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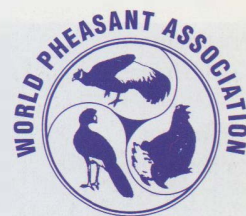
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WPA NEWS



The International Newsletter of the World Pheasant Association

WPA News No 65 May 2001 Contents

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Willock	

Ruffed pheasants in captivity: a major problem

Ludo Pinceel



Lady Amherst's pheasant taken from the WPA photo CD (see page 20).

Although the two species of the genus of ruffed pheasants *Chrysolophus* are commonly kept, there are serious problems concerning the animals held in protected environments. An aviary bird for such a long time, the golden pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus* (L.), has succumbed to all the effects of domestication. The relative proportion of mutated genes has become far too important in the *ex-situ* populations, with an important impact on the features of bred animals. There has also been occasional hybridisation with Lady Amherst pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*. As a result today's animals in European collections are hardly comparable with their wild ancestors. The limited

imports of mainly male Lady Amherst pheasants, resulted in regular crossbreeding with golden pheasants, right from the beginning. In the attempts to reconstruct the 'Lady' phenotype by means of artificial selection later on, important mistakes have been made. Features that do not occur at all in nature were favoured, while natural characters have disappeared.

About three years ago some ruffed pheasant enthusiasts decided to take some action. An extensive morphological investigation of animals caught in the wild was carried out by screening all the skins in the collection of the Natural History Museum at Tring (UK). The results of these studies were published in a series of papers

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in the Dutch edition of *Aviornis International*. They provided us with detailed descriptions of both male and female of the two species and permit us to unmask most of the hybrids between these species at once on a simple morphological basis. Examination of a large number of animals in private collections confirmed that very few pure animals are left in captivity. Fortunately, we were able to obtain some individuals of the golden pheasant, offspring from animals imported from the Beijing Breeding Centre and from the San Diego Zoo. In the meantime we are keeping within the Ruffed Pheasant Group a population of about 60 birds with good morphological features. As for the Lady Amherst pheasants, we were not able to localise any 'good-looking' birds, with only one exception.

To confirm the morphological research, feather samples were sent to the Istituto Nazionale per la Fauna Selvatica (INFS) at Bologna (Italy) where Dr Ettore Randi analysed them. 38 samples of *C. pictus* and *C. amherstiae* were collected. All samples were analysed, and all except one showed mitochondrial-DNA very similar to putative pure *C. pictus*. Therefore, these results suggest that almost all the *C. amherstiae* in European stocks are hybrids. However, the *C. pictus* samples have given rather variable sequences, and there is only one

apparently pure *C. amherstiae* for comparison so it is obvious that more samples must be taken, especially from reliable reference birds. Perhaps samples from museum skins would be helpful, although this material is not so easy to work with. Another solution would be to obtain samples from animals caught in the wild.

There is also the problem of unmasking hybrids from *C. pictus* with only paternal introgression of *C. amherstiae*. As the mt-DNA is maternally inherited, it can detect only maternal hybridisation. Dr Randi is currently checking ca. 50 different micro-satellite loci, which were originally isolated in the domestic fowl. These micro-satellites will be used to obtain information on eventual paternal hybridisation.

Any information about reliable *Chrysolophus*, especially *amherstiae* is welcome!

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The Ruffed Pheasant Group consists of Ludo Pinceel, Paul Raeymaekers, Raf Smets, Victor Steenackers and Jos Van Houdt, for details contact tel: ++(0) 14 851397.

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Golden pheasant taken from the WPA photo CD (see page 20).

The World Pheasant Association gratefully acknowledges the support of

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Richard Howard

A considerable amount of work has been done since my last Chairman's report. The office is becoming more and more efficient in the capable hands of Jill, ably assisted by Robb. Emails pour in by the dozen but we would still like to see written tit bits from you for us to put in **WPA News**.

Gary Robbins spent a large amount of time arranging a splendid weekend at Lotherton Bird Gardens near Leeds, only to have the sadness of a poor attendance, not helped by really awful weather. It was still a very well-balanced and interesting weekend and I would like to thank Gary for all the hard work he put into it.

