

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Galliformes Specialist Group and Affiliated
Societies: Reports and Other Materials

Galliformes Specialist Group and Affiliated
Societies

1996

Annual Review of the World Pheasant Association 1995/1996

World Pheasant Association

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/galliformes_reports



Part of the [Biodiversity Commons](#), [Environmental Policy Commons](#), and the [Ornithology Commons](#)

World Pheasant Association, "Annual Review of the World Pheasant Association 1995/1996" (1996).
Galliformes Specialist Group and Affiliated Societies: Reports and Other Materials. 16.
https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/galliformes_reports/16

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Galliformes Specialist Group and Affiliated Societies at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Galliformes Specialist Group and Affiliated Societies: Reports and Other Materials by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.



ANNUAL REVIEW

OF THE WORLD PHEASANT ASSOCIATION



1995/96

THE WORLD PHEASANT ASSOCIATION REVIEW, 1995/96



A REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD PHEASANT ASSOCIATION (Registered Charity No. 271203)

Published in November 1996 by
© The World Pheasant Association
PO Box 5
Lower Basildon
Reading RG8 9PF
Berkshire, UK
Tel: (0118) 984 5140
Fax: (0118) 984 3369

ISBN No: 0 906864 35 6

Citations of papers in this volume should use the following
KCR Howman. (ed.). 1996. Ann. Rev. WPA 1995/96.
World Pheasant Association, Reading, UK

Front cover illustration: Blue and green peafowl by R David Digby

CONTENTS

Officers of the Association

Annual report of Council 1995/96		1
Chapter reports		5
Pheasant Specialist Group	<i>Peter J Garson</i>	9
Partridge, Quail and Francolin Specialist Group	<i>Simon D Dowell</i>	13
Grouse Specialist Group	<i>Matt Ridley</i>	16
The Seventh International Grouse Symposium, Fort Collins, USA	<i>Anne Westerberg</i>	17
Megapode Specialist Group	<i>René Dekker</i>	20
Captive Breeding Advisory Committee	<i>Han Assink</i>	23
WPA-South Asia Regional Office and captive Crested Argus	<i>Rahul Kaul</i>	25
Brown eared-pheasant project report	<i>Zhang Zheng-wang</i>	28
Saving the Blyth's tragopan	<i>Ron Sumner</i>	32
Why are <i>Lophura</i> pheasants so variable?	<i>Geoffrey Davison</i>	34
Recent rare pheasant observations in Chin State, West Myanmar (Burma)	<i>Ben King, Dave Farrow, Craig Robson, Hugh Buck Tim Fishe</i>	39
Notes and news		41

PATRONS

Rudolph Agnew, The Marquess of Hartington
The Hon James Bruce, Lord Buxton of Alsa, The Earl of Harewood KBE,
Dr Swaminathan, Dr Matthew Ridley, Michel Klat

PRESIDENT

Prof Cheng Tso-hsin (China)

VICE-PRESIDENTS

M P Bhandara (Pakistan), B des Clers (France), R P Howard,
Lt Col J O M Roberts (Nepal), C Sivelle (USA), Dr B Bertram, J Brocklehurst
P Bloom (Australia), Dr D Bruning (USA), Dr G R Potts, W Chaplin,
C D W Savage, Modh Khan Bin Momin Khan (Malaysia),
Dr T W I Lovel, F Damen (Benelux), G E S Robbins, J Brown CBE
K Chalmers-Watson, Prof R J Wheeler, Klaus Peter Erichsen (Germany)

CHAIRMAN

R P Howard

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Dr D A Kinsman

DIRECTOR GENERAL

K C R Howman

TREASURER

I Hoggarth

EDITOR

K C R Howman

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Mrs Jan Readman

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL 1995/96

Mrs D Kinsman, Dr P J McGowan, Dr M Rowland, N Worth,
I Hoggarth, E C Dickinson

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

H Assink, J Corder, J Hills, G E S Robbins, S Tonge

CHAIRMEN OF CHAPTERS

Australia	B Bradey, PO Box D42, Dural, NS W 2158, Australia
Benelux	H Assink, De Vogelhof, Boerenweg 66, 5944 EL Arcen, Netherlands
Brazil	Alessandro D'Angieri, Rua Barao do Rio Branco 253, CEP 13201-760, Jundiai SP, Brazil
China	Prof Zheng Guangmei, Department of Biology, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100875, China
France	B Giboin, 34 Rue Jouffroy, 75017 Paris, France
Germany	W Grummt, Tierpark Berlin-Friedricksselde, A M Tierpark 125, D-1136 Berlin, Germany
India	Prof Mohan Ran, c/o Prof A H Musavi, Chairman, Centre of Wildlife & Ornithology, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh 202002, UP, India
Nepal	Lt Col J O M Roberts, PO Box 170, Kathmandu, Nepal
Pakistan	Brig Mukhtar Ahmed, 7 Aziz Bhatti Road, The Mall, Lahore, Pakistan
Thailand	Somtob Norapuck, 244 Soi Sukapiban 5, Ram Indra Road, Bangkokhen, Bangkok 10220, Thailand
UK	M Rowland, The Conifers, Hayter Close, West Wrattling, Cambridgeshire CB1 5LY, UK
USA	R Sumner, 1800 S. Canyon Park Circle, Suite 402, Edmond, OK 73013-6631, USA

CHAIRMEN OF SPECIALIST GROUPS

Pheasants	Dr P J Garson, Dept of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences, Ridley Building, University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU
Partridges, quails and francolins	Dr John P Carroll, The Game Conservancy Trust, Burgate Manor, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 1EF
Grouse	Dr Matthew Ridley, Boston House, Blagdon, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6DB
Cracids	Dr S D Strahl, Pickering Creek Environmental Centre, 27370 Sharp Road, Easton, Maryland 21601, USA
Megapodes	Dr R W J Dekker, Curator of Birds, National Museum of Natural History, PO Box 9517, 2300 RA Leiden, Netherlands

BANKERS

Child & Co, Royal Bank of Scotland plc, 1 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1BD

Annual Report of Council 1995/96

1995-96 was the Association's 20th Anniversary year and it was a good one. With the Association's new rules fully approved we were able to turn our attention to the new affiliation agreements with our original chapters as well as considering new ones.

It was appropriate that in our 20th Anniversary year we should succeed in publishing the second and third of our *Action Plans* - namely those for partridge, quail and francolin and for pheasants.

Our three *Action Plans* are the first completed by Specialist Groups for birds and are a real feather in the cap of the Association.

With the Melaka Pheasant and Partridge, Quail and Francolin Symposium deferred until September 1997, we were left with a symposia free year and were thus able to concentrate on the 20th Anniversary celebrations at Harewood.

It was decided to try and make this a fund-raising event with a dinner, held in conjunction with an art exhibition, on Friday, 22 September. The dinner was well supported by local people as well as members and considerable funds were raised for the Association. On Saturday 23rd, a strictly members-only, one day convention was held ending with an informal drinks party.

The year saw a definite improvement in the Association's finances (see **WPA News** 51) and it is hoped that this improvement will continue in 1996/97.

Membership

Council was saddened to learn of the death of several very staunch supporters of the Association during the year. Sydney Godfrey Phillips, Andrew Bateson, John Sandford and Professor George Dunnet had all made, in very different ways, major contributions to WPA.

The increase in membership subscriptions in July 1995 inevitably caused much extra work for our membership administrator without perhaps bringing the hoped for benefits of increased income as can be seen from the accounts. It is a matter of concern to Council that membership income forms such a relatively small percentage of our income.

Membership numbers compared:	Dec 1994	Dec 1995	
UK	610	615	0.82%
Overseas (UK reg)	150	147	-2%
Other overseas	1343	1160	-13.6%
Total	2103	1922	-8.61%

Overall as can be seen, membership is fairly stable.

Our President



Our President, Professor Cheng Tso-hsin and his wife Lydia, photographed on his 89th birthday on 18 November 1995

Changes in Officers

New Vice Presidents:

John Brocklehurst, John Brown CBE,
Gary Robbins

New Members of Council:

Ian Hoggarth, Nick Worth

New Treasurer: Ian Hoggarth

New Auditor: Robert Culver

New Chairman of Conservation

Policy and Programmes Committee:

Simon Tonge

South Asia Regional Office

The SARO Office in Delhi has continued the excellent progress of 1994/95 and is succeeding in funding almost totally our projects in India. A special tribute is due to the Jamsaheb of Jamnagar, the Patron of WPA India, for

his continued help and support. A full report appears later in this **Annual Review**.

Travel

Members of Council continue to be kind and generous with both time and money in combining business with pleasure during their travels and thereby helping to maintain contacts and friends, and we are most grateful to them. During the year Gary Robbins visited the USA as did the Director General who also visited Pakistan and Thailand. Gary Robbins also visited Malaysia in February and Philip McGowan visited China in August 1995 to attend the Chinese Galliforme Conference and in February/March 1996 visited India and Pakistan.

Activities of main committees

The formation of the new Conservation Policy and Programmes Committee (CPPC) under the chairmanship of Simon Tonge, Senior Curator of London Zoo, brings about for the first time the opportunity to properly weld together our field and captive management activities. The committee's membership includes the chairman of all our five specialist groups as well as our Captive Breeding Advisory Committee.

The Development Committee under the chairmanship of John Hills masterminded the fund-raising activities at Harewood and other

successful events including a charity clay pigeon shoot organised by Richard Howard at the Royal Berkshire Shooting Grounds which ended in a BBQ at the Beale Centre. Reports from the Specialist Groups are included later.

Publications

The publications fund, which was referred to in last years **Annual Review**, had a good full first year and its benefit to the finances of the Association can be seen in the annual accounts. Of special interest was the publication during the year of *Cheng and the Golden Pheasant*, a delightful biography of the life of our Association's President, Professor Cheng Tso-hsin. We are most grateful to the subscribers to the fund which made the publication of this book possible, and also the reprinting of some of our popular earlier publications. During the coming year the main new publication will be a first Monograph of Peafowl.

Events

Thanks to kind sponsorship by Matthew Gloag and Sons and The Famous Grouse Whisky we were able once more to have creative and educational stands at the Scottish Fair at Scone and at The CLA Game Fair at Harewood. Both these events were successful and made a contribution to our funds though it must be said that most of our helpers not only provide their help free but also pay for their

own expenses during the shows.

An innovation was the taking of a small stand at the Rutland Bird Fair. In terms of financial and membership gain it was a failure, but the benefits of such events are not immediately apparent and we decided to enter for a second year in August 1996.

Mention of our shows cannot be made without three special acknowledgements. The first goes to Jimmy Reekie who, almost single handed, sold some £4000 of raffle tickets for gallon bottles of The Famous Grouse. The second are Charlie Greenwood and Paul Higginbottom, who were the principle and certainly the most expert of our stand builders for both the Scone and Harewood fairs and to Keith Chalmers-Watson for making them available to us. Lastly and by no means least, Stephen Jaques for his remarkable landscaping of our Game Fair stand where he blended his

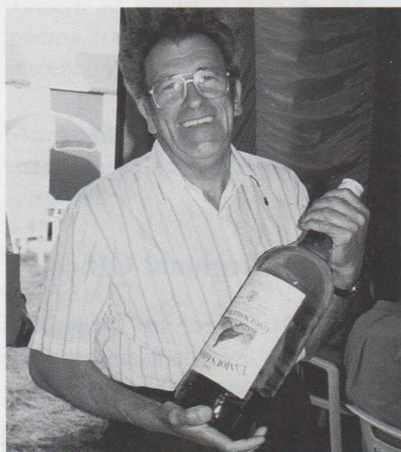


Photo: Jean Howman

Jimmy Reekie with a gallon bottle of Famous Grouse

planting in with a 24 foot mural of the Himalayas by artist Simon Gudgeon as a centre piece to the stand.

Our thanks are due once again to Michel and Diane Klat for hosting of a very special dinner at their home in aid of WPA in April 1996.

Chapter affiliations

We are most grateful to British Airways Assisting Conservation for their flight assistance in making liaison visits possible to Thailand, Pakistan and the United States for discussions on the setting up of the new affiliation agreements.

