. It is not the past, but the present and future of our great heritage of nature that now needs to be looked after. The destruction of our wildlife, as in most other parts of the world, has been a continuous, long-lasting process. It was slow, though steady, even before India got its independence. But after independence, this process was accelerated beyond all proportion, and has now reached a magnitude which if not effectively checked in time, will shortly result in complete disappearance of all our wildlife. Unfortunately, the seriousness of the situation is even now not fully realised or appreciated not only by the general public, but more so by those who are in a position to take effective steps. The average educated Indian, who is usually well informed and takes a keen interest in so many things, has generally little or no interest in natural history, and is therefore apt to be unduly impressed and misled by newspaper write-ups and semi-authoritative statistical quotations and jargon. Of this there has been no shortage in the past year and a half since a meeting of the I.U.C.N. (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) was held at Delhi. What has confused the mind of the layman even more, are statements given out publicly by some important conservationists from the World Wildlife Fund and other international bodies, who have visited India for a brief period and have issued statements without any foundation regarding the Tiger population of the country.

As is the case the world over, when problems concerning the depletion of wildlife are brought to public notice the general trend seems to be to immediately put the entire blame on the shoulders of the hunting sportsman. Ever since the I.U.C.N. meeting at Delhi, there has been such a hue and cry and so many baseless write-ups and statements have been given out, mostly by irresponsible people, and even some by people who should have known better, that even bona fide hunters and sportsmen, who are actually the real supporters and backbone of conservation the world over, are now feeling hesitant about giving any statements about game conservation in the country. Government recognised shikar outfitters, who have been arranging hunts for foreign tourists and helping to earn much-needed foreign exchange for the country, are blamed for earning blood-stained dollars and are treated as outcasts. These outfitters have to depend on wildlife for their very livelihood—a majority of them spend more than eight months out of the year in the forests in close contact with wildlife. It can be safely claimed that this group consists of some of the most experienced and top hunters of the country. Yet these people are deliberately kept out of all conservation bodies such as The Wildlife Board of India, and are never consulted or given an opportunity to express their views or give suggestions regarding game conservation. Not a single person from this group was invited to attend the meeting of the I.U.C.N., when the idea of banning Tiger hunting in the country was first initiated. It has been claimed in semi-official write-ups that one of the main causes of the reduction in the Tiger population in India is the shooting of Tigers by foreign tourist clients of shikar outfitters. Even important foreign game conservationists have supported this view without bothering to go into actual facts and figures, which would reveal that out of a maximum of 400 Tigers shot on legal permits annually, only 100 or less are shot by foreign tourists, the rest being bagged by local sportsmen. Though no actual figures are available of Tigers annually killed by poachers, judging from the numerous skins displayed for sale

in stores all over the bigger cities, and from the estimated figure of well over a thousand Tiger skins being exported out of the country, it can be safely assumed that poachers kill well over 400 Tigers annually. No sportsman is likely to sell his trophy skin, so the skins being sold in the stores, and the ones that are exported commercially, have to be of Tigers killed by poachers.

Since independence, India has shown remarkable progress in practically all spheres of development. In fact, it can safely be claimed that no other developing country in the world has achieved such tremendous progress in such a short time. It seems that the only thing in which we have lagged behind is the care and conservation of our wildlife. The main reason for this can be put down to the lack of interest in wildlife by our Forest Department authorities. During the British regime, practically all British Forest Officers in India were keen hunters and took a great interest in the care of wildlife. On the other hand, our present Indian Forest Officers are, except for just a handful, all non-hunters. Besides, the various schemes for development of the forests have increased to such an extent that an average Forest Officer does not have time to pay any attention to the needs of wildlife of his area, specially since (so far) the conservation of wildlife has been left out of all forest development schemes. Even the higher, and in fact the highest, authorities in the country have been so preoccupied with such essential matters of national importance as food shortage, population explosion and other important political matters that the care of wildlife has been treated as a very minor affair and almost completely neglected. Wildlife conservation bodies have been set up at the centre as well as in some of the states, but due to lack of allotment of necessary funds and lack of general interest by all concerned, the workings of these bodies have been far from satisfactory. These bodies do not even have sufficient staff to implement our game and hunting laws and regulations, which, incidentally, are as good as those of any other country in the world. Lack of sufficient and efficiently trained conservation staff also leads to large-scale poaching all over the country.