Our thanks should also go to Gary and his daughter Sarah for our new and very impressive website. If you haven't already visited it, then please do - there's something for everyone on it whether you are a hobby breeder or interest in more scientific matters. The address is www.pheasant.org.uk (see page 14).

Our book and publication sales are now handled by The Game Conservancy Trust down at Fordingbridge, which I hope will increase sales.

The really disappointing thing to report is the cancellation of the Jersey Convention. It just became too expensive for all concerned. I would like to thank all those who wanted to make the convention a success, but the strength of the £ defeated us. My thanks to Jeremy Mallinson for all his help. Han Assink tried his best to get an



Paul North signing off, aided and abetted by Jimmie Reekie

alternative in Germany but the dates did not allow this to happen. Hopefully Han can arrange this really exciting weekend next year. To be positive, we will be holding the WPA Convention at Beale Park, our headquarters, and a full list of events will be forthcoming as soon as possible.

Foot and Mouth has played havoc with all concerned with Benelux having to cancel their meeting and at present Beale Park remains closed to the public.

We are hoping for great things for WPA as Philip McGowan has now joined us and will, with Monique, be forging ahead to implement our future plans.

Colin Willock's new book *A Life on the Wild Side* looks really fantastic and the

generosity of Colin is boundless in giving us such a marvellous book to sell - by the thousands I hope. The money brought in from this could be quite considerable. I am sure all WPA Council and members would like to not only buy a copy, but thank both Colin and his dear wife Joan (see page 20).

Finally, a very special thank you to Paul North who has finally decided to hang up his editorial pen and close up his computer on the production of the WPA UK Bulletin (see page 14). Paul has put in endless hours on behalf of WPA and its UK members and I and Council cannot thank him enough for his enormous contribution. As you will see from page 14 we have thankfully not heard the last of Paul.

QUAIL & PARTRIDGE STAMPS FROM MALAYSIA

These charming quail and partridge stamps were sent to us in January by Geoffrey Davison from Malaysia and were designed by a local artist Teh Yew Kiang. Anyone wishing to get their own can do so by contacting the General Post Office in Kuala Lumpur, their email is filateli@pos.com.my or via their web page: <http://www.pos.com.my>

Surely there must be a huge number of galliform stamps which have been issued over the years. Is there any member who has a collection? WPA President, Keith Howman confesses to having gathered a few over the years but he readily admits it is certainly not comprehensive or anywhere near complete. It would be very interesting to know of anyone who might have started a philatelic record of galliformes. Please get in touch if you have. If nothing else, it would be nice to be able to feature some of them in **WPA News**. Send us an email at office@pheasant.org.uk.



Studies on habitat selection and home range of Reeves's pheasant by using radiotracking techniques

Zhang Zhengwang and Sun Quanhui

Report on the progress of the WPA project

This project was endorsed by WPA Pheasant Specialist Group on 31 January 2000. In the past six months, we have been working on this project and some progress has been made.

1. After reading the literature and collecting information from various sources, a review of the status and studies of the Reeves's pheasant has been completed. We found the population of this species is declining and the range is decreasing in China. Although several natural reserves have in recent years been established within its range, the management of the reserves is very weak. Despite the excellent work on this species in the late 1980s and early 1990s by Prof Wu Zhikang's team, updated information is needed.
2. We started the field work in December 1999. The study area is the Dongzhai Nature Reserve of Henan Province, eg 114°18'-114°30'E, 31°28'-32°09'N. The Reserve was established in 1982 by the Henan Provincial Government for protecting birds. The total area is 10,000ha and 233 species of birds have been recorded. Although it is a nature reserve, no good management for the Reeves's pheasant, except a breeding pen has been established since 1987.
3. We have made surveys of the Reeves's pheasant in Dongzhai Reserve in winter and spring by the line transect method, and the habitat used by the pheasants was also recorded. We found that Reeves's pheasant lived in the forest at an altitude of 300-800m in the reserve. The habitat types include coniferous-deciduous mixed forest and deciduous forest. In winter, they form flocks of two to 15, and same sex flocks were found frequently, which may be an anti-predator behaviour. The population density in the core areas is about 20-30 individuals/km².