Major donations and sponsors

Your Association could not survive without the help of generous donations both in cash and in kind. In relation to the latter we would like once again to pay tribute to the assistance from British Airways Assisting Conservation who do so much to help us with our major logistical problem of keeping in contact with chapters and field workers throughout the world.

Famous Grouse once again sponsored our stands at the CLA Game Fair and the Scottish Fair at Scone as well as agreeing to be sponsors for the 6th International Grouse Symposium being held at Fort Collins, Colorado in August 1996. Our grateful thanks to them for this vital sponsorship.

Amongst donations we would particularly like to acknowledge are

those from IUCN the World Conservation Union, BirdLife International, WPA Germany, The Pheasant and Waterfowl Society of Australia, Corico International, The Oriental Bird Club, Sportsman Game Feeds, Laporte Chemical Industries, Friends of Tracy Aviary, Jaques van Loon, and two very generous anonymous donations.

Finally special mention of a particularly important and successful fund-raising effort. Ron Sumner, President of WPA USA has not only succeeded in successfully rebuilding the membership of WPA USA but at the same time has raised \$US 3000 spread across many of his new members for Dr Rahul Kaul's work on the Blyth's tragopan in N.E.India. A report by Ron Sumner on the work done so far on this project appears on page 32.

Staff

At home our staff remained the same though our database consultant Tom Gardiner took over much of the day-to-day running of our membership records. Officially Jan Readman ceased to be full time but, workaholic that she is, we have yet to see much reduction in the hours she puts in, though many of them are now spent on the increasingly busy publications administration. Jane Clacey continued to do her usual superb job of typesetting our publications as well as much else besides.

Chapter reports

China. It was an exciting year for WPA-China. A number of events took place and some of them are summarized below. The most important achievement of WPA-China during the year, was signing the Chapter Affiliation Agreement between China Ornithological Society and WPA-International on 10 October 1995, which made China the first chapter of WPA to sign the Agreement. Another important event was the success of the Chinese Pheasant Workshop, held by WPA-China in Qingyang, Gansu province from 21-25 August 1995. It was the first national meeting after WPA-China was formed. About 82 representatives from all over China attended the conference. Dr PJK McGowan and Dr PJ Garson from WPA-International, Mr Alexander Pack-Blumenau and his colleagues from WPA-Germany also made good presentations to this Workshop.

In the past year, WPA-China continued to support the field research projects in China. Among them, the Sichuan Hill Partridge Project (by Dr He Fen-qi), Brown eared-pheasant Project (by Zhang Zheng-wang), The China Pheasant Database (by Ding Chang-qing), the Green peafowl Project (by Wen Xian-ji), Hainan hill partridge Project (by Gao Yu-ren) and other projects have made great progress. We thank WPA-Germany, Oriental Bird Club, Chicago Zoological

Society and other organizations for funding these projects.

Other field projects taking place in China are Harmani eared-pheasant, Blood pheasant, Golden pheasant, Kokalas pheasant, Ring-necked, Temminck's tragopan, Elliot's pheasant, Reeve's pheasant, Black grouse and Chinese hazel grouse.

Beijing Normal University successfully bred about 20 Cabot's tragopan in captivity in 1995-1996. In 1996, Beijing Breeding Centre raised ten Chinese monals, 50 Brown eared-pheasants, 20 White eared-pheasants and 1300 Golden pheasants.

In the past year, three students who worked on pheasants were awarded the PhD degree by Beijing Normal University.

The Proceeding's of First Chinese Pheasant Workshop edited by Zheng Guang-mei, Zheng Zhengwang and Xu



*In captivity Beijing Normal University
bred about 20 Cabot's tragopan*

Photo: Keith Howman

Weishu has been published in the first class Chinese journal *Acta Zoologica Sinica* Vol.42(suppl.).

During the year, membership of WPA-China has held steady. A total of 80 members of the chapter consist mainly of field researchers, zoo keepers, university staff and reserve managers.

India. During the 9th Annual General Meeting of WPA India it was decided that, due to problems of distance and subsequent travel, a postal ballot to elect the office bearers of the Association should be held. This ballot was duly conducted and nominations have been received. The process enables members from all regions to participate actively in the affairs of the Association.

Another milestone during the last year was the signing of the Affiliation Agreement with WPA headquarters. This will enable the WPA India members to get their copies of the **WPA News** and the **Annual Review** at much subsidised prices in addition to being able to work closely with their international partner.

The Association, along with the South Asian Regional Office, has collaborated in many projects. Some of these include the production of a colour poster of the 'Threatened Pheasants of India' and these will be distributed with the purpose of publicity and fund-raising. In addition WPA India continues to publish its newsletter *WPA India News* which provides information

about the activities and the galliforme projects currently taking place in the country. WPA India is also in the process of publishing the proceedings of the Shimla Symposium with the help of WPA-USA.

WPA India is planning to conduct, jointly with SARO and the Mizoram Forest Department, a 'Pheasant Census Workshop' in Mizoram in Spring 1997. This should be of use to the local forest officials who can undertake census monitoring exercises independently once trained.

Efforts are also taking place to increase our membership base and to place regional representatives to generate support from their regions.

Pakistan. The membership of WPA-Pakistan increased by 20 bringing the total to 148 members.

WPA's first chapter was formed when Keith and Jean Howman visited Pakistan in 1975. Their recent visit in September 1995 coincided with the WPA-Pakistan's 20th Anniversary celebrations. In order to celebrate the occasion and to honour the Howmans' long and friendly association with our organisation, a lunch was hosted at the Golden Dragon Restaurant in Islamabad.

The new affiliation agreement was also signed between Keith Howman (Director General WPA) and Brigadier Mukhtar Ahmed (Chairman WPA-Pakistan) at the official meeting of WPA-P in Islamabad on 21 September 1995.

WPA Pakistan would like to congratulate Dr Mumtaz Malik, the Chief Conservator of Wildlife for NWFP on his Phd obtained during the year and thank him too for his co-operation and support for the surveys being conducted on which details are given below.

During the year support of the captive breeding centre at Dhodial was organised, with technical help from Robert Whale. The sponsors of the project were WPA-P and the North West Frontier Province Wildlife Department.

The Pakistan Galliforme Project was formed by WPA-P, in conjunction with the NWFP Wildlife Department and sponsored by UNDP.

The prime objective of this project is to establish a 'Long Term Monitoring Programme' for three years, to survey and build up a database on the current status of all the pheasant species in Pakistan. Four surveys have already been conducted during this period.

Manshi Reserve Forest - winter survey II

From 11 March to 20 March 1996 a 12 man team with three dogs under the co-ordination of Robert Whale surveyed the areas not covered in their previous trip. They also re-surveyed certain areas to obtain more information about the birds. The survey also aimed to address two logistical questions: does the use of dogs markedly increase the number of birds recorded? How much disturbance (flushing) do the pheasants

tolerate before emigrating from the area?

Siran Valley Pheasant Survey

From 20 May to 9 June 1996. A six man team led by Robert Whale surveyed parts of the east bank of the Siran Valley to observe pheasant species in the area and to monitor the summer densities of the Koklass. There is still a lot of work to be done in regards to areas which hold Western tragopan, Koklass and Monal.

Manshi Reserve Forest - winter survey I

From 30 January to 18 February 1996 a survey team of 12 men led by Robert Whale surveyed various parts of the Manshi Reserve Forest to observe pheasant species in their winter habitat. The two pheasant species recorded were 21 Monals and a total of 132 Koklass.

Ayubia National Park Survey and Training

From 20 April to 25 April 1996 a five member team of wildlife watchers and one co-ordinator visited Ayubia National Park, Abbotabad district, Hazara division, NWFP. The main objective of this field trip was to train the watchers in the method of counting dawn calls of the Koklass pheasant, as well as the Kalij. Later the watchers would be assigned for three-week surveys in areas such as Kaghan, Siran and Kohistan. Ayubia National Parks holds high densities of Koklass and



*Rob Whale
(right) who has
been leading
the pheasant
survey teams
with Brigadier
Mukhtar
Ahmed,
Chairman of
WPA Pakistan
(centre)*

Kalij pheasants. Another advantage is the easy access to the park, which makes it an ideal training ground for the wildlife watchers and also for students.

USA. See page 32.

Germany. WPA Germany held its Annual Convention for 1996 on 21 and 22 September in Erfurt, Thüringen. Like the previous year, more than 100 breeders, scientists and their wives met at the largest and most successful collection of pheasants in Europe today, run by Christian Möller in Erfurt.

In the afternoon Dr Wolfgang Grummt, Chairman of WPA Germany and Vice-Director and Curator of Birds at Tierpark Berlin, welcomed members and guests and opened a meeting full of interesting lectures on various subjects, some of which were:

- Legislation on trading and keeping wild birds (Lorenz Haut)
- International projects of WPA (Han

Assink)

- Pheasant captive breeding in Hanoi Zoo (Dang Gia Tung)
- Ethological research on pheasants (Prof E Thomas)
- Research on reproduction and behaviour of Cracids at Berlin Zoo (Dr Petra Hansch)
- Keeping and breeding tragopans (Christian Möller)
- WPA Memories (Dieter Arnolds)

Finally an excellent and reasonable buffet dinner layed the ground for a long evening of discussion and exchange of news and know-how.

On Sunday morning at the AGM members decided to support the release project for Hazel grouse in the Harz region in Germany with 2000 DM.

The Chairman thanked all members who helped organise the Annual Convention and two regional meetings in North and West Germany in May, as well as the printing of the new, fully coloured information brochure, which was produced at no cost to the Association.

Pheasant Specialist Group

Peter J Garson - Chairman

Department of Agriculture and Environmental Science, Ridley Building, University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, UK

This year we finished our Action Plan and continued to receive exciting news about ongoing projects and new pheasant conservation plans from all around the world.

Core functions

The principal landmark this year was the completion of the *Action Plan* (McGowan and Garson 1995) in November. Although this was compiled by Philip McGowan and Peter Garson, it is a true reflection of the views of the entire network consulted about its contents at regular intervals since 1993. It was designed in collaboration with Tom Gardiner and Jane Clacey and typeset by Jane under contract to the Species Survival Commission. The compilers gratefully acknowledge their hard work, and the support of Keith Howman, in finally bringing this task to a successful conclusion. Since January the *Action Plan* has been distributed to nearly 1,000 people and organisations by the SSC, WPA and the compilers.

On a daily basis, we continue to function largely through the Chairman, with the help of a broadly based core committee of eight others in UK: Mike Cook (WPA CBAC), Mike Crosby (Asia Programme, BirdLife

International), Keith Howman (WPA DG), Carol Inskipp (Oriental Bird Club), Georgina Mace (SSC Steering Committee and Institute of Zoology, London Zoo), Philip McGowan (WPA Council and Open University), Roger Wilkinson (WPA CBAC and Chester Zoo), and Maureen Swan (Game Conservancy Trust). We only held one meeting this year, in December, but produced the two scheduled issues of our newsletter *Tragopan* in August and January, thanks to the efficient editorial skills of Philip McGowan, with help from Carol Inskipp who has now taken over this task.

Thanks to continuing institutional support from the Open University and the University of Newcastle, only modest funds were required to maintain our central activities: core committee meetings, production and distribution of *Tragopan*, and the Chairman's communication costs. We are grateful for contributions from WPA, BirdLife International, and *Tragopan* subscribers, which together provided the £500 needed this year.



Photo: P. J. Garson

Dr Ding Chang-qing on the UK's Great (Hadrian's) Wall, November 1995

Project Review

Before reviewing progress on *Action Plan* and other projects with which this Specialist Group was associated during 1995/96, we must once again stress that in most cases our only role has been to give advice on project implementation and/or sources of funding (which are given below for the year in question). If we have received a proposal or project outline, we will have offered advice and/or endorsed the project, making it official under SSC, BirdLife and WPA. Such endorsements are noted below. There are probably many projects in progress of which we have no knowledge, and we would ask readers who know of any to contact us. One of our principal responsibilities is to maintain a global list of ongoing projects involving pheasants. Progress on several field projects in India are the subject of a separate report by Rahul Kaul.