In November 1959, a meeting of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (I.U.C.N.) was held at Delhi, to which all and sundry were invited, except, as mentioned earlier, representatives of the government licensed shikar outfitters, who include in their group some of the top hunters in the country and some of the most experienced naturalists and wildlife experts. The idea to close Tiger hunting was first initiated at this meeting of the I.U.C.N., and has now resulted in Tiger hunting being banned all over India as well as Nepal. It remains to be seen how this will affect the Tiger population of the country. This will certainly save about 400 Tigers that were annually shot on legal permits by bona fide sportsmen. But what of the many more Tigers killed by poachers? This number is bound to go up. In the absence of proper game law enforcement agencies, the only deterrent to poachers in any area so far was the presence of legal permit

holders, but with the removal of this obstacle due to the ban on Tiger hunting, the poachers are going to have a free hand all over the place. And what of the legitimate food of the Tigers? In most forest areas the Deer and the Wild Pig have been killed off (mostly by poachers), to such an extent that Tigers have been forced to live more or less entirely on domestic cattle that freely roam the forests. This creates a further problem, as the loss of even an old and decrepit cow means a lot to a poor villager. This problem will be increased a hundredfold if the ban on tiger hunting really helps to increase the Tiger population.

It is surprising that the I.U.C.N. at the time of considering a ban on Tiger hunting, did not consider the preservation of other wildlife. Tiger hunting has been banned all over the country, but permits for general game are still being handed out freely, and of course the poachers are still taking a heavy toll of the Deer and the Pigs. But what is even more serious than poaching and the loss of the Tigers' legitimate food is the loss of Tiger habitat. Since independence, the country has lost almost one fourth of its entire forest area, due to various causes such as development projects which include the building of roads, bridges, dams for irrigation and power projects, settling refugees from Pakistan, the ever-increasing demand for agricultural land for food production, and above all for putting down plantations of exotic trees for industrial use. These plantations do not provide adequate cover for wildlife and such areas are lost forever as wildlife habitat. It is not uncommon to see Tigers living and breeding in sugar-cane fields adjacent to forest areas, as there is not sufficient cover left for them in the regular forests. The Deer and other general game cannot even claim sugar-cane fields for their home, as on these farm areas they would be mercilessly shot down not only by regular poachers, but also by farmers who have been liberally handed out gun permits on pretext of crop protection. All these facts somehow seem to have escaped the notice of the I.U.C.N. meeting.

No amount of poaching or non-enforcement of our game laws can possibly finish our wildlife, the main danger being the destruction of wildlife habitat. Poaching and Game Law enforcement are now receiving some official notice, but nothing whatsoever is being done to preserve wild life habitat. Unless suitable and urgent steps are taken to stop the destruction of our indigenous forests, we may as well say good-bye to our wildlife. The ban on Tiger hunting may increase the tiger population, but where is this increase going to live. Each individual Tiger needs a certain forest area to live and breed—some experts have calculated this to be as much as seven to nine square miles. No amount of banning hunting can force two or more Tigers to live in an area that is only large enough to hold one Tiger. One cannot help but come to the sad, though logical, conclusion that the wildlife of India is doomed to certain extinction unless the authorities concerned change their present attitude.