Reeves's pheasant taken from the WPA photo CD (see page 20).

4. In late March and early April, in total eight cocks of Reeves's pheasant were caught in the core area. The birds were measured, marked and radio-tagged. After release, each bird was tracked two to three times every day. A full day tracking was conducted every ten days. The locations of each bird was obtained and the breeding behaviours were observed. The drumming behaviour of the cocks was studied as well.
5. In May, several nests were found in the reserve. The clutch size wasn't recorded and the characteristics of the nest sites studied. After the chicks hatched, the broods were followed in order to know the survival of the chicks.
6. The field work is going on smoothly. Sun Quanhui conducts his studies in Dongzhai until September. Another student Mr Zhang Xiaohui will continue his work in the autumn.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to WPA-USA for providing the grants for the first year of field work and the PSG of WPA for supporting this project. We are grateful to Dr Peter Garson for his encouragement and help in running this project.

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Red junglefowl genetics

Interest continues in trying to establish the extent of genetic introgression of domestic fowl genes into wild populations of red junglefowl *Gallus gallus*. This clearly has importance in protecting the natural genetic diversity of junglefowl, not least as a source of novel genes for use in the poultry industry world wide. Efforts are being made to look at the supposedly diagnostic wild characters (dark legs and an eclipse plumage in males, no combs in females) in the field and captive collections in India and Nepal.

There are also feral junglefowl populations of uncertain origin and purity on a number of Pacific Islands (Vanuatu, Solomons). Kimberley Cheng (University of British Columbia, Canada) and others are hoping to obtain samples from these and SE Asian mainland populations in order to sequence DNA and produce a molecular phylogeny, thereby also reconstructing the historical spread of these populations outside the native range for the species.

Meanwhile Lehr Brisbin (University of Georgia, USA) has crossed his putative pure males, originating from northern India in the 1960s, with domestic fowl females and is finding a small comb to be retained in the hybrid females even after two back-crosses with his males. Thus presence of combs in females in the wild might well indicate past introgression.

Forktail Leica Award 2000

The Oriental Bird Club has awarded its Forktail Leica Award to Dr Anwaruddin Choudhury (Rhino Foundation, Guwahati, Assam) to study the threatened Hume's pheasant *Syrnaticus humiae* in north-east India from January to December 2001. The aims are to find out the current distribution, status and threats to the species in north-east India, especially in Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. A hitherto unsurveyed area, Mt Saramati in Nagaland which is reputedly a stronghold for some other threatened species including Blyth's tragopan *Tragopan blythii*, will also be surveyed.

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Density index and habitat associations of the cheer pheasant

Project Update winter 1999-2000 and summer 2000

Rajiv S Kalsi and Junaid Nazir Shah

Species involved

Cheer pheasant *Catreus wallichii*

Protection status

Mace Lande (1991) status- Vulnerable,
CITES- Appendix I, National protection
status- Schedule I (India).

Objectives

The main objectives of this phase of the project were:

1. To monitor the cheer pheasant population in Majathal Wildlife Sanctuary, Himachal Pradesh, India.
2. To work out density indices of cheer.
3. To conduct detailed habitat studies at these sites to classify landscape and microhabitats optimum for cheer survival, and to conduct similar studies at sites where cheer are absent.
4. To study habitat preference/avoidance of cheer.
5. To study the temporal variations in the cheer habitat.

Habitat use

The available habitat in the study area was categorised into six different habitat types. The habitat types are: pine, scrub, grass, oak, degraded and cultivation.

A Magellan GPS 2000 XL receiver was used to record coordinates at various positions along the perimeter of each habitat type. These coordinates were used to calculate the area of all the six habitat types using a JavaScript computer programme. The area of each habitat as used in the programme Resource Selection for Windows to determine preference/avoidance of habitat categories by cheer (Table 1). Cheer presence/absence data in the different habitat types was determined by call census as well as from transects. Twelve transects of lengths varying from 1.0 to 1.25 km were marked in the different habitat types.

For studying habitat variables, 12.62-m radius circular plots were laid randomly in habitats with and without Cheer. Habitat variables were recorded at landscape as well as microhabitat level. A herbarium of different grass species found in the Cheer habitat in Majathal Wildlife Sanctuary is being prepared. The grass species will be identified after consulting experts in Punjab University, Chandigarh.