Philip McGowan (Open University, UK) continued his project on key areas for the conservation of Asian galliformes. Ding Chang-qing (Institute of Zoology, Beijing) spent several weeks at the Open University in November, and transferred over 1,900 recent site records for China into the main database, with the promise of more to come. In February Umar Aftab (WWF-Pakistan, Lahore) also worked with Philip on recent site records for his country, and in March Rahul Kaul (WPA SARO, Delhi) arrived with hundreds more! The project now enters its final analytical phase to specify areas requiring ground surveys or safeguarding as protected areas. This project was sponsored in 1995/96 by the Leverhulme Trust (UK), the Howman Trust, British Airways Assisting Conservation, WWF-Pakistan, WPA and the Royal Society of London. The Chinese sub-project is endorsed by the Group.

Resit Sozer (Haarlem, Netherlands) led a joint Indonesian team in Kalimantan (Indonesia) from November to March, on a continuing project to assess the distribution and status of Bornean galliformes. By talking to local people and visiting promising sites, he established that Bulwer's pheasant *Lophura bulweri*, Crested fireback *L. ignita* and Great argus *Argusianus argus* were all quite widespread and apparently tolerant of human disturbance of habitats. In contrast, Crestless fireback *L. erythrophthalma* and Bornean peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron schleiermacheri* appear to be extremely rare and restricted to particular (different) habitats. This project is endorsed, and is funded by the Wildlife Conservation Society (New York, USA).

Another survey led by Roy Dennis (Nethybridge, UK) during January-February in Danau Sentarum NR in SW Kalimantan only found evidence of the commoner three species mentioned above. This project was endorsed.

A team associated with BirdLife's Himalayan Jungle Project in Kohistan (N Pakistan) braved the winter snows with local people and their trained dogs for a three month stint in the Palas valley in search of wintering grounds for the western tragopan *Tragopan melanocephalus*. They found a significant concentration of birds close to village terracing and on the other side of the river from the main spring breeding area discovered by Guy Duke in 1990. This project was funded by the

European Union and the Government of NW Frontier Province, Pakistan.

The BirdLife Vietnam Programme team has been collaborating with the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute in Hanoi to produce a management plan for the Ke Go area, from which they have obtained evidence of both Vietnamese pheasant *Lophura hatinhensis* and Imperial pheasant *L. imperialis*, amongst an extraordinary number of other birds, mammals and plants over the past five years. This plan involves incorporating the best preserved areas of lowland forests into one protected area as a Nature Reserve, in an effort to relieve pressures from commercial logging and hunting (Eames 1996). This project was funded by the European Union.

Progress on WPA's Vietnam Project, involving the captive breeding of Vietnamese pheasant and Edwards's pheasant *L. edwardsi* in Vietnam and Europe, is detailed in the CBAC report.

A project investigating the utility of cryopreservation as a means of storing and transporting Edwards's and Silver pheasant *L. nycthemera* sperm was completed in December as a Masters thesis by Karrie Rose (University of Guelph, Canada). She showed that it retained sufficient viability for this technique to be useful in combination with artificial insemination for captive breeding programmes. This endorsed project was funded by Metropolitan Toronto Zoo, the Animal Health Trust and WPA-Canada.

Following pilot work on Elliot's pheasant *Symaticus ellioti* over several years, Ding Ping (Hangzhou University, Zhejiang) registered under Prof Zheng Guang-mei's supervision in October for a three year PhD study of the ecological requirements of this species, centred on Leigong NR in SE Guizhou. This is funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China.

Surveys of known and potential new sites for Reeves's pheasant *S. reevesii* throughout South China have continued throughout 1994-96, led by Li Zhu-mei (Guizhou Institute of Biology, Guiyang).

A 1995 survey on the island of Palawan (Philippines) by Roy Girdler (Leatherhead, UK) produced evidence of a substantial population of Palawan peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron emphanum* adjacent to its best known site at St Paul's NP, but poaching by resin collectors is seen as a serious problem.

Investigations of evolutionary relationships between Imperial, Vietnamese and Edwards's pheasants by comparing mitochondrial DNA sequences have been completed on a small sample by Euan Malone (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK), as part of a larger study of the evolution and taxonomy of the galliformes. As more samples from wild and captive bred birds, as well as museum skins, have now become available, this work is being extended independently by Ettore Randi

(Bologna, Italy) and Peter Arcander (Zoological Institute, Copenhagen, Denmark). As different techniques and regions of the DNA can give different answers to the same question, this duplication of research effort is to be welcomed.

Finally, new research is now underway to study the ecology and behaviour of the Red junglefowl *Gallus gallus* in Peninsular Malaysia, as a PhD project for Mohammad Irshad Arshad (Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, Serdang).

Recent Literature

- Eames, J.C. 1996. Ke Go Nature Reserve - the place of wood. *World Birdwatch* 18(1): 6-8.
- Evans, T.D. and Timmins, R.J. 1995. The status of the green peafowl *Pavo muticus* in Laos. *Forktail* 11: 11-32.
- King, B., Farrow, D, Robson, C., Buck, H. & Fisher, T. 1996. Recent rare pheasant observations in Chin State, West Myanmar (Burma). *WPA News* 50: 9-10.
- McGowan, P.J.K. and Garson, P.J. 1995. Status survey and conservation action plan 1995-99. Pheasants. IUCN, Gland Switzerland. Pp.116.
- Moynihan, M. 1995. Social structures and behavior patterns of captive and feral Reeves pheasant *Symaticus reevesi* in France. *Alauda* 63: 213-228.

Partridge, Quail and Francolin Specialist Group

Simon D Dowell - Chairman

Department of Biological and Earth Sciences, John Moors University, Byrom Street, Liverpool L3 3AF, UK

Following the publication of the first Partridge, Quail and Francolin Conservation Action Plan in August 1995 (McGowan et al. 1995), the Partridge, Quail and Francolin (PQF) Specialist Group has been working hard to initiate the projects prioritised within the Action Plan.

Core activities

The *Action Plan* is a useful document but the hard work that went into its production will have been in vain unless the Plan is implemented. The PQF Specialist Group has pursued this vigorously and more than a third of the 19 major projects in the *Action Plan* are now in operation. Ensuring the implementation of all the *Action Plan* projects within the next five years is co-ordinated by the nine strong PQF Specialist Group core committee based in the UK. Committee member involvement ranges from providing a catalyst to fund-raising or generating enthusiasm for a project to developing their own proposal and carrying it out themselves.

Like the other WPA Specialist Groups, the PQF group is not in a position to provide funds directly, but it is developing a close working relationship with a number of funding organisations who have agreed to

support priority projects from the *Action Plan*. Potential conservation workers submit a fully costed proposal (on a PQF project proposal form devised by the group) to the core committee. Following consultation and refereeing, the committee decides whether to endorse the proposal and submit it to funding organisations who will accept PQF Specialist Group endorsement of a project as rendering it worthy of a grant. This co-operative arrangement has led to the development of the Sichuan hill-partridge project in China and is expected to enable the initiation of several new projects within the next year.

Project reports

Four projects initiated and supported by the PQF Specialist Group stand out as having achieved particularly good results in the last year.

Identification of key areas for the conservation of Asian Galliformes

In this ambitious project, a database of all galliform records for Asia has been compiled by Drs Phil McGowan and Mike Gillman at the Open University in the UK. This Leverhulme Trust funded project will enable the Galliform Specialist Groups to focus their conservation efforts on the most important areas for galliforms in Asia.

*Conservation of the Sichuan hill-partridge *Arborophila rufipectus* in China*

Visits to Sichuan, China by two PQF Specialist Group committee members in previous years culminated in the establishment of a major project to study the endangered Sichuan hill-partridge.

Funds for this year's work were raised by the PQF Specialist Group from Stiftung Avifauna Protecta, The Zoological Society for the Conservation of Habitats and Species and The Oriental Bird Club.

Between the end of April and the end of June, Mr Dai Bo of the Sichuan Forestry Department in Chengdu led a survey team into the last remaining areas of forest habitat in the Daliang Shan region of southern Sichuan.

A total of 172 calling male hill-partridges were recorded in primary and secondary forest, though none were recorded from the artificial plantations of alien conifers that replace the primary broadleaf forest after it has been clear-felled by loggers. Results suggest a shrinking population at densities of less than one pair per square kilometre of suitable habitat and the total population in the highly restricted range of this species may be less than 2000 individuals. The hill-partridge's habitat is threatened by logging (over 90% of it is due to be logged within the next 30 years) and the next stage is to establish protected areas and further investigate its ecology.

The involvement of the Sichuan Forestry Department through Dai Bo is crucial and he is to be congratulated on his hard work and dedication.



Sichuan hill-partridge

Artist: David Mead

Survey and habitat management of the Swamp francolin Francolinus gularis in India

A study of the ecology and management of the vulnerable Swamp francolin in India was completed, with the main findings to be presented in a report written by Perwez Iqbal later this year. Swamp francolins were found to utilise sugar cane fields was high due to feral dogs. Future management must ensure that extensive areas of wet grassland remain, but sugar cane fields around the edge of these areas may provide extra cover.

PQF Specialist Group support for this project has enabled funding by the International Trust for Nature Conservation, the People's Trust for Endangered Species, WPA, The Oriental Bird Club and British Airways Assisting Conservation.

Status and conservation of the Bearded tree-quail Dendrortyx barbatus in Mexico

One of the most threatened of the world's galliforms is the Bearded tree-quail and a project to study these has been initiated in Mexico by the PQF Specialist Group's new Chairman, Dr John Carroll and Jack Clinton-Eitniear of the Center for Tropical Bird Studies. Initial surveys have been conducted revealing that the birds are especially vulnerable to trapping for meat and for the local pet trade. Efforts are underway to publicise the plight of this bird with local people by making it the state bird of Veracruz.

New Chairman

This was my last year as Chairman of the Group and so this is my last annual report on the group's progress. I would like to thank the members of the PQF Specialist Group and WPA for their tremendous support during my four years as Chairman which I have enjoyed immensely. I will continue to serve on the PQF committee and remain an active member. I am delighted to be able to hand the running of it over to Dr John Carroll who has taken up a research post at The Game Conservancy. John will be known to many of you from his research on Grey partridges in North America and wood-quails and tree-quails in Central and South America. He has been a regular contributor to WPA symposia and is a co-author of the *PQF Action Plan*.

I welcome John to his new position as Chairman of the Specialist Group and wish him well for the future. The main challenge will be the initiation of conservation work on all 19 of the major projects in the *Partridge, Quail and Francolin Action Plan* and I believe the group is well on the way to achieving this.

Reference

McGowan, PJK, Dowell, SD, Carroll, JP and Aebischer, NJ 1995. *Partridges, Quails, Francolins, Snowcocks and Guineafowl: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.

Grouse Specialist Group

Matt Ridley

Boston House, Blagdon, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6DB, UK

It has been a busy and successful year for the group especially with the organisation of the Seventh International Grouse Symposium in Fort Collins, USA for which a full report follows this update.

The Grouse Specialist Group now has a membership of 129. Not only have we held the 7th International Grouse Symposium and the first to take place in North America, but we raised funds for the travel of several delegates from China, Estonia, Finland and Russia to the conference. This donation came from The Famous Grouse Scotch Whisky, which also endowed a travel scholarship to Scotland. A separate report on the symposium is appended to this report.



We also raised an immensely generous donation from the Martin Wills trust for the preparation of the *Grouse Action Plan* by the new chairman of the Grouse Specialist Group, Ilse Storch, and work has already begun on that plan. Martin Wills was a knowledgeable and inspired countryman and writer who died tragically young in 1992 and left a generous charitable legacy. His interest in forestry, ornithology and conservation will come together in this action plan. We are immensely grateful to Sir David and Lady Wills and Dr Catherine Wills for their support.

In conjunction with WPA, the group also raised funds towards a further three years' research in all on the Chinese Hazel Grouse by Dr Sun Yue-hua and his colleagues. We acknowledge the contributions of The Famous Grouse Scotch Whisky to this important work on a threatened species.