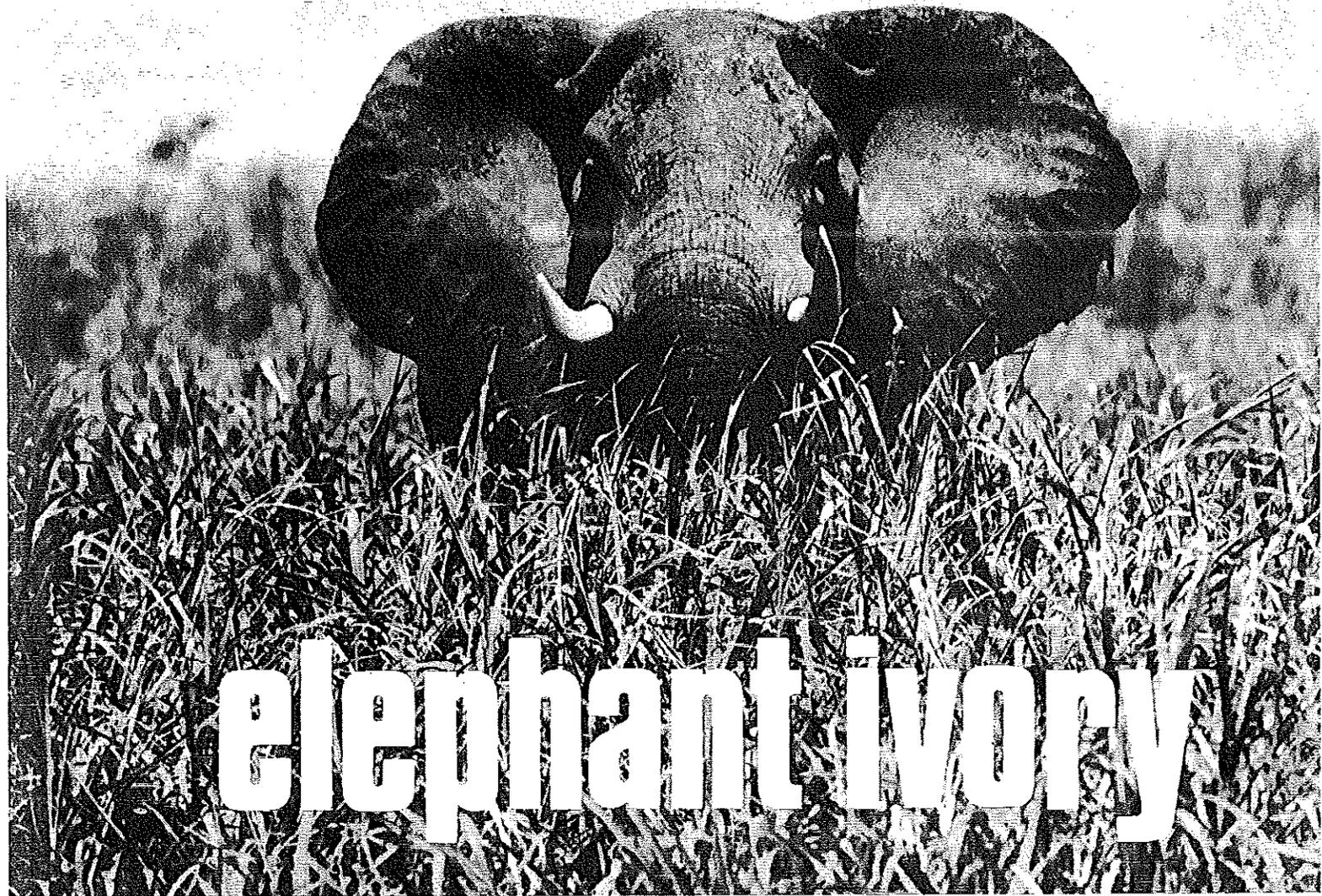


Photo by: BRIAN HERNE

By Ian Parker

Of the most desired African game trophies, a big pair of Elephant tusks must rank among the highest, appealing even to people who have no interest in hunting. Man's regard for ivory extends far into pre-historic times and even today it is considered by many as virtually a currency in itself. Its durability is established by ivory carvings in good condition having been found in the pyramids. As trophies, Elephant tusks will outlast that prized Lion skin and be available for untold generations of the hunter's progeny to marvel at long after the hair has gone from the skin (despite what the taxidermists might tell you!).

Perhaps no animal has been shrouded with greater legend and mystique than the Elephant. Every hunter has his own ideas about what makes them 'tick'. As a source of camp-fire controversy and bar 'bull', the species is unrivalled, and has probably been so for centuries. It is therefore somewhat of a pity to deprive hunters of one of their major bases for fantasy (elephantasy?) and fairy stories. However, such is the effect of science, and over the last decade research has made the Elephant one of the better known of Africa's large fauna. Not surprisingly, the growth of ivory has received attention and it is a summary of this that I present here. In the main, the findings are those

of R. M. Laws, and pertain to Kenya, Uganda and northern Tanzania in particular.

Elephant tusks are a pair of highly specialised top jaw incisors, and not canines as are the tusks of pigs or hippos. They erupt in, or somewhat before, the animal's second year and are covered with a layer of hard enamel (as with most mammalian teeth). This cap is rapidly worn away and leaves a tooth composed of dentine or 'ivory', which continues to grow virtually throughout the animal's life. The rates at which tusks grow differs between the sexes: males produce an annual average of about 4.5 inches growth in length annually as compared to the females' 3.35 inches. If a male was permitted to grow its tusks without breakage or wear for its full 63 years of allotted life, they would be nearly 20 feet long and the female's would be over 16 feet. The fact that no known specimens have ever attained these maxima and that it is rare to get tusks of over 9 feet and 5 feet for males and females respectively, gives some idea of the rate of breakage and wear that must be routine. In this context it is of interest that many of the longest tusks obtained come from Elephant in which the tips have grown together, or adopted a growth form that makes them difficult to use as tools and therefore subject to less breakage.

Growth in circumference is very much more rapid in males than in females, with maxima in excess of 20 inches and 11 inches respectively. It is this that brings about the most characteristic differences in shape between the sexes' tusks; the males' appear much thicker and more heavily tapered, the taper being particularly pronounced in early life, while females have slender and more cylindrical ivory.

The average mean maximum tusk weights for males is about 175 pounds per tusk, and about 50 pounds for females. However, variation about these potentials is quite considerable and it is still theoretically possible for tusks in excess of 200 pounds to be grown. However, such high weights are seldom achieved. The main reason for this being, and particularly so in the males, that few Elephant reach the older ages necessary. The dominant factor in ivory size is age, and big tusks will only occur where Elephant are so managed that the greatest ages possible are attained. However, this is a long-term form of management in many respects more analogous to timber production than that of mammals, as one must think in terms of decades rather than years.