June 2000 – July 2001 field work

During this concluding field season, data on the density and habitat of the Cheer will be collected as earlier. Additionally, a set of

experimental plots has been laid and is being monitored. These experimental plots have been fenced off to exclude disturbances like grass cutting, grazing etc. These will be used as control plots and data compared with plots laid in areas used traditionally by the locals. Regular monitoring and comparisons between the two types of plots will allow assessment of changes in vegetation character. An effort is on to determine landscape and patch metrics for the Cheer using data generated from GPS locations and habitat plots.

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Green peafowl subpopulations

Gary Robbins (WPA, UK) and Dr Ettore Randi (INFS, Bologna, Italy) have obtained privileged access to samples from green peafowl *Pavo muticus* skins originating in peninsular Malaysia and held in the Raffles Museum collection in Singapore. These date from before 1920 and represent the long-extinct Malay Peninsula population of this species. Eight skins were also found at Tring where staff also kindly allowed samples to be taken for analysis. These have been sent to Ettore Randi for DNA analysis, so that the degree of genetic difference between the extinct Malaysian race and surviving populations including that on Java in Indonesia and others, can be established. A population of captive-bred green peafowl has become feral in the vicinity of Melaka Zoo in Malaysia, suggesting that a re-introduction project conducted in accordance with the IUCN Guidelines has some prospect of succeeding. One important early step in this process is to establish which population should be used as the source of birds for such a project: the DNA analyses are being carried out to provide data on which to make this decision.

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Tragopan Number 13/14.

Table 1. Availability/utilization of different vegetation types by Cheer.

Habitat type	Relative area	Expected usage	Observed usage	Bonferroni confidence interval
Pine	0.150	2.250	3	0.000-0.407
Scrub	0.240	3.600	6	0.015-0.653
Grass	0.340	5.100	5	0.090-0.577
Oak	0.120	1.800	1	0.000-0.195
Degraded	0.100	1.500	0	0.000-0.000
Cultivation	0.500	7.500	0	0.000-0.000

Table 2. Comparison of habitat variables between Cheer and random plots.

Habitat variable	Mann-Whitney U	Significance
Grass cover	522.50	0.003
Scrub cover	450.50	0.000
Tree cover	645.500	0.014
Sapling cover	718.500	0.049

Exploratory surveys for Blyth's tragopan and other Galliformes in Kachin State, northern Myanmar (February 2001)

Alexander Pack-Blumenau, Karl-Heinz Bragowski and Khin Maung Hla



Local hunter in Hpungran Razi Range

Introduction

Blyth's tragopan *Tragopan blythii* is currently listed as 'Vulnerable' to extinction (Fuller and Garson 2000). Its historical range is thought to be disjunct and two subspecies are currently recognised. The poorly known western race *T.b. molesworthi* occurs in eastern Bhutan and southeast Tibet, whilst the nominate subspecies *T.b. blythii* is from Manipur and Nagaland in India, and adjacent parts of northern Myanmar, from where there has been little reliable information for many decades.

This project is the first element in a longer co-operation planned by WPA and the Nature and Wildlife Division of the Myanmar Forest Department, involving surveys and training which should assist in the conservation of Galliformes in Myanmar.

The main objective of this exploratory survey was to visit a region known to locals as Hpungran Razi, in Kachin State, northern Myanmar, in an attempt to confirm the occurrence there of a 'red Tragopan' only known recently from parts of a skin held at the offices of the Forest Department in Putao (Thein Aung, pers.comm.). In addition, records would be made on the occurrence of all other Galliformes, and a first assessment would

be made of the extent and quality of forested habitats there, as well as of any obvious human impacts. Feather samples were also to be collected for use in DNA analyses concerned with the taxonomy and phylogeny of pheasants being undertaken for WPA by Ettore Randi (INFS, Bologna, Italy). We especially wanted to obtain feathers from Oates's and Williams's kalij *Lophura leucomelanos oatesi/williamsi* to help in a related project on silver/kalij relationships being undertaken by Sybille

Moulin (Museum of Paris/INFS). We were in Myanmar from 30 January to 14 February 2001.