Thanks to Diana Lovel and Jane Clacey, *Grouse News* continues to thrive, and two newsletters were producing during 1996.

The Seventh International Grouse Symposium, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA - August 1996

Anne Westerberg

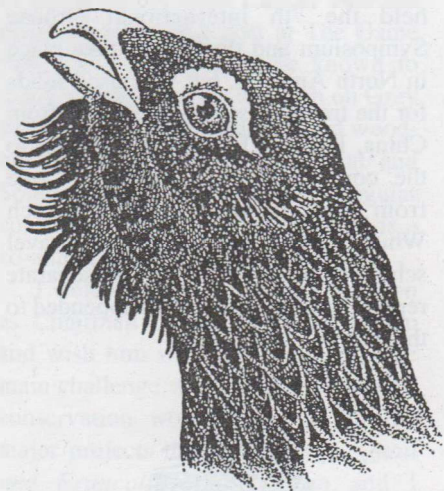
32 Manor Road, Medomsley, Consett, Co Durham DH8 6QW, UK

For the first time since its inception, the triennial International Grouse Symposium was held in North America. Two and a half days of presentations and a day and a half of field excursions were superbly organised and made for a most informative and enjoyable conference attended by some 170 delegates.

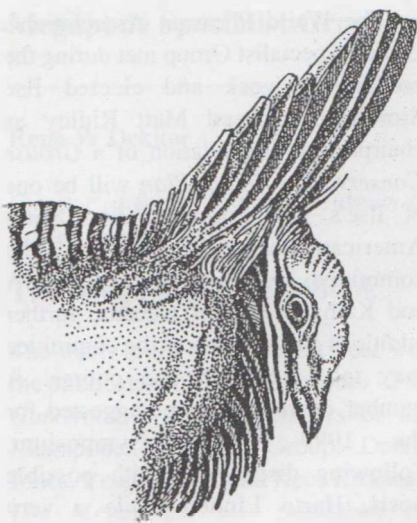
A total of 48 papers were presented orally within six plenary sessions, with additional studies exhibited in poster form. The conference concluded with an overview by Mark Boyce, which is incorporated within the following summary.

Papers covered a wide range of topics, including status, distribution and population trends of North American grouse, the status of Chinese grouse, habitats, conservation and population dynamics of forest grouse, breeding ecology and behaviour, movements and dispersal, micro climate and physiological ecology, molecular systematics and parasite infection dynamics, habitat management and the roles and mechanics of introduction, reintroduction and translocation in grouse conservation.

Studies fell under three main themes: population dynamics and regulation (including predation and parasite-host interactions), behaviour



(leks and territoriality) and ecosystem management. In respect of population dynamics and regulation, predation appears to be important in limiting and regulating the populations of several grouse species. A notable difference was evident between the interests of North American researchers, whose studies are little concerned with predation, and the particular emphasis



given to predators by many other workers. This may have arisen because of the absence of an option for predator control in North America, where studies focus rather on the provision of cover within habitats. The importance of food in regulating populations has not been convincingly demonstrated, but work on parasite-host interactions indicates the potential of these for regulation.

The spatial distribution of habitat and its effect on population dynamics and dispersal was the subject of one plenary session and spawned stimulating discussion on implications for grouse conservation. The theory of metapopulation dynamics, where a motapopulation is a system of distinct sub-populations connected by dispersal and regulated by local extinction and recolonization of habitat patches,

provided much of the focus for discussions. Consideration was given to whether population conservation should be focused at the local, landscape (metapopulation) or continental scale, and at what point in the depletion of a population conservation practice might best be initiated. An early preventative approach, rather than a later reactive one seems to be most useful. Those populations most valuable for ensuring long-term survival may be those which persist at low density, providing source populations for recolonization. the loss of habitat, *ie* its reduction, has more critical implications for conservation than its break-up, or fragmentation.

Recent behaviour studies on Sage grouse, Black grouse and Sharp-tailed grouse have focused on lek behaviour, whilst territoriality has been shown to be important for monogamous species including Red grouse, Ptarmigan and Hazel grouse.

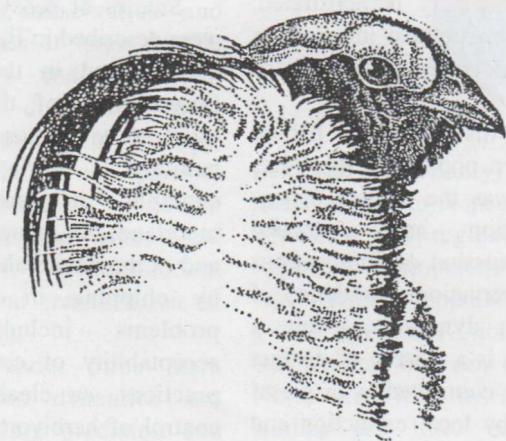
Studies of ecosystem management were described in Britain, in Manitoba, Canada and in the German Black Forest. One of the most difficult problems to be overcome in managing habitats is nutrient depletion, for example in managing British moorlands for non-natural vegetation, and in the wholesale removal of aspen by chipping in Manitoba. Other problems include the public acceptability of certain management practices, *eg* clear-felling, and the control of herbivores through culling. The management of habitats

maintained by disturbance is still poorly understood. Other problems occur where the management of one species may be detrimental to others, leading to the need for controversial decisions concerning which species may acceptably be conserved at the expense of others.

Future research needs call for less descriptive, and more rigorously scientific, work incorporating experimental methods, captive studies, landscape manipulation, increased attention to replication and study design and rigorous statistical testing. Areas requiring particular attention include the need to relate habitats to populations (eg using GIS), investigation of the roles of parasites and predators in population regulation, studies of indirect relationships in ecosystems (eg nutrient losses and insect losses to pesticides) and studies of conservation genetics, still in their relative infancy.

The World Pheasant Association's Grouse Specialist Group met during the conference week and elected Ilse Storch to succeed Matt Ridley as chairperson. Compilation of a *Grouse Conservation Action Plan* will be one of Ilse's first priorities. Two North Americans were elected to the committee, Jack Connelly of the USA and Kathy Martin of Canada; further additions and changes to the committee may take place in due course. A number of venues were suggested for the 1999 Grouse Symposium. Following discussions with possible hosts, Harto Linden made a very well-received offer to host the Eighth Symposium in Finland.

Proceedings of the conference, including refereed papers and edited abstracts, are scheduled for publication in *Wildlife Biology* in the first or second issue of 1997.



Megapode Specialist Group

René W Dekker

Curator of Birds, National Museum of Natural History, PO Box 9517, 2300 RA Leiden, Netherlands

The Megapodes Handbook

The main event of the report year was the publication of *The Megapodes - The Handbook* by three members of the Megapode Specialist Group: Darryl Jones, Rene Dekker and Kees Roselaar. *The Megapodes* was published by Oxford University Press and is the first handbook on the family since Oustalet's monograph which was published in 1880-1881. So far, the book has been well received among ornithologists and in reviews in ornithological journals.

It describes and illustrates the 22 species in this interesting family distributed over Australia, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, the Philippines, and some southwest Pacific islands. Sometimes known as thermometer birds, they are the only birds known to use external heat sources rather than body heat for incubation.

In the first nine chapters, the authors give an overview of the family as a whole, describing their taxonomy, distribution, biology and behaviour. Megapodes exhibit an array of physiological, ecological, and behavioural adaptations related to their unique incubation technique, and these

are fully explored. Then follow the 22 species accounts, each one giving a complete description of the bird in its natural state. Sonograms are included where possible.

The Megapode Newsletter

Only one issue of the *Megapode Newsletter* was published during the report period (Vol. 10, no 1: May 1996). Articles included were:

- Bowen, J. 1996. The Vanuatu Megapode *Megapodius layardi* on Ambrym.
- Firman. 1996. Note on a survey of the Philippine Megapode *Megapodius cumingii* on the Togan Islands.
- Riley, J. 1996. The status of megapodes on the Sangihe and Talaud Islands.

International symposia

Preparations are underway for a four day Megapode Symposium in Nhill, Australia, to be held from 6-9 December 1997. Information can be obtained from Dr Darryl N Jones, Australian Environmental Studies, Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland 4111, Australia or Dr René Dekker, National Museum of Natural

History, PO Box 9517, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands.

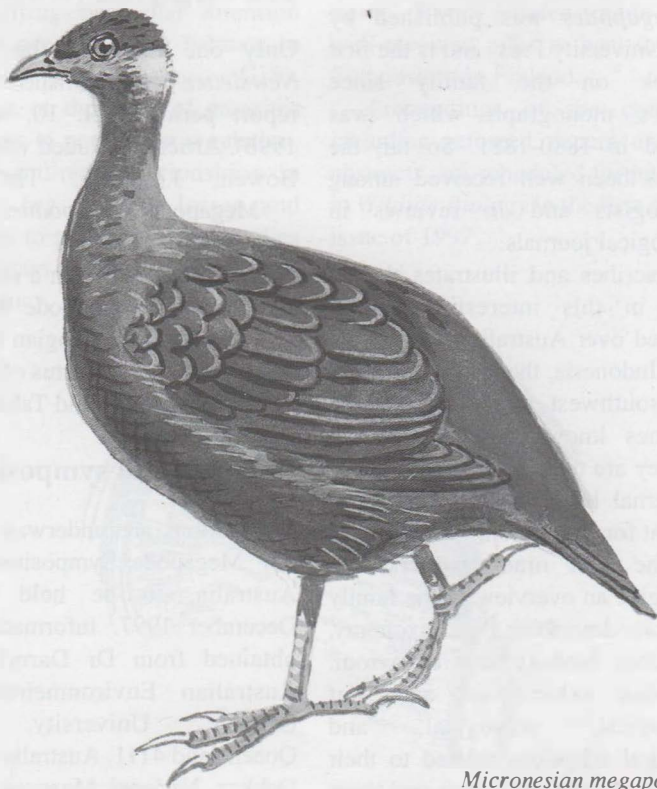
Megapodes: an action plan for their conservation 1995-1999

Following the publication in April 1995 of the action plan, the status of the so-called 'Projects to be initiated' is as follows:

- **Project 4.2.1.** Survey for the Bruijn's brush-turkey *Aepyodius*

bruijnii: Survey conducted in 1993 by a team of Dutch biologists. Future surveys needed in other parts of Waigeo.

- **Project 4.2.2.** Conservation of the Maleo *Macrocephalon maleo*: In stage of dormancy because of lack of funds. This project is by far the most expensive conservation project suggested in the action plan and should only be initiated once sufficient funds are available.



*Micronesian megapode by
Esdaile Hudson*

- **Project 4.2.3.** Conservation of the Moluccan megapode *Eulipoa wallacei*. Under study by a Dutch biologist, while a British team is preparing work on a different island starting November 1996.

- **Project 4.2.4.** Survey and study of the Nicobar megapode *Megapodius nicobariensis*: Under study by biologists from the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, India.

- **Project 4.2.5.** Survey for the Tanimbar megapode *Megapodius tenimberensis*: Two weeks surveys and study conducted in February/March 1996 by Dutch biologist from the National Museum of Natural History, The Netherlands.

- **Project 4.2.6.** Survey for the Biak megapode *Megapodius geelvinkianus*: Cancelled by the Indonesian authorities as a result of the hostage affair in Irian Jaya which took place between January and May 1996.

- **Project 4.2.7.** Survey for the Vanuatu megapode *Megapodius layardi*: Conducted by British team on the island of Ambrym. Future surveys needed on other islands.

Selection of publications by members of the Megapode Specialist Group

Argeloo, M. & Dekker, RWRJ. 1996. Exploitation of megapodes eggs in

Indonesia: the role of traditional methods in the conservation of megapodes. *Oryx*, 30, 59-64.

Benshemesh, JS. & Emison, WB. 1996. Surveying breeding densities of Malleefowl using an airborne thermal scanner. *Wildlife Research*, 23, 121-142.

Birks, SM. 1996. Reproductive behaviour and paternity in the Australian Brush-turkey *Alectura lathami*. Dissertation, Cornell University. 257pp.