Laws has pointed out that natural mortality is such that very few males can be expected to pass the fifty-five year mark, when they can be almost certain of having tusks well in excess of 100 pounds. The question thus posed to the manager is "is it worth holding on to an animal for so long?". With today's licence fees the answer is most certainly 'No'. Of a cohort of 1,000 male Elephants born in the Tsavo National Park, only 273 will reach 20 years (when they have about 20-pound tusks) and six reach 55 years (120-pound

tusks). Simple arithmetic shows that the price the hunter should pay for ivory in the upper class must be several hundred per cent more than at present to justify the management risks of keeping an animal for fifty years. This is a problem that sportsmen should consider. It would certainly be of very great assistance to the various authorities if hunters themselves gave a clear indication of what minimum tusk size they should orient their long-term Elephant management toward. This would have to be coupled with a realistic indication of what should be paid for an animal of the desired tusk size. Such a move on the part of sportsmen themselves, even though it would inevitably mean that they will have to pay more for a good Elephant, would be politically worthwhile.

The foregoing highlights a further aspect of Elephant management. Before it was established that tusk size was basically related to age, several Game Departments made endeavours to 'preserve the large-tusker strain', by penalising the sportsman financially for shooting a large tusker (an older animal) and inducing him to take smaller tusks (younger Elephant). Such a policy could only have the long-term effect of reducing the chances for getting big ivory in a population, as every young male is needed to ensure some get through to the older age groups. The policy of permitting the killing of smaller bulls is therefore self-defeating in the end.

It is a pity that more is not known about the tradition of the ivory trade as it stretches back into antiquity and has been the base for numerous ventures of interest and excitement. The names given to the various grades of tusks in themselves have a certain poetry. Vilaiti is all tusks over 40 pounds in weight, sound or only slightly defective, making it virtually an all-male category. Cutchi are tusks between 20 and 40 pounds, again making it a mainly male category. Fankda is all male ivory between 10 and 20 pounds, Calasia is virtually female ivory over 10 pounds, Maksub all ivory of both sexes between 5 and 10 pounds, and Dandia all ivory of both sexes below 5 pounds. A further category is Chinai for all badly broken or defective tusks.

These names give scope for rather more descriptive terms of Elephants themselves: Vilaitiphants, Cutchiphants, Fankdaphants, and so on. In conclusion (and as I am not a hunter), I would make the following recommendations to clients for the grading of their professional guides:—

1. Treat the man with respect if he gets you a Vilaitiphant, particularly if it is a Senior Vilaitiphant.
2. You have grounds for complaint if he has you shoot a Cutchiphant.
3. Demand your money back, plus 20%, if he involves you with a Fankdaphant.
4. If you shoot a Dandiaphant, it was probably your fault anyway for letting him have that last whisky. In such circumstances, the only way out is through your sense of humour.



news from the east african professional hunters' association

The season has been a good one for the 188 members of the East African Professional Hunters' Association. Practically all have been extended to their fullest since May last, though repercussions of the recession in the United States have been felt. Trophies have been of a better than average standard, and with the opening of the additional Tana River blocks in Kenya and development of the Selous some big ivory has been taken out. A sportsman hunting with *Harry Muller* killed an Elephant of 136/141 pounds in the Selous. Husband and wife hunting with *Edgar De Bono* obtained ivory of 101/103 and 125/128 pounds respectively from the Tana area of Kenya. From the same area, an American hunter shot a 121/137 pound Elephant with *Tony Archer*.

The good hunting for the season has been marred, on the other hand, by the death of several well-known personalities. *Mohamed 'Bali' Iqbal*, a leading East African professional hunter, died early last year. *Major A. K. (Tony) Catchpole* was killed by a Buffalo in November last while hunting privately in the Narok area of Kenya. *Geoff Lawrence Brown*, a prominent personality in the hunting world for the past twenty years, died in an Arusha hospital after a brief illness in September last. Other hunters have had some narrow escapes. *Tony Henley*, while hunting with his client in the Kuando area of Botswana was mauled and scratched by a lion to the extent of 50 stitches. He is believed to have recovered and is hunting again. Buffalo were responsible for injuries to *Boet Dannhauser* and *Douglas Collins*. The former, whilst doing game control work in block 37, Kenya, was charged and tossed and in spite of emptying his revolver into its head, was only saved from greater injury than several broken ribs and very heavy bruising by the presence of his friend, who finished the Buffalo off. *Douglas Collins* while hunting birds with his brother, was gored in the thigh by a cow Buffalo, which he had encountered in thick bush. This encounter ended in tragedy when Mr. Collins, reloading and firing from the ground with the animal standing over him, discovered on killing the animal that one of the bullets had passed through it and killed his brother.

The last season's trophy measurement scheme was won by *Alfredo Pelizzoli*. *Robin Hurt* was second and

Dave Ommanney third. On the whole, the trophies were fractionally better on the average than the previous season: impala for example at 2 57/16 are better by over an inch; Lesser kudu by just under an inch; Sable by just over two inches at 39 5/16; Beisa oryx by over one inch at 29 1/8"; Coke's hartebeeste at just over an inch at 16 5/16"; Elephant by 3 1/2 pounds the two tusks at 135 pounds. Defassa waterbuck dropped off in average by just over an inch to 24 1/2 inches and Rhino by one inch to 16 3/4".