Study areas

The Hpungran Razi Range (see figure 1) is a mountainous area which covers about 1,500 km². Its centre lies 50-70 km northeast of Putao (N27°20'48'', E97°24'06'') in Kachin State, in the extreme north of Myanmar, and adjacent to eastern Arunachal Pradesh in India. The altitude range there varies from about 400m near Putao, to over 3000 m. This region is extremely remote and can only be reached on foot along a 120 km trail.

In the hope of encountering Oates's kalij, we made a one day visit to the Rakhine Yoma Range (N 16°47'08'', E96°09'30'') to the northwest of Yangon (formerly Rangoon). We followed the road through Pyay (formerly Prome) to Thandwe (formerly Sandoway), where Ticehurst (1933 cited in Delacour 1977) saw pheasants of this race on the roadside.

Methods

In order to assess local people's knowledge of the status, distribution and habitat use of any Galliformes species, we used photographs (including some of species that definitely do not occur in Myanmar to act



Pheasant enthusiasts above Blyth's tragopan valley.

as controls) and interpreters familiar with the local language. We approached everyone we met along the trail leading to Hpungran Razi, as well as people in the villages we passed through. Whenever somebody apparently identified a species from our pictures, we asked him imitate that bird's calls. Unsurprisingly, most of our reliable informants were hunters. We used this information to select localities to visit in the forest, in an effort to confirm secondary records and inspect the habitat. For each sighting actually made we determined the precise location using GPS.

To provide DNA samples, we collected feathers from the field, as well as from the collections at the Museum and the Zoo in Yangon (formerly Rangoon), storing each specimen separately in a sealed plastic bag (to prevent DNA cross-contamination).

Pheasant records and specimens obtained

During our visit, we were able to locate populations of black-breasted kalij *Lophura leucomelanos lathami*, Burmese red junglefowl *Gallus g. spadiceus*, grey peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron b. bicalcaratum*, and Blyth's tragopan, all in the Hpungran Razi Range. Unfortunately the snowline came down to our most remote campsite and made the crossing of two further tops impossible. This meant that we could not reach an area which is supposed to hold Sclater's monal *Lophophorus sclateri*, but we were shown a skin by a local hunter and can therefore confirm the presence of this species in that region. During our short trip to Rakhine Yoma we were successful in gathering a skin of Oates's kalij. From Yangon Zoo we also obtained feathers of lineated kalij *L.l. lineata*.



Blyth's tragopan in Hpungran Razi (taken from video footage).



The survey team.

Pheasant distributions and human impacts in Hpungran Razi

En route for Hpungran Razi, we found the first forest-covered mountain ridge immediately after leaving Shan Kaung, a village 13 km NW of Putao (N27°25'28'', E97°17'50''). Because there is another village (Wasan Dan) on the other side of this ridge we found a lot of disturbance here, resulting from the collection of fuelwood and tree-cutting for local use. We also gathered from our guides that hunting with snares, as well as crossbows with poison arrows, was commonplace. The village of Wasan Dan was only set up in 1986, since when the residents consider that there have been considerable reductions in the populations of kalij and peacock-pheasants, although they thought there had been an increase in junglefowl. They had no knowledge of tragopans. After a further 17 km, passing another village, we came to Zeyadan (N27°30'44'', E97°09'17''), a small settlement of less than 20 houses, and the last such place on this trail. Shifting cultivation provides the villagers with crops (mustard and wheat) for their own needs, whilst hunting supplements the local diet and protects crops from damage by wild pigs and deer. From here onwards along this trail, the vegetation appeared to be in virtually undisturbed condition and all the hillsides were covered with primary forest. Forest cover averaged more than 80% and the canopy was at around 30 m.