Dekker, RWRJ., Argeloo, M. & Jepson, P. 1995. Notes on the Moluccan Megapode *Eulipoa wallacei* (GR Gray, 1860) following the rediscovery of two major nesting grounds. *Zoologische Mededelingen*, 69 (15-29), 251-260.

Goth, A., & Vogel, U. 1995. Status of the Polynesian Megapode *Megapodius pritchardii* on Niuafo'ou (Tonga). *Bird Conservation International*, 5, 117-128.

Priddel, D. & Wheeler, R. 1996. Effect of age at release on susceptibility of captive-reared Malleefowl *Leipoa ocellata* to predation by the introduced fox *Vulpes vulpes*. *Emu* 96, 32-41.

Rinke, D. 1995. Red Data Bird. Niuafo'ou Megapode. *World Birdwatch*, 17(4), 20-21.

Stone, T. 1995. Shell mound formation in coastal northern Australia. *Marine Geology*, 129, 77-100.

Captive Breeding Advisory Committee - Annual Report

Han Assink

De Vogelhof, Boerenweg 66, 5944 EL Arcen, Netherlands

The CBAC is primarily a committee which keeps in contact by correspondence. However in the 1995/96 period it met twice - once informally at The Old House, Hare Hatch in June and again with a full meeting at Harewood in January.

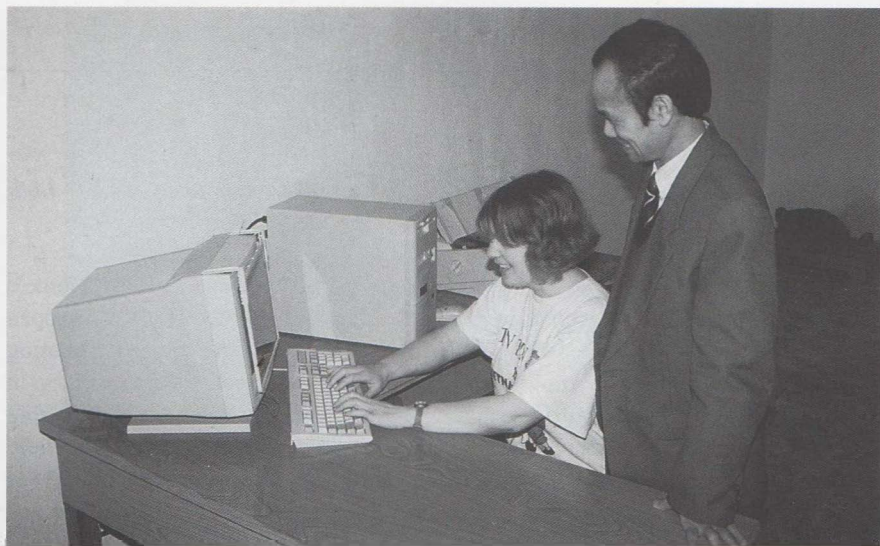
The committee comprises a core committee plus corresponding members from around the world. During the period the main concerns have been the data collection for studbooks, in particular the Edwards's, Blyth's and Malay and Mountain peacock-pheasants.

The Edwards's is particularly difficult because there have been no new importations, so far as we are aware, since the 1930s. Different countries may have built up 'island' gene pools so we have been busy collecting DNA samples which are being sent to Dr Ettore Randi in Italy for evaluation and to ascertain if there is variation between the genetic stock in different countries. During the year samples were obtained from N America, Japan, UK and Europe. Dr Randi's research for us is being funded by the Paris Natural History Museum.



Photos: Han Assink

DNA may help in establishing the relationships of the various Lophura pheasants in Vietnam. This photo is of a cock Vietnamese pheasant Lophura hatinhensis



Gillian Stewart demonstrating the ARKS studbook programme

It has been agreed that BAAC will assist in an interchange of genetic stock between Europe and N America. Whilst the work on the Edwards's pheasant studbook has been progressing we have been building up relationships with colleagues in Vietnam, the original home of the species. In particular we have been following up on the work begun by Gillian Stewart and taken on by Claire Beastall in providing technical assistance to the zoos in Vietnam and in particular Hanoi Zoo. Working relationships were also established with WWF in Vietnam through Dr David Hulse to whom we are most grateful for his support.

The co-operation between WPA and the Vietnamese Zoos has had one early and very exciting benefit - namely the breeding at Saigon Zoo of the first

Crested argus pheasants ever bred in captivity. None of our work in Vietnam could have been done without the generous support of many organisations and people.

The Taxon Advisory Group in the UK is jointly chaired by Gary Robbins and Jim Irwin-Davis. They have provided a perfect example of how the private aviculturist and the professional zoo world can work harmoniously and efficiently together. Hopefully the pattern developed by them can now be replicated in Europe.

WPA/CBAC attended the International Conferences of SEAZA and EAZA in Taipei, Taiwan and Poznan, Poland respectively. At the Poznan conference the presentation by Gillian Stewart on her work in Hanoi was very well received.

WPA-South Asia Regional Office

Rahul Kaul

Dhananjaya Katju, WPA South Asia, c/o WWF-India Secretariat, 172-B Lodi Estate, New Delhi 110 003, India. E-mail: dj@wwfind.ernet.in

The year 1995-96 was a busy year for SARO both at the desk as well as in the field. The desk was a site of hectic activity with the behind the scenes work, so critical in ensuring that projects go on without any hitches. During this period, we also employed two research associates who were charged with the responsibility of providing assistance to researchers in the field, and also making sure that the reports arrived back from the field in time. When not in the field, they filled in the lines of the galliformes database, mainly through the kind efforts of scores of respondents whom we have been constantly pestering with our not too friendly questionnaires.

Our third survey to NE India, in the winter of 1994-95, was conducted in the remote interiors of the West Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Here, we obtained incontrovertible evidences of the presence of Sclater's monal *Lophophorus sclateri* and Temminck's tragopan *Tragopan temminckii*. We conducted our fourth survey in December 95-February 96, this time in the state of Mizoram, where from the Hume's pheasant *Syrmaticus humai* was reported. Our surveys confirmed the Mizoram Forest Department's

claim of the presence of the Hume's pheasant and also the Blyth's tragopan *Tragopan blythii*. We are now planning to hold a Pheasant Census Workshop in Mizoram in March and April, during which we expect to impart basic field training to the forest personnel of North-eastern States so that simple and uncomplicated techniques to obtain details of various galliformes in the region can be demonstrated, with the hope that this will lead to constant monitoring.

In the middle of the year, we started work, through one of our associates, on the fire ecology of Kumaon hills and the possible effect of such fires on galliformes of this region. Data has been collected and is being compiled at present into a report which will be sent to the local Forest Departments and the Ministry in addition to any other requests received.

While these activities were going on, our assistance to the Satyr tragopan project in Singalila National Park, Darjeeling, continued. This project was funded initially by the West Bengal Forest Department, through the Government College Darjeeling. WPA-SARO remains an active collaborator and has gone one step

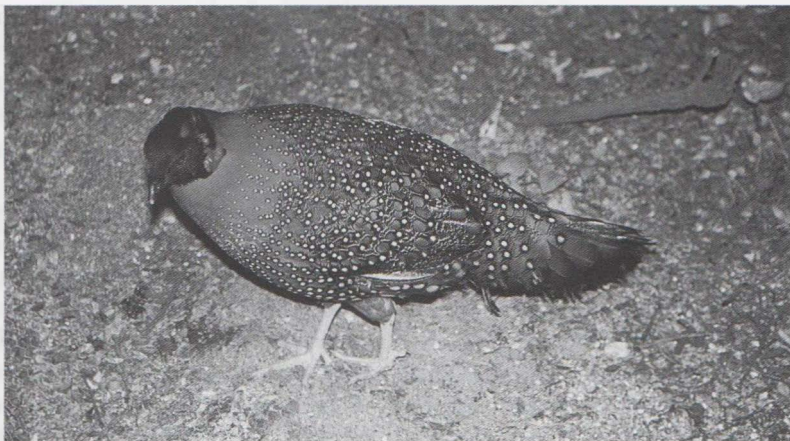


Photo: Jean Howman

Cock Satyr tragopan

further in providing radio-collars and a receiver for use on the Satyr tragopan in SNP. Representatives of WPA-SARO have now made three trips to the field site and have designed the study, demonstrated various field methods, their applications and also the use of radio-telemetry to the researchers. Radios will be employed on the birds in the next season (Spring 1997) following permission by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India to trap birds for this exercise. After completion of the project in June 1996, SARO has employed the researcher Sarala Khaling, to enable her to continue her research and the subsequent writing up. WPA-SARO is also seeking funds to see Sarala complete her radio-telemetry studies next spring and the analyses of data following this field work.

We initiated two more studies almost simultaneously. One was the Blyth's tragopan ecology project in the

north east India and the second was the Kumaon Ecology Project in the U.P. hills. Our correspondence with Ron Sumner resulted in WPA-USA funding a part of the Blyth's tragopan project, together with the Peter Scott Trust, Jamnagar. The study will investigate the distribution and ecology of the Blyth's tragopan pheasant in its range of occurrence.

A part of the Kumaon ecology project aims to study the ecological separation of pheasants of Kumaon and their responses to varying degrees of human pressures. This project is funded by the Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and is being conducted by the Centre of Wildlife and Ornithology, Aligarh Muslim University. The WPA-SARO office has deputed a scientist to the project to oversee field work and also the production reports. Both projects are of three years duration.

On the publication front, SARO has been bringing out the *WPA-India News* on behalf of WPA-India. We have also printed some colour posters depicting the 'Threatened Pheasants of India' with the aim of providing WPA-India with some fund-raising and publicity material. We have also been a channelling office for forwarding material published by WPA HQs to WPA-India and its members.

Being the South Asia Regional Office, we are also responsible for assisting galliforme conservation efforts in the South Asian region. Last year, I made a trip to get first hand information on the galliforme conservation scene in Nepal. The Pipar project, about which so much has been written earlier, is in my opinion a very successful project. Its success is reflected by the faith locals have in WPA. The schools promoted by WPA in that region have benefited local children which has created much goodwill. I was in the Pipar area for about a week and found it as unspoilt or perhaps better than when Jimmy Roberts and his men must have first started WPA work there; a tribute to the success of this project. This truly reflects the strength of WPA - small but effective.

During that trip, I was requested by the Director of the Annupurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) to prepare a Conservation Strategy for Galliformes of the Annupurna region. A proposal has been prepared and sent to ACAP HQ for their comments.

Among the small projects that we are conducting this year is a very interesting one to develop radio-collars indigenously so that costs can be reduced substantially. Another project that we are conducting in Delhi is a small but an interesting study on what survival strategies, the Indian peafowl *Pavo cristatus* is employing to survive in an urban area like Delhi.

There are many more projects lined up for the coming years. To name a few, the grassland fragmentation project in Gujarat, the Western tragopan *Tragopan melanocephalus* project in NW Himalaya and the Cheer *Catreus wallichii* habitat project are scheduled to begin in the latter part of 1996 (after the monsoon) or early 1997. Two more projects which are also in the pipeline are the Spurfowl ecology project and the Grey junglefowl project, both in the peninsular India. There is no end to the list because so much still has to be done. We have just begun with the pheasants, and have yet to touch the partridges, quail and francolin.

I believe we have shown satisfactory growth, not in terms of building infrastructure but in the number of projects we are associated with. We have to try not to spread ourselves too thin, given the resources of money and personnel we have at our disposal. We have the urge to grow but for that we need more money and more staff. We are working on this presently but any ideas and of course, solutions, are most welcome.

Studies on habitat and management of Brown eared-pheasants in China

Zhang Zheng-wang

Department of Biology, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100 080, P R China

Studies on habitat selection and management of Brown eared-pheasants in China was a two-year research project focused on the study and conservation of the endangered Brown eared-pheasant in Shanxi Province. It has been supported in various ways by WPA and The Pheasant Specialist Group and funded by WPA-Germany, Chicago Zoological Society and the China Wildlife Conservation Association. In the first season's work

(1995), the main finding of this project was that the activities of mushroom collectors greatly reduced the breeding success of this endangered species of pheasant in Pangquangou Natural Reserve. This year we have extended our field work to study the population in Luyanshan Natural Reserve. At the same time, we have also been carrying out behavioural studies using captive birds in Beijing Breeding Centre for Endangered Animals.