In spite of the good trophies there are disturbing reports of poaching constantly coming in and there is no doubt that some heavy ivory and many fine leopard trophies are being lost to the illegal activities of these people. It is to be hoped that recent and pending legislation to control the sale of game trophies will improve the situation. The Tanzanian authorities have been particularly active in anti-poaching measures with the result that illegal dealings involving many hundreds of skins have been disclosed and a number of those concerned are now in court. Long-term development plans for the game in all three countries of East Africa have either been published or are in the process of being worked out. Whilst the three countries will naturally pursue their own course of action, the policy will undoubtedly be similar to cater for the very heavy inter-state traffic in tourism and hunting. With the ever-increasing interest by the Europeans and Americans in East African wildlife, as a whole, the future for hunting there is good. Of the three Community states, Uganda has been the least progressive in its hunting policy, resulting in a number of hunters from there moving elsewhere. *Nicky Blunt*, who has been hunting in Uganda for the past seven years, has moved to Tanzania and will hunt from Dar es Salaam. *Robin Smith*, formerly a resident hunter of the Semliki Lodge in the Toro Game Reserve, will also hunt in Tanzania from Moshi. A hunter of many years standing in Uganda, *Brian Herne*, has formed his own company and has recently moved to Nairobi. Over the past year, many well known Tanzanian hunters formerly working for Tanzania Wildlife Safaris, have been released from the services of that company to form their own companies and to hunt independently. From all reports, they have had a very successful season.

the same, (light sandy brown to very dark brown). In size he will square in the high 8 foot class, weight not over 800 or 900 pounds. Population is problematical, but certainly in excess of 15,000, with an annual legal take about that of the Brownie.

Many stories are told of the "white ghost" bear of the arctic icefields, the Polar Bear. Stories of raiding native Eskimo villages and caches, of stalking lone hunters, of depredation and wanton destruction. Most of them are just that . . . stories.

In point of fact, the Polar Bear seldom comes on land, comes in contact with the native hunter only when he is out on the ice, or when both approach a dead whale or other attractive meal. Dangerous he is, and like all in his class, caution and respect are a must. In range and numbers, evaluation is impossible, for his home eternally drifts around the north pole and the polar bear hunted off Alaska's coast this spring may be off Norway or Spitzbergen next spring. Habits too, are different from the other great bears, for only the female "hibernates" and she only goes into seclusion for a couple of months while the cubs are getting big enough to follow her around. But like other great bears, young appear only every two years (average) and so reproduction is slow. The annual harvest in Alaska is under 300, well controlled and implemented. This animal, because of his habitat and nature, is and must be the subject of international agreement and study.

The Black Bear of Alaska and related sub species are very numerous. He is a luxurious and often difficult trophy, for he is cunning and wary. Found over most of Alaska, in many places in abundance, he is a creature of the open tundra, the forest and streams. Deathly afraid of the Brownie and the Grizzly, he is most wary when within their range and often non-existent in Brownie country. Like all animals hunted for trophies, many stories are told, but most professionals do not consider him dangerous. Perhaps more than 20,000 to 25,000 would be an educated guess, maybe in excess of that. Certainly they are able to hold their own against present cropping, which is something like 800 to 1,000 annually.

The rare Glacier or "blue" Bear is a colour phase of the black bear. Found in very limited numbers (variously estimated from 250 to 500) and range, which is near and embraces the coast and adjacent forest and mountain slopes adjacent to Yakutat and the Malispena Glacier this great trophy is difficult to come by. Certainly no more than a handful of hunters have taken him in fair chase, among them Warren Page, Shooting Editor of "Field and Stream." Guided by the writer, on a return engagement (Warren took a fine Glacier Bear in 1951) we saw more during this 15-day period than we have ever seen before, although most were female and young.

One day, while at a favourite look-out place on Kolhondra Bay, I spotted a good-looking bear in a small open place on the big slide opposite us. The glasses turned him into a "blue" bear and a dandy. Quick evaluation revealed that no approach was

possible from the mountain itself, for nowhere could we see him except in the small opening in which he was feeding . . . too small. The shot from below would be long, hopefully not over 400 yards, and Warren could certainly do it if anyone could (he has been the All Bore Champ several times). So the stalk began, actually a near run across the open river bottom and into the dense bush at the far side. Hot, sweating, fighting, I looked often. Now we were near the last small opening from which he could be seen and I leaped a small spring brook and began to look for a rest for Warren's Weatherby. He stooped to get a drink from the spring and I told him to get ready. Then . . . the beautiful Glacier Bear walked into the brush . . . and we never saw him again. Watched that mountain for two more days too . . . such is hunting!

Not more than two or three Glacier Bears are legally taken each year, although there is undoubtedly some illegal traffic in skins.