At 600-800 m we found a good number of kalij. From 800 to 1,500 m and especially at 08.00-10.00 in the mornings, we could often hear calls from male peacock-pheasants. Only if one approached

these birds to within 10 m did they fly up. Both species are well known to the local hunters and are trapped quite often in snares set to catch musk deer *Moschus chrysogaster*. Shortage of time then forced us to concentrate on one small valley (N27°31'46'', E96°58'15''), 18km beyond Zeyadan. This valley was just 600 m long, with slopes rising from a small stream at 1,950 m up 30° slopes facing SE and NW to ridges at 2,300 m. The forest had a dense understorey of 2-3 m high bamboo thickets and many creepers, making progress without the energetic use of a machete virtually impossible. At this elevation the trees had a diameter of 25-80 cm and the forest was damp, despite there being no running water on the slopes at this time of the year. Canopy cover was around 70% and the ground cover was 80% dry leaves, 10% dry twigs and 10% bare soil. The stream was frequented by Tragopans in the early mornings. On two mornings we could distinguish three calling males answering each other from the same positions in this small valley, all at around 2,150 m. We were able to take a short video sequence of a male and female.

The tragopan is not hunted regularly because it sells for little money (<US\$5) as food in the local markets. The main target of trapping with snares is the musk deer, which is worth (US\$30 - 40) for its pod (the abdominal scent gland of males). Because the traps are not visited every day and are extremely numerous in the forests other species including tragopans are caught and used for food.

Other threats to the forests and wildlife of this remarkable area arise from a recent increase in trekking tours; there have been

about ten in the last two years. Because of the extreme remoteness of the area, many porters are needed for a party to stay there for any length of time. Besides the discard of disposable (but virtually indestructible) plastic items, trekking parties need to make fires at night, because the temperature can drop to below zero and the local porters are not equipped with adequate warm clothing or bedding. There was still much snow still lying above 2,500 m in February. There is inevitably disturbance in the forest as a result of the cutting of trees and collection of water for daily use at trekking camps. It is likely that treks will be concentrated in the spring months, coinciding with the breeding season of many animal species, thus increasing the likely impacts of any negative effects.

The establishment of new villages, or the extension of existing ones, pose a great threat to these forests because of the shifting cultivation system traditionally adopted by the local people. As we saw at Zeyadan, this can lead to an almost total loss of forested habitat in the vicinity of the village. Here we found several hectares burned, and saw no evidence of forest regeneration in areas abandoned after crop growing for some years.

Conclusion

We have been privileged to visit an area of remarkably pristine forest, now known to hold a population of Blyth's tragopan, the least known species in this the most spectacular genus of pheasants. It is also known to harbour populations of gibbon *Hylobates* sp., takin *Budorcas taxicolour*, leaf deer *Muntiacus putaoensis*, red goral *Nemorhaedus goral* and civet *Viverra* sp. (Thein Aung, pers. comm.). We therefore



Bamboo thickets in Hpungran Razi.

recommend most urgently to the Wildlife Division of the Forest Department of Myanmar give the Hpungran Razi Range some protected status as soon as possible. This may be most simply achieved by extending the existing Hkakabo Razi National Park (north of the Me Kha River) to include Hpungran Razi.

Acknowledgements

This project was endorsed by the Pheasant Specialist Group and was made possible thanks to funding from James Goodhart via the WPA, together with the Zoological Society for the Conservation of Species and Populations, and Stiftung Avifauna Protecta.

We give special thanks to Peter Garson who encouraged us to go Myanmar in the first place, gave us technical advice and helped to draft this report. Our thanks must also go to Khin Maung Zaw and Philip McGowan for attending to many

administrative details, and to Thein Aung for dealing with our many logistic problems in the field. Last but not least, we thank our families giving us the necessary free time to make this trip.

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EAZA GalliTAG Regional Collection Plan