All photos: Zhang Zheng-wang

Female Brown eared-pheasant sitting on a nest



Radio-tracking in Luyashan

1. Radiotracking studies

This work was carried out from January-May 1996 in Luyanshan. Six Brown eared-pheasants (two males and four females) were radiotagged. By radiotracking the locations of the birds two to three times each day, we found that the home range of individual birds varied from 2.19 to 128.18 ha. Birds had larger home ranges when they separated into pairs and started to select their breeding place. In the breeding season, the home range is 2.20-6.79 ha and the size varies with months, habitat types and food abundance. From March onwards, when the breeding season begins, the home range becomes markedly smaller. Smaller home ranges are also found in coniferous forest areas

and in habitats with a good food supply.

By radiotracking and field observations, we found that the cock birds show strong territorial behaviour. Territory owners often fight and chase intruders. Adult cocks take high quality territories while young birds often form small groups and do not breed unless some territorial birds were killed by predators. The Brown eared-pheasants is a monogamous bird; after the breeding territory is established, if one partner disappears, a new mate is found.

2. Breeding success

In 1995, we found 28 Brown eared-pheasant nests and a 76% nest failure rate, largely related to human

disturbance, especially by mushroom collectors in the forest during the incubation period. In 1996, we contacted the Wildlife Department in Taiyuan and at the headquarters in Pangquangou and asked them to take some measures to stop the mushroom exploitation. We are very pleased that they have taken some action in protected areas holding Brown eared-pheasant and that breeding success was improved this year. We found 25 nests in Pangquangou and Luyanshan compared with clutch size's of 4-22. For the 19 nests examined, 73% failed. Although human disturbance and predation are still the main factors leading to nest failures, the relative importance of these two factors has changed. Among 14 unsuccessful nests, for which we have good records

in 1996, 35% suffered egg-collection by local farmers, 50% were predated by crows and mammals, and 14% failed through desertion and nest parasitism.

3. Nest parasitism

In 1996, two remarkable Brown eared-pheasant nests were found in Pangquangou. They were both parasitized by Ring-necked pheasants. The first nest was found on 22 May and contained 12 eggs. Among them, eight were of Brown eared-pheasant and four were laid by Ring-necked pheasants. The hen Brown eared-pheasant incubated the eggs until 5 June, when she led three Ring-necked chicks away from the nest and left her own eggs unhatched in the nest. The second nest, found on 23 May contained 22 eggs; 20 were Brown



4 Ring-necked pheasant eggs were found in a Brown eared-pheasant nest

eared and two Ring-necked. This nest was destroyed soon after it was found.

4. Behaviour studies

In the breeding season, we have made behavioural observations on the Brown Eared-pheasants in Beijing Breeding Centre for Endangered Animals. 14 different kinds of behaviour were recorded using two methods, the scanning method (recording the behaviour of all birds every five minutes) and the focal method (continuously recording the behaviour of single birds using a tape recorder). The data were logged in a computer and analysed using the Observer 3.0 software. We found that (1) Brown eared-pheasant have two peak periods of activity. The first one occurs in the early morning, before 08.00hrs, and the second in the late afternoon between 16.00 and 19.00. The time-budget for cocks is: walking 48%, resting 18%, feeding 21%, calling 6%, displaying 4% and others 3%. For the hen it is: walking 49%, resting 19%, feeding 29%, calling <1% and others 6%. Feeding occurs mainly in the three periods 05.00-08.00, 10.00-14.00 and 16.00-19.00. The hen takes more time when feeding than the cock. The period of 05.00-06.00 is the peak period for cock calls. Display occurs before 10.00 and copulations take place mostly in the early morning.

In the breeding pen at Pangquangou one pair of Brown eared-pheasants made a nest and successfully produced ten chicks. On 6 June, one day before

the chicks hatched, the male took over incubation while the hen left the nest to feed. Probably this is the first sighting of male incubation in any of the eared-pheasants.

5. Population status

In 1996 we also carried out population surveys in Pangquangou and Luyashan. The breeding density is similar to that of last year (six birds/km²). A survey west of Beijing found that Brown eared-pheasants have disappeared from the Dayumu Valley, a site where they were found several years ago, which is really bad news. The reason for this is most likely to be due to mining in the area.

Conclusion

Beijing TV made a programme on conservation of the Brown eared-pheasant and other wildlife in Beijing at the golden time of late April. It included an interview with me and other ornithologists. We called on the local government to take measures to protect the habitats of this bird.

I hope to publish several papers in high quality journals next year. This work will be continued as a new project entitled 'Territorial behaviour and habitat selection of Brown eared-pheasants' which has been funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China. We thank all the people who have supported the project so far.

Saving the Blyth's tragopan

Ron Sumner

1800 S. Canyon Park Circle, Suite 402, Edmond, OK 73013-6631, USA
E-mail: rsumner@icnet.net

Reproduced with kind permission from Gazette, June 1996

The following article demonstrates just what a chapter of WPA can achieve by helping to fund a WPA project and how much interest it can provide for members. Ron Sumner and Rahul Kaul have been the catalyst but it is the members of WPA who have provided the vital funding.

India has become an independent country during the last 50 years. Its population is approximately three times that of the United States, with its land mass being about one quarter that of the United States. The vast majority of the population is not educated beyond the sixth grade. Most of the jungles in the state of Nagaland are owned by villagers.

For many of them, economy comes before ecology. They tend to look upon conservation appeals as having little meaning in the economic conditions of their daily lives. A loaf of bread costs 15¢ (American dollars) and the field workers currently working on this project carry packs up to 75lbs each up slopes in excess of 60 degrees. They do this for earnings of just \$2.14 per day.

Just over a year ago, I received a reply from Dr Rahul Kaul of the WPA-SARO seeking help in establishing funds for much-needed field work on the Blyth's tragopan. Thus, the Blyth's

Tragopan Field Study in India was born. I must admit that it was almost entirely Dr Rahul's doing but it was something that I also thought WPA-USA could help with and was a very worthwhile project. While I would never guarantee that any works of this nature will bring birds to the American shores, I can most certainly guarantee that if we don't help with these projects, there certainly won't be any more of the birds brought to this country or others.

With all the above in mind, WPA-USA set about trying to raise the necessary \$3,500 for the first year of the five-year field project. While it was known that Blyth's tragopan existed in the state of Nagaland, as far as I can tell, it was only rumoured or suspected that they existed elsewhere except that they were once thought to exist in China and perhaps some states bordering Nagaland. In the first stage, the distribution in the range of its occurrence in the north-eastern areas of

India are being studied. This stage will last an entire year and started several months ago. Information on its distribution and macro habitat is now becoming available.

In December there was a confirmed sighting of Blyth's in the state of Mizoram. However, due to heavy rains in some areas, it was not possible to explore all of the forest. Consequently, the team moved to the state of Arunachal Pradesh where sightings of the Blyth's were again confirmed. Sadly, one of the sightings was in the form of a fresh head hanging in a villager's hut. The field team saw and heard Blyth's in the Mehao Wildlife Sanctuary and collected a great deal of data on the habitat and vegetation of the area. Data are also being collected where Blyth's do not occur in the hope of gaining a better understanding of what their requirements are. Currently, the field team is back in the parts of Mizoram they missed in December because of the rains. A female Blyth's on a nest containing four eggs was recently sighted in Mizoram by a forest officer. In the excitement, the forest officer got carried away by what he had found and took the eggs to his base camp in an attempt to artificially incubate them. The eggs were placed under a broody hen and the forest officer was later reprimanded for his act. Let us hope that all hatch and become adults.* The field team will stay in Mizoram for the next 30-40 days collecting data and start entering data into the computer.

Nagaland will be the next state entered but Mr Angami, Chief Conservator of Forests for the state and a good ally of the WPA, has stated that because of rains it would be better to wait until September/October of this year. His advise will be followed.

Based upon what I have been told, it would now seem to me that rather than having just confirmed sightings in the state of Nagaland, we now have confirmation of its existence in at least two other states in India. This is no small feat since the confirmed range now exceeds some 600 miles in a north-south direction rather than the 200 or so miles across the state of Nagaland. It is also my understanding that at least two and perhaps three more states will be studied in the next few months for confirmation of the pheasant in those states.

All contributions are greatly appreciated, no matter how small, and all monies go directly to India to support this project. As far as I know, WPA is the only organised group in the world that is doing anything for the conservation of Galliformes. WPA-USA is trying hard to do its part. I believe that if every person who raises galliformes in the US would donate only \$1, enough would be available to carry on this project for at least two years, if not three. We owe it to the birds to do what we can for their salvation.

*Three chicks hatched and all perished within a week.

Why are *Lophura* pheasants so variable?

Geoffrey Davison

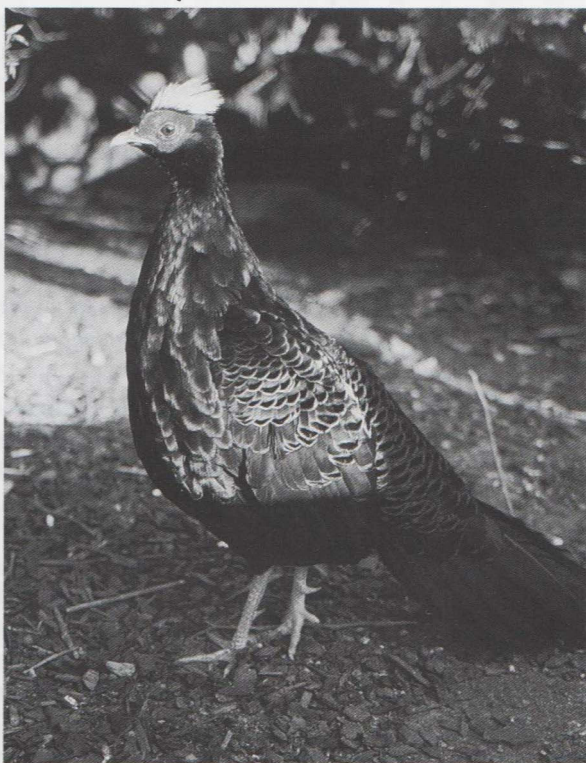
WWF Malaysia, Locked Bag No 911, 46990 Petaling Jaya, Malaysia
E-mail wwfmal@pop.jaring.my

The discovery in Vietnam of *Lophura* pheasants with white central rectrices, in 1964, was not widely known until the middle 1970s. There has subsequently been a growing discussion of the relationships between taxa named *Lophura edwardsi* (Edwards's pheasant), *L. imperialis* (Imperial pheasant) and *L. hatinhensis* (Vietnamese pheasant).

The overall impression is that Edwards's pheasant is smaller, chubbier, the central rectrices no longer than the next pairs and with rounded tips. In both males and females the central rectrices are dark. Males mature in their first year, and have a white crest.

Imperial pheasants and Vietnamese pheasants seem to be larger, slimmer, with straighter or even slightly downcurved tails, with the central rectrices

pointed and slightly longer than the next pairs. In males of the Vietnamese pheasant, one to three central pairs of rectrices, and in females sometimes the third pair, are white or partially white. Males mature in their second year, and the crest is dark.



Cock *Lophura* pheasant

Photo: Jean Howman

These are not the only, nor necessarily the most consistent differences. My purpose in writing this note is to draw attention to the amount of variation in these birds, in relation to other variations in the genus as a whole; and hence to emphasise the degree of caution necessary at all times in using formal names.

Variation in the genus *Lophura*

There are some well known but little discussed examples of great individual variability in the plumages of *Lophura* species.

L. leucomelanos and *L. nycthemera* both have many nominal subspecies, and a wide array of synonymies based on plumage differences. The basis for making decisions on the geographical species limits between these two have recently been reviewed by McGowan and Panchen (1994). In addition to the characters they considered, crest shape and leg colour are relevant in deciding whether a given population belongs to one species or the other. *L. leucomelana* shows a greater range of plumage variation between sites (from entirely black in *L. l. moffitti* to highly variegated in *L. l. hamiltoni*) than *L. nycthemera*. The greatest degree of plumage variation within populations at a given site, however, occurs at the contact zone between the two.