The antlered game of Alaska takes in all of the deer family; moose, caribou, elk, and deer. The elk is an introduced animal, found only on the Kodiak Island Group and the hunting is limited. Unfortunately, although body size is large, it seems that this animal in Alaska has not produced many record class trophy heads.

Our deer are small, although many trophy heads are taken in their class. Very numerous in their range, which is mostly southeastern, coast and islands, and the Kodiak Group, they are estimated to number in excess of 100,000 and are increasing. Their range too is slowly creeping northward on both the coast and inland.

Alaska's great moose bears some explanation and understanding, for he is truly a great trophy. The largest of the deer, a big bull stands over 7 feet at the shoulder, will certainly weigh over three quarters of a ton and is worthy of any hunter's time and effort. To kill a moose is easy . . . to kill a trophy moose is difficult. Let me tell you that a good "trophy" moose will have an antler spread of over 5 feet, a new record this year measuring 81 inches. A really big bull is smart, moves with swiftness and silence, and is often very dangerous, especially if wounded. It takes a really good professional hunter to evaluate a moose rack at all, not to mention quickly, as is often necessary. Few big bulls are taken with one shot, most require 4 or 5, well placed.

Moose are herbivorous, browsing animals, fond of aquatic plants. Like the giraffe, they cannot reach the ground without kneeling or spreading their forelegs. They are well distributed in Alaska, quite numerous in many areas and well able to hold their own. In numbers they have been variously estimated from 40,000 to 80,000 with an annual take of 3,000 to 4,000. Certainly not over-cropped and well able to hold their own.

The Barren Ground Caribou is our most numerous animal, ranging the open tundra country from the Alaska Peninsula to as far north as land goes. Hardy, gregarious animals, they are often found high in the

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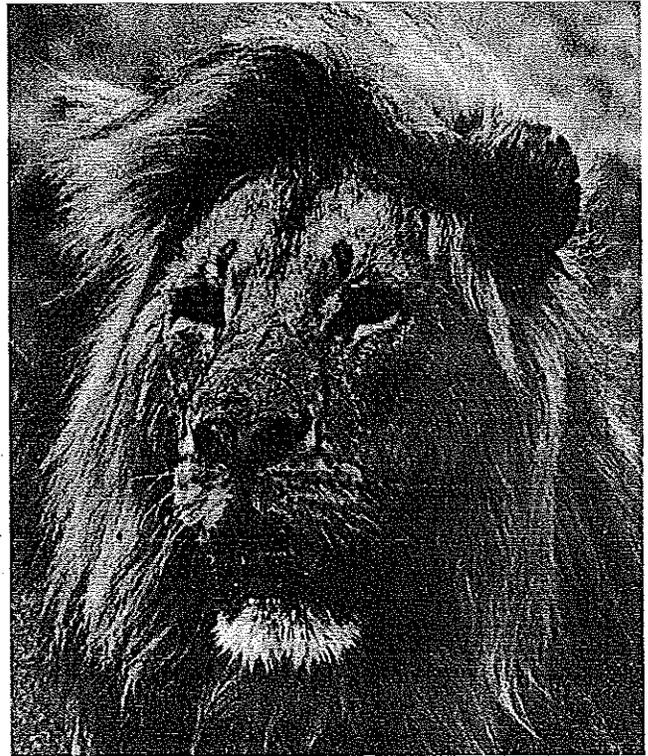
“of elephants, birds and lions”

By Ada Wincza

from her recent book “Masai the Magnificent”

I have seen a Masai mauled by a leopard, and an old man legless after an encounter with a lion, and a young uncircumcised boy who was presented to me as a slayer of lion: he had evidently speared a marauding beast with his short-bladed spear. The most spectacular thing I have ever seen was a Masai lion hunt near the place today known as Mbuga Kitwai Game Controlled Area in Tanzania. The previous evening a lion had snatched a goat from a large herd and departed to the dense bush nearby. Armed with their long spears and swords, they marched to the place where the lion was supposed to be hiding with his kill. They marched in half-moon formation and started to encircle the beast. Never in my life have I more regretted not having a camera.

The Masai closed the circle keeping the lion at bay. Sitting on top of our car, I had a magnificent view. They marched forward narrowing the circle with their formidable swords ready to thrust. Suddenly the lion leapt forward. He felt cornered and desperate. With a roar of tremendous rage he charged one of the warriors. The young moran sprang aside, thrusting his long spear into the flank of the animal. The beast roared with pain, bolted, and sprinted into a nearby bush. The circle of warriors narrowed again. The lion leapt anew, and another spear was thrust into his behind. The beast lost his head completely: he started to turn around on his tail like a dog when stung by a bee, trying to pull the spear out of his body. The first spear, which had not been thrust deep enough, dropped to the ground and the lion twisted it in his powerful jaw like a stick, but another Masai leapt forward and shouting at the top of his voice thrust his weapon through the lion's lungs. Soon, covered with blood and pierced with spears and looking like a huge pin-cushion, the lion gave a final groan and fell to the ground dead. I could not see which of the Masai cut the animal's tail—either the one who thrust the first spear, or the one who dealt the mortal wound. The warrior stood with the gory tail and laughed a triumphant laugh. He was a hero! He also cut the forepaws off and skinned the head and took with him the huge mane. Tail in hand he started to dance, and his friends joined him in stamping and jumping and their voices sounded fiercer than the lion's roar they were mimicking. Someone asked me when I returned to camp “Why are you so excited? What have you seen?” and I answered:



“I have witnessed the scene engraved on the famous Mycenaen sword suddenly coming to life.”