Species	ISIS survey (31.12.99)	EAZA GalliTAG survey (1998)	Total <i>ex situ</i> estimate	Red List category (2000)	Proposed EAZA GalliTAG action
Blyth's tragopan <i>Tragopan blythii</i>	8.5.2 6 places	9.5.0 6 places	ca. 50	Vulnerable	European Studbook
Cabot's tragopan <i>Tragopan caboti</i>	19.15.3 11 places	5.5.0 4 places	ca. 150	Vulnerable	European Studbook
Edwards's pheasant <i>Lophura edwardsi</i>	104.72.12 36 places	78.76.8 39 places	ca. 1,000	Endangered	EEP Studbook
Vietnamese pheasant <i>L. hatinhensis</i>	24.19.42 9 places	2.2.0 2 places	50-100	Endangered	EEP Studbook
Crestless fireback <i>L. erythrophthalma</i>	9.15.0 10 places	4.4.0 3 places	ca. 200 <i>L.e.e.</i> ca. 50 <i>L.e.p</i>	Vulnerable	European Studbook
Mountain peacock-pheasant <i>Polyplectron inopinatum</i>	21.22.9 9 places	11.12.0 7 places	ca. 450	Vulnerable	European Studbook
Malaysian peacock-pheasant <i>P. malacense</i>	12.15.0 10 places	3.6.0 2 places	ca. 350	Vulnerable	European Studbook
Great argus <i>Argusianus argus</i>	49.48.9 41 places	25.30.6 18 places	ca. 500	Near Threatened	European Studbook
Congo peafowl <i>Afropavo congensis</i>	49.57.10 20 places	44.33.5 10 places	ca. 150	Vulnerable	EEP Studbook

The Galliformes Taxon Advisory Group of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria is concerned with the management of *ex situ* populations of pheasants and other Galliformes species. During the EAZA meeting at Aalborg in Denmark during September 2000, provisional decisions were reached on the management action to be taken on all the populations overseen by this TAG, including those of many pheasant species. All species currently held were assigned a score using a system adopted by EAZA which stresses *in situ* conservation status and zoo involvement in field conservation action. However the action proposed reflects several other factors: *ex situ* status in Europe and world wide, PSG

recommendations in the 1995 Action Plan, the supposed quality of the population in terms such as purity and genetic diversity, and the educational potential of the species as a live exhibit. The table above summarises information on the populations provisionally scheduled for special measures in Europe as a result of this exercise.

Alain Hennache, Director, Parc Zoologique de Clères, 76690 Clères, France. E-mail: zoo.cleres@wanadoo.fr
Gary Robbins, Stone House, Old Market Street, Mendlesham, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5SA, UK. E-mail: GESR@abincub.demon.co.uk

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PHEASANTS AND GROUSE

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PROJECT ROUND-UP

Pakistan Galliformes Project

The Pakistan Galliformes Project, directed by Rab Nawaz (aka Rob Whale to WPA members over many years) (WWF-Pakistan, Abbottabad) involved repeated surveys of western tragopan *Tragopan melanocephalus*, koklass *Pucrasia macrolopha* and Himalayan monal *Lophophorus impejanus* populations in six areas in Hazara Forest Division, NW Frontier Province, Pakistan during 1995-99. This work was funded by United Nations Development Programme in collaboration with WPA-Pakistan and the Wildlife Department of North West Frontier Province. Fieldwork confirmed that there is a large concentration of western tragopan in the Palas Valley, Indus Kohistan, wintering close to permanent villages even in relatively mild winters. A resolution was passed at the WPA International Symposium on Galliformes (Nepal, September 2000) that the area should be proposed to UNESCO as a World Heritage Site or Man and Biosphere Reserve.

Tibetan eared-pheasants tagged

During the 2000 study season Lu Xin (Wuhan Univ., Hebei) marked a total of 60



Himalayan monal.

adults and subadults of *Crossoptilon harmani* in Tibet, China. Based on the marked birds, including those marked in the previous year, much data on behavioural ecology were collected. He also succeeded in locating 12 nests and marked six chicks. Interestingly he found that two females that paired with two different males laid their eggs in the same nest so that the combined clutch size reached 19 eggs. This project is funded by

the China National Natural Science Foundation and WPA.

Western Ghats junglefowl study

K J Peeyuskutty (Bombay Natural History Society) is continuing his studies of grey junglefowl *Gallus sonneratii* in the Western Ghats in south India, as part of a larger study of bird communities on which he is now employed. Until summer 2000 his work was centred on Periyar Tiger Reserve, where he had live-trapped and banded three females, found and characterised both nests and roosting sites, and collected faeces for diet analysis.

Sclater's monal in Yunnan

Han Lianxian (Southwestern Forestry University, Kunming) has been awarded a research grant from the Yunnan Province Natural Science Foundation to extend his work on the status and conservation of Sclater's monal *Lophophorus sclateri* in western Yunnan, China until 2002; his original project, funded by WPA, is scheduled to end this year.

Western tragopan research

Shahid Bashir (Aligarh Muslim University) is now undertaking his third and final season of detailed work on annual changes in habitat use and the calling behaviour of



Sonnerat's junglefowl.



Photo: P. Baylis

Hen western tragopan in the wild.

western tragopan *Tragopan melanocephalus* in the Speeka forests of Chamba, Himachal Pradesh, India. During his fieldwork in 2000, he encountered 69 birds whilst walking trails and heard dawn calls in spring from a minimum of 41 males spread across eight locations within the study area. This project is funded by WPA.

Bulwer's pheasant, Borneo

John Rowden (Wildlife Conservation Society, USA) found no trace of Bulwer's pheasant *Lophura bulweri* during his return visit to Kayan Mentarang NP in NE

Kalimantan, Indonesia (Borneo) during December 1999-January 2000. The rains were late, changing fruiting patterns of the plants that may provide food for this pheasant, which has been suggested to be somewhat nomadic. He now is hoping to obtain permission to radio-tag some individuals in Sarawak, East Malaysia (Borneo) in July 2001, so that he can then track their movements over long periods. This project was funded by the Species Survival Fund.

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Male Bulwer's pheasant. All photos taken from the WPA photo CD (see page 20).

Golden pheasant/ Lady Amherst's pheasant hybrids in Guizhou

In recent years, Li Zhu-mei (Guizhou Institute of Biology) has found three cases of hybridisation between golden pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus* and Lady Amherst's pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae* in the wild in Guizhou, China. One was taken as a specimen. The specimen is in the collection of an amateur [bird/pheasant collector] in the Guiyang area, who bought it in 1995 from a peasant on the Shuicheng-Anshun road (west of Guiyang).

Kindly translated by Michael Rank from the Newsletter of the Chinese Ornithological Society 9(1), June 2000.

Pheasants in Cambodia

Staff from Wildlife Protection Office of Cambodia and the Fauna and Flora International (FFI) Indochina Programme carried out a wildlife survey in NE Mondulkiri Province during April 2000. They found evidence of green peafowl *Pavo muticus* being hunted but local information suggested that it is still relatively common there. This area is immediately adjacent to the Yok Don NP in Vietnam, which was found to hold an important concentration of this species in 1998. Now an international conservation effort is being advocated to conserve the habitats and many threatened species of this whole region.

A larger team co-ordinated by FFI undertook a biodiversity survey of the Cardomom Mountains in western Cambodia in January-April 2000. Local hunters indicated that green peafowl were still common there, although only two records were obtained. The little known Lewis's silver pheasant *Lophura nycthemera lewisi*, which is endemic to these mountains, was also recorded in three places. Encouragingly, the level of hunting by local people seems to be modest.

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COMMUNICATION UPDATE

Monique Gudgeon

A Life on the Wild Side

In last **WPA News** you hopefully will have received a leaflet publicising a new book by author and broadcaster, Colin Willock. Called *A Life on the Wild Side*, it recalls his many adventures as an early wildlife filmmaker, travelling around different parts of Africa in the 1960s, meeting a variety of larger than life characters, and nearly always accompanied by his intrepid and long-suffering wife Joan. It is an excellent book, very entertaining, often extremely funny and better than anything, it benefits WPA too. When Colin started to write the book he asked WPA President Keith Howman if we would publish it for him and that he would like to donate part of the proceeds from sales to the Association.

This has given me an excellent opportunity to contact a lot of newspapers and magazines which might not have necessarily ever heard of WPA and tell them all about the book and all about us too. Coverage has been good with both local and national press picking up the story and running some reviews and interviews. Booksellers have also been approached and we are getting it into as many bookshops as possible. Every copy that is sold directly benefits WPA so the more we sell the better, and if you haven't bought one – please do and tell your friends to as well. I can guarantee you will enjoy the book!

Colin has written a wonderful tribute to the World Pheasant Association at the beginning of his book (see back page) and thanks WPA for all its help over the years. We in