The Bornean populations of *L. ignita* (which are consistent in colour and vary only slightly in size) are very

distinct from the Malay Peninsular and Sumatran populations of *L. ignita rufa*. They have sometimes been called distinct species. However, southern Sumatra is (or was) occupied by an enormously variable population which is known as *L. i. macartnayi*, individuals with widely differing plumage features having been given many names. The name *Lophura hoogerwerfi* was first based on a single female from northern Sumatra. No specimens of males have been taken, so far as is known. The number of specimens is still tiny, and inadequate to make any reasoned judgement about whether the taxon is sufficiently distinct from *L. inornata* as to be of species rank. There is no reason to assume that the small captive population of *L. inornata* is free from genetic influence of *hoogerwerfi*.

Zones of secondary contact?

The examples of *L. ignita* and of *L. leucomelanos* / *nycthemera* have all the appearance of secondary contact zones between populations which have undergone a period of geographical isolation and achieved only partial reproductive isolation. The renewal of geographical contact then results in more or less unstable populations that resemble hybrid swarms.

The actual phenomenon which has occurred is presumably more complex than this suggests. McGowan and Panchen (1994) show that the plumage patterns at the centre of the aggregate

range of *L. leucomelanos* / *nycthemera* appear to be the most 'primitive', whereas an hypothesis of secondary contact could imply the opposite. The existence of multi-directional clines in plumage features, radiating away from geographically central populations, is a good argument against the hypothesis of secondary contact.

The intuitive assumption of secondary contact zones, reached from looking at distribution maps, may not be correct, or be only partly correct. Other factors which may be involved include (but are not restricted to) partial reproductive isolation by minor, temporary or incomplete geographical barriers; assortative mating; and loosening of genetic linkages within highly inbred demes.

Relevance to Vietnamese populations

There is strong reason to be aware of the possibility that similar phenomena occur amongst the Vietnamese populations of *Lophura*. This is a mood which is already clear amongst those investigating the birds, but which does not seem to have been explicitly stated. Many relevant points can be made, some of which are offered below without any specific logical progression from one point to the next.

The earlier names, *edwardsi* and *imperialis*, do not necessarily refer either to the commonest, or the most widespread, or the physically most uniform and consistent populations that

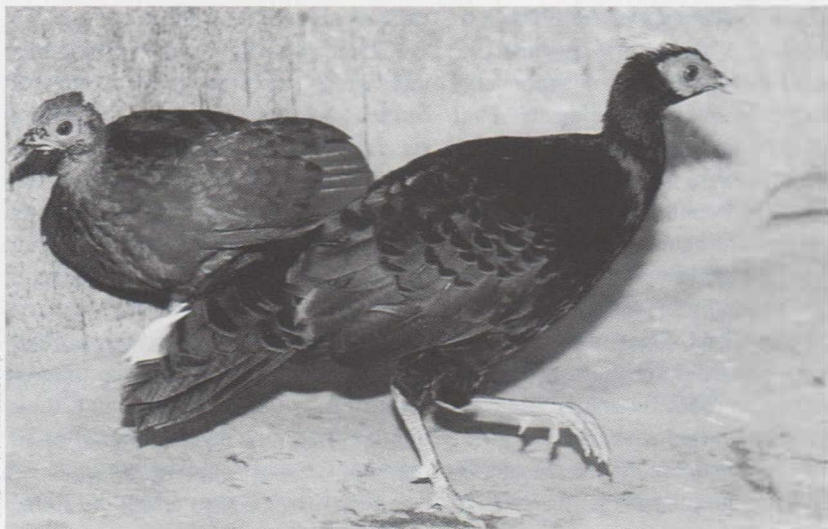
exist or existed.

There is already evidence of some individual variability in the earliest of captive populations. For example, a specimen of *imperialis* in the Natural History Museum, Tring, has a grey crest. It bears a hand-written note, apparently by Delacour, drawing attention to this feature but describing it as unique; however, it must have been unique within an extremely small sample. Variability such as the time of acquiring white rectrices, and their number (only one such feather after 30 months, in one captive *hatinhensis* described by Dang and Le 1996) presumably reflect genetic variability in the wild source populations.

It is interesting to speculate on the lifespan of captive birds (which is also the timespan within which genetic characters might have the opportunity to become manifest), and whether Delacour's grey-crested bird might have acquired a white crest at its next moult.

Captive populations are derived from very few individuals. There has undoubtedly been a great deal of inbreeding, resulting in relatively high levels of homozygosity. The degree of stability and physical consistency seen within a captive population is not necessarily a good reflection of the degree of consistency in the wild population from which it was derived.

Some examples of genetic diversity may have been accidentally selected out (or even deliberately selected out, in order to conform to a 'standard'



Lophura hatinhensis with the white tail feather just growing through on the cock bird

based on an original 'species' description). Differences which might have been examples of individual variation might, over generations of captive breeding, have become associated with particular morphological types. For example, could maturity in the first year have become associated with an '*edwardsi*' plumage type through breeders' efforts to produce as many individuals as quickly as possible?

DNA analyses that are based upon samples from captive stocks are likely to be affected by such biases. Consistency in DNA typing within a captive population, say of *edwardsi*, and distinctness from a few wild-derived individuals, say of *hatinhensis*, might therefore be difficult to use as justification for recognising distinct species. Not only are there

problems in the statistical independence of samples from captive stock; tissue samples from museum material cannot be assumed to be of wild stock, or if wild may still be related to captive stock because of the history of capture to breeding to death and museum preservation.

If an aviculturist were to come across a female pheasant exhibiting characteristics which are typically associated with males (let us say, for example, a female Silver pheasant with a few white dorsal feathers or rectrices) this would be regarded as a suspicious circumstance. The suspicions would revolve around hormonal imbalance, physiological malfunction and sterility owing to age or to extreme inbreeding. Similar phenomena can occur in the wild, and the observation of white rectrices in female *hatinhensis* by Dang

and Le (1996) and Corder (1996) provides interesting grounds for speculation.

There appears to be some laxity in naming single wild specimens. For instance, one widely-circulated expedition report used the name *hatinhensis* for a detached head and leg from a hunted male bird; yet there are no reported features of head and leg morphology which could be used to distinguish *hatinhensis* from *imperialis*. This can lead to erroneous distribution maps, assumptions about morphology, and also assumptions about what is and is not being conserved by on-the-ground conservation efforts.

In all future work which attempts to address this taxonomic and conservation problem, it seems necessary to provide as much voucher material as is possible and consistent with conservation principles. Although for repetition of experiments, skins and other tissue samples would be desirable, nevertheless a few feathers, drawings, photographs and even written descriptions and tape recordings could all be useful.

There is some danger of the taxon *imperialis* being overlooked. Recent surveys have given emphasis to *hatinhensis*, and recent discussion has centred on the differences between *hatinhensis* and *edwardsi*. The captive stock of *imperialis* morphotype has been dismissed as valueless because of its hybrid origins but presumably does contain some residual proportion of *imperialis* genes.

If *edwardsi*, *imperialis* and *hatinhensis* represent examples drawn from a zone of great variability, which might be a zone of secondary contact, then it is certainly not yet clear whether two relatively stable types still exist, representing earlier isolates (by analogy with *leucomelana* and *nycthemera*, or with *ignita* and *rufa*), or whether one or both have now disappeared; which of the three available names (if indeed any) apply to such stable types, and which to individuals from a less stable zone; and what is the geographical relationship between such populations.

This sort of variation seems to be unusual amongst pheasants (though this statement itself needs to be tested by looking at genera such as *Ithaginis*, *Pucrasia* and *Phasianus*). Some thought is perhaps needed on why the genus *Lophura* seems particularly susceptible to it.

References

- Corder, J. 1996. Plumage variation in Vietnamese and Edwards' pheasants. *Tragopan* 4: 10-11.
- Dang Gia Tung and Le Sy Thuc. 1996. Observations and findings about the Vietnamese Pheasant at the Hanoi Zool. Gardens. *Tragopan* 4: 8-9.
- Mc Gowan, P.J.K. and Panchen, A.L. 1994. Plumage variation and geographical distribution in the Kalij and Silver pheasants. *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 114: 113-123.

Recent rare pheasant observations in Chin State, West Myanmar (Burma)

Ben King*, Dave Farrow, Craig Robson, Hugh Buck and Tim Fishe

*Ornithology Dept, American Museum of Natural History, C.P.W. at 79th St, New York, NY 10024, USA

Reproduced with kind permission from Tragopan, Issue 5, July 1996

On 31 March 1995, at about 2,300 meters elevation on Mt Victoria in south-eastern Chin State, Myanmar (Burma), Dave Farrow saw a male tragopan fly from a perch high in an oak down into the forest. The sighting was quite brief and unexpected and the species could not be determined from the sighting. However, it must have been Blyth's tragopan *Tragopan blythii*, which was recorded at 2,400-3,000m on the mountain in 1937 (Stresemann and Heinrich 1939). No further sightings were made on Mt Victoria. There was no response to repeated playback of a tape of Blyth's tragopan calls. An elderly local hunter said it was once common on Mt Victoria, but now rare. Our campsite on Mt Victoria was at N21°13.348, E93°57.880. The tragopan sighting was about 4km east of there along the road to Kanpetlet.

On 6 April 1995, at a site about 22km (direct) NW of Mt Victoria, Ben King found a single fresh scapular feather from a Blyth's tragopan. The feather was found on a trail at about 2,500m elevation, approximately 2km



Photo: Jean Howman

Hume's pheasant

SWS of N21°23.891, E93°49.091. This position is at mile 16 on the Mindat to Matupi road. The feather was compared with feathers from specimens in the American Museum of Natural History and can only be Blyth's tragopan. Local hunters said they knew the bird and given four or five days could show us one. They said it was now rare.

A few days later in the village of Ramhtlo (22km north of Haka) in Northern Chin State, we were shown a

partial skin of a male Blyth's tragopan that had been trapped some five months previously in the forest above the village. They are said to be rare there. Craig Robson examined two male specimens in the British Museum, Tring which were collected in the same area by T R Livesey in 1930. Ramkhlaui is at N22°49.558, E93°33.775.

Despite the paucity of formal records, the Blyth's tragopan appears to be widespread, albeit rare, in suitable habitat throughout the higher elevations of the Chin Hills. The record near Mindat is a new locality for the species. Feathers of a recently killed male Hume's pheasant *Syrnaticus humiae* were found by Dr Htin Hla and his brother by the roadside 3km WNW of N21°23.891, E93°49.091 on the Mindat-Matupi Road, southern Chin Hills, on 6 April 1995.

On 10 April 1995, at Htin Yu Sakan, near Thiangan, about 40km northeast of Ramthlo, we were shown the remains of two Hume's pheasants said to have been taken nearby in the last year. The elevation of the area was about 1,735m. Hunters and other local folk from both the southern and northern Chin State were familiar with this species and rated it more common than the tragopan.

One of our guides told us that he saw a Green peafowl *Pavo muticus* crossing the road between Pauk and Tilin in a fine forest in Magwe Division. This sighting was several months before our trip. Each of the local hunters/trappers we spoke to told

us that pheasants are much less common than formerly, attesting to the heavy impact of hunting and trapping on their populations. Couple this with intense logging and the pheasants appear to have a limited future. Mt Victoria is scheduled to become a national park, but its boundaries are not yet delineated. There is extensive primary forest about 2,100m and it is a truly marvellous area.

Unfortunately trapping pressure is heavy and pheasants and partridges are difficult to find and see. A recently completed road to 2,900m on the mountain will make easy access for ecotourists and/or loggers. If trapping, hunting and logging could be eliminated, this would be a superb world-class national park.

While still complicated, it is already much easier to visit and study in these areas of western Myanmar than it is to get into the far eastern states of India. Myanmar may turn out to be the best (only?) area to study Blyth's tragopan in the field. It would be best to make haste. Myanmar's wildlife is entering its twilight zone, only slightly later than surrounding countries. This expedition was conceived, organised, designed and led by Dr Hugh Buck of Kuala Lumpur and operated by Dr Htin Hla of Yangon.