I really felt as if I had assisted in a scene from antiquity. I thought about the description of Oppian who, in 180 A.D., compared the Oryx lowering his horns to withstand the attack of a carnivorous animal to the posture of a hunter: when charged by a lion the hunter stood his ground with his legs wide apart and his spear steadily couched. Oppian's description of a lion hunt eighteen centuries ago could today be rewritten word for word, although the Masai appear to be more courageous because they face lions completely naked while the people of Oppian's epoch protected their bodies with sheepskins and had leather helmets on their heads.

through the swamps with the aid of the walkie talkies we located our quarry. The old man was at his best, smiling and happy. I had never met anybody so eager, but after two hours he seemed vague about the Sitatunga's position. He assured us that we had arrived at the spot where the Sitatunga had been, but he was no longer there. Everybody in the party was exhausted, except the old man; however, he did seem lost; worse still, Dr. Chatwell's scope was starting to fog up. All the equipment was wet except for the walkie talkie which was in a plastic bag. I called the gunbearer on the hill and asked him where the Sitatunga was. It had moved and was now about 100 yards to our left. We turned and moved on, panting and sweating. We had only gone about 40 yards when we found a patch of ground which resembled sand with no growth of lettuce or weeds—mud. The old man pushed his spear through it tentatively and we moved round, but not before Dr. Chatwell had fallen in and my gunbearer, trying to help him, also fell in. The noise was unbearable, although nobody said anything. I consulted my walkie talkie again—the Sitatunga was still ahead of us and we moved around the morass. We must have been very close to the Sitatunga now, and then I saw ahead a Goliath Heron take off with a great flapping of wings, and here we were on very treacherous swamp, wobbly and insecure.

Suddenly, again, I saw the horns 50 yards away and they were facing me, but I could not see anything else. We stopped and almost immediately started to sink in the swamp. However, the Sitatunga was also curious and I could see the top of his back. Dr. Chatwell put his rifle on my shoulder for he had seen it too. There was no time to lose for we were both wobbling terribly and the Sitatunga would almost certainly rush away. He fired and the Sitatunga disappeared.

"Damn it, you missed him," I cried.

"Sorry, Brian," he replied.

We were almost up to our knees and indeed by this time I was literally on my knees clambering for the next firm piece of swamp. We went over and searched, but there was no blood, just bubbly swamp and mosquitoes. I could have wept, but no, the old man dropped his spear and lunged into the water and lettuce and here he was with just his head showing in the most terrible patch of swamp and water and he was clutching on to a pair of horns with both hands and screaming hysterically. I slung my rifle off my shoulder and foolhardily jumped in. We had him. A magnificent trophy and we happily dragged him on to a clump of papyrus. How to get him back? This was again another problem. It took us three hours for we wanted a photograph and of course had no cameras. A terrible chore, but finally we had him on terra firma, taking it in turns two and two to carry and half swim with him to the boat.

The Sitatunga bug had hit me; I went out many times after that and surprisingly found the clients who were willing to do it. They were not all successful, but the challenge was there and among the more memorable

incidents one occurred when I was hunting with a couple from California. Bill was on the hillside directing us in to the Sitatunga. We came to a channel about twenty feet wide, which we had to swim. Jane went first, I followed holding my rifle above my head and Dominico, my gunbearer, came close behind in the same fashion. The leeches seemed to be especially bad that day and we were a little overwrought, having made four attempts during the previous week and always having had a treacherous wind, we had never got near a Sitatunga. This was almost certainly my "Big One".

Jane made it to the far side of the channel and helped me on to the papyrus. We scraped the leeches off and turned round to see Dominico's head submerged about three feet away from the bank. He soon reappeared, but of course the rifle had gone down. His feet were ankle deep in weeds. I yelled "Give me the rifle" and lunged towards him. He smacked a hand towards me and disappeared; finally I jumped in and grabbed him by the shoulders and Jane gave us a hand ashore, but the rifle was gone. Unfortunately, this was a family Weatherby .300 of great sentimental value and Jane was very upset. The old man immediately volunteered to go down and did so five times, but said he could not reach the bottom. My gunbearer went down in the filthy, leech-ridden, brown, murky water. He could not make it either. Finally and reluctantly I went in with a paralysing fear that I might come up "under" swamp. On the second attempt I finally hit the bottom, although I could see nothing. I groped in mud, felt a stock sticking out at an angle and jerked, heading for the surface. I came out of the water with my nose bleeding furiously and my ears drumming and one bleeding, but we had the rifle. In the excitement my rifle had been lying on the swamp and, with everybody standing around, my rifle was now lying in about two inches of water. Jane's scope was, of course, fogged and so was mine. We had left all our other rifles on the mainland and had no spare scopes. It meant a six-hour trip back to Entebbe in the launch to get another scope. Leaving Bill and Jane I did this and arrived back with five spare scopes the following day. We never did get a Sitatunga. They were there and the challenge was there and Jane and Bill were never dispirited. This was the luck of the hunt.

Almost two years later I was hunting Bugala with the well-known big game hunter and author, Rudolf Sand, from Denmark. Rudolf is one of the luckiest and most capable hunters I have ever met and preceding our safari to the Ssesse Islands, Rudolf, in two days, had managed to bag a Record Book Defassa Waterbuck and Uganda Kob. We pitched our camp on the usual sandy beach and headed for the high ground. On the second day we spotted a magnificent Sitatunga way out in the swamp and again with the old man we plodded through the papyrus for almost two hours before Rudolf got a shot. This beautiful trophy was subsequently listed sixth in Rowland Ward's Records.

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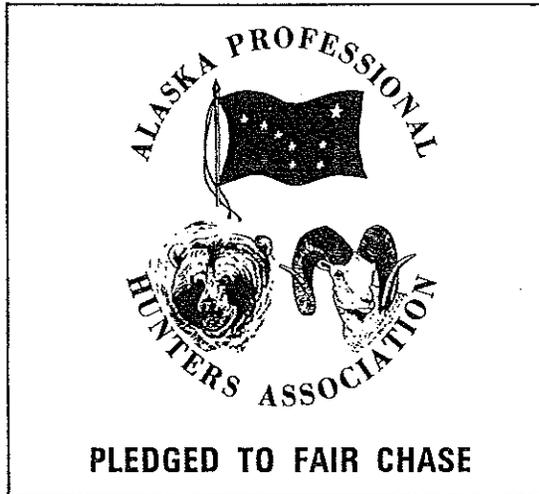
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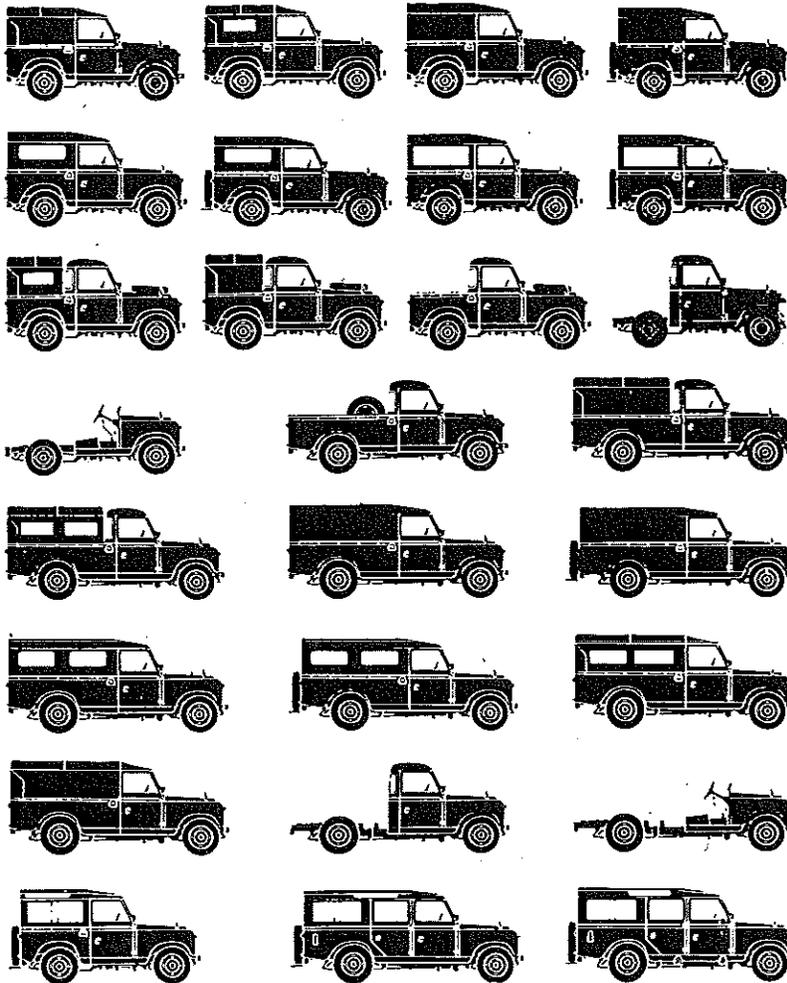
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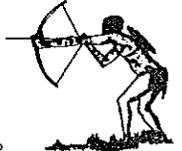
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