References

- Stresemann, E. and G Heinrich. 1939.
Die Vogel des Mount Victoria. Mtt.
Zoo. Mus. Berlin 24:151-264.

Bornean peacock pheasant

Reports have been received that Resit Sozer recorded three positive calls of the rare Bornean peacock pheasant in Kalimantan.

Chinese PhDs

Congratulations China. The Pheasant Specialist Group reports that two Chinese PhD students successfully obtained their PhDs in 1996. Zhang Fu-cheng studied the mating system and interspecific relationships of Temminck's tragopan and Jia Chen-xi studied the habitat selection, breeding ecology and behaviour of the Blood pheasant. Both studies took place in the Wolong Natural Reserve in western Sichuan under the supervision of Professor Zheng Guangmei of Beijing Normal University.

Juvenile Malleefowl fail to survive

Reprinted with kind permission from the Avicultural Magazine Vol.102 No.2 1996

Captive-reared three to five month old Malleefowl *Leipoa ocellata* failed to survive beyond 104 days when experimentally released into Yathong Nature Reserve, NSW. The principal cause of mortality was predation by the introduced red fox. It accounted for at

least 50% and may have accounted for as high as 92%. Twelve older Malleefowl released into the reserve fared better - three of them survived beyond 15 months. Foxes, habitat clearance and fragmentation, habitat degeneration and changes to fire regimes are considered to be the main causes of the overall decline of this species. Details of the experiment were published in *Emu*, Vol.96:32-41.

Extinct pheasants discovered

Hanoi - A pheasant species scientists thought was extinct in the wild has been found in central Vietnam. WWF project staff working in Bach Ma National Park, the park management and provincial authorities confirmed that two Edwards's pheasant *Lophura edwardsi* were caught just days ago.

David Hulse, a representative for the World Wide Fund for Nature, said villagers had caught a mating pair of Edwards's pheasant in the Bach Ma National Park last week.

The last known capture of the species was in 1928, but the Edwards's pheasant had already been considered rare five years earlier when Jean Delacour, a French ornithologist, took 15 of the birds back to Paris. Until then, the species had only been known to science from four skins sent in 1895 to the National Museum of Natural History in Paris.



Transferring the Edwards's to the director of Bach Ma National Park

Three expeditions conducted between 1988 and 1994 failed to sight one. "This is yet another feather in the cap for conservation in Vietnam," says Dawood Ghaznavi, Asia/Pacific Programme Director at WWF International in Switzerland. "Rediscovering this pheasant after 70 years means mankind has a second chance to save this exquisite bird and its habitat."

Mr Hulse said the female pheasant had since died of injuries sustained while being captured and the male had a broken leg. However, he said, their discovery indicated that the existence of a wild population was highly probable.

The Edwards's pheasant, only found in Vietnam, has dark blue-black plumage. The bird reportedly inhabits very wet forest, and much of its known habitat has been destroyed. Bach Ma, which contains some of Vietnam's wettest and lushest forests, is considered to be the only protected area where some populations of the species could exist. The park is also said to harbour six other pheasant species out of a total of 12 in Vietnam and 23 in southeast Asia.

The search for the Edwards's pheasant was renewed recently after local villagers reportedly sighted the pheasant. Earlier this year, villagers found a threatened species of pheasant,

the Siamese fireback *Lophura diardi*.

"We are elated the Edwards's pheasants were found, as this signifies that the probability of an existing wild population is high," says WWF Bach Ma project leader Roland Eve. "The fact is mainly thanks to the good cooperation between project staff and the local provincial network of forest guards."

"We now have plans to increase the number of forest guards who will be patrolling the area," adds Hoang Ngoc Khanh, director of the Thau Thien-Hue Province Forest Protection Department. "This, along with the public awareness campaign, should increase the chances that the pheasant will survive in the wild."

Nearly 78,000 people live around the park. Many still depend on the forests for subsistence. WWF's project, funded by the European Commission, involves the local communities in conserving the park's resources. Project activities include helping the authorities develop an "ecotourism plan and sustainable community development schemes, training park staff, and collecting data on the park's rich animal and plant life.

Is it a feather or a feather?

Those who attended the Annual Convention at Child Beale will have heard Keith Chalmers-Watson describing the new bird sexing system using a feather developed by University Diagnostics Ltd.

Arrangements have been made for WPA members to be able to get their birds tested for the very reasonable sum of £20.00 per sample.

All that is required is that you write to University Diagnostics Ltd at South Bank Technopark, 90 London Road, London SE1 6LN for a free sample kit and information pack. Then collect a freshly plucked chest feather from the bird into the sample bag provided or a small drop of blood onto the special filter paper and return it to the company with the appropriate fee. Analysis and report will normally be completed within five working days.

Keith Chalmers-Watson checked out the system with some known sex birds and all were correct. The special rate will apply to all members but there may be an additional postage charge for overseas members.

UPDATE

International Symposium on Galliformes, 8-14 September 1997, Peninsular Malaysia

A fax has just been received from John Corder who is in Malaysia attending the 6th Annual SEAZA Conference. Dates have now been finalised for the symposium in September 1997. The proposed programme is:

Sat 6/Sun 7	arrival in Malaysia transfer to Melaka
Mon 8-	3 day symposium
Wed 10	or trips to local places of

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| | interest like historic Melaka City, Melaka zoo and butterfly farm | b) Scientists tour (led by Dr Philip McGowan) at Kuala Lompat (12 places) |
| Thur 11 | transfer to Taman Negara to a new resort owned by the Wildlife Dept and seldom visited by tourists | c) Wildlife tour (led by Wildlife Dept) to see projects for pheasants, rhino, elephants, gaur, zoos and bird parks |
| Fri 12-
Sat 13 | outings in forest to include bird-ringing, bird watching and chance to visit Crested argus dancing ground etc | Other tours will be available. |
| Sun 14 | return to KL and airport or begin post-symposium tours | If you have already registered you will be sent further details soon. If you have not and would like details sent to you please write to Jane Clacey at WPA HQ and you will be included on the mailing list. |
- Possible tours:
- a) Birding tour (tour leader to be decided - 10 places)

In Memory of Harrie Weekers 1919-1996

On Friday 21 June we received a message that Harrie Weekers has left us. Harrie has fought a battle against the disease that finally took all his energy. He was a recipient of a high Royal Decoration, 'Ridder in de Orde van Oranje Nassau' for his services to the community. Harrie Weekers was always prepared to help and assist people. He was a builder and built numerous churches, factories, offices and houses. In particular he was proud to restore old buildings and craftsmanship, which he loved so much, was so important to him. The restoration of the 'White Church' in Thorn was his proudest achievement as was his work for the decenal St Martinuschurch in Weert.

Harrie Weekers was for more than ten years a Council member of WPA-Benelux and contributed greatly to bridge the gap between breeders and conservationists. In his opinion there was no difference of attitude but perhaps the methods were different.

I remember very well our trips around the breeders and zoos in Holland and Belgium to collect the eggs for the Cheer pheasant project in Pakistan. Harrie was involved for more than ten years in collecting nearly 400 eggs on a yearly basis from three zoos and nearly 40 breeders of WPA and Aviornis. During these long trips I learned a lot from Harrie not only about birds but about so many other things in life. His contribution to breeding tragopans is known worldwide and he

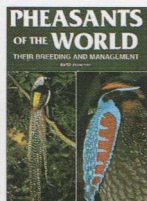
always kept looking for a better way of keeping them and was always improving his methods.

Harrie's breeding with crowned pigeons was and is renowned worldwide. He produced more than half of all the captive born pigeons within the studbook. As reproduction in these species is slow he has searched for methods together with his wife to find ways to hand-rear crowned pigeons from egg to adult bird. Before he passed away, he succeeded he raised 'Miep', the first hand-reared crowned pigeon in Europe. Harrie Weekers and his wife made an enormous

contribution to the keeping of birds, a tradition deeply rooted for centuries, and added an extra dimension to bridge the gap between traditional bird keeping and conservation.

Harrie was friends with many people who determined the role of aviculture in this century, Dr Jules Vallen, Madame Malisoux, Dr Jean Delacour, Dr Tim Lovel, Keith Howman and many others, who added the role of captive breeding in the tools for conservation. In particular his contacts with his friend Dr Jules Vallen was frequent. We wish the family much strength in the coming time.





PHEASANTS OF THE WORLD - their breeding and management *

K C R Howman

Keith Howman's thirty years of pheasant breeding is combined with the most spectacular collection of colour photographs ever assembled.

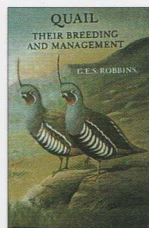
Hardback 184 pages 341 colour photos
8 figures 1 table
ISBN 0 88839 280 X£45.00
LIMITED EDITION AVAILABLE

QUAIL - their breeding and management

G E S Robbins

Now in its third re-print, this book is the bible for all who wish to keep quail and learn more about them.

Hardback 108 pages 25 photos (22 colour)
4 illustrations 1 map
ISBN 0 906864 02X£14.95

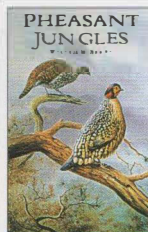
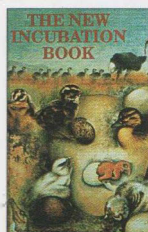


THE NEW INCUBATION BOOK

Dr A F Anderson Brown &
G E S Robbins

This book is essential reading for anyone wanting to incubate eggs of any type whether they be pheasants, waterfowl, ratites or even crocodiles.

Hardback 276 pages 60 photos
51 figures 10 tables
ISBN 0 86230 061 4£14.95



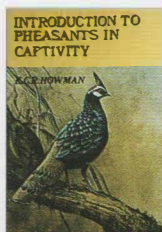
PHEASANT JUNGLES

William Beebe

Pheasant Jungles captures the excitement of the solitary pursuit of these scarce and secretive birds. A birding classic reprinted.

Hardback 268 pages 8 colour illustrations
68 photos
ISBN 0 906864 05 4£19.95
LIMITED EDITION AVAILABLE

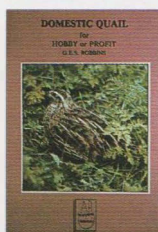
BOOKLETS



INTRODUCTION TO PHEASANTS IN CAPTIVITY

K C R Howman

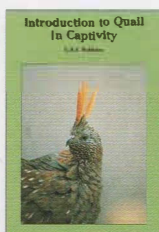
Paperback 20 pages
10 photos (9 colour)£2.50



DOMESTIC QUAIL - for hobby or profit

G E S Robbins

Paperback 16 pages
3 photos
2 figures£2.00



INTRODUCTION TO QUAIL IN CAPTIVITY

G E S Robbins

Paperback 16 pages
3 photos 4 figures£3.00

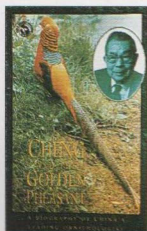
LIMITED EDITIONS

A small number of leather bound limited edition copies are available of

Pheasant Jungles, Cheng and the Golden Pheasant and
Pheasants of the World, their breeding & management

Prices on application

NEW FOR 1996



CHENG AND THE GOLDEN PHEASANT

Yang Qun-rong

Edited by Derek Bingham

A fascinating biography of the life of the man who for nearly 70 years has been China's leading ornithologist.

Hardback 286 pages 28 photos 3 maps
ISBN 0 906864 20 8£19.95
LIMITED EDITION AVAILABLE

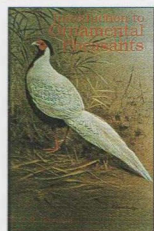
NEW FOR 1996

INTRODUCTION TO ORNAMENTAL PHEASANTS

K C R Howman **

This book will prove invaluable reference work for those planning to keep their first pheasants, while being of more than a passing interest who are already advanced in keeping these birds.

Hardback 128 pages 56 photos (32 colour)
11 figures
ISBN 0 88839 381 4£14.95



Raised in the Highlands



Quality in an age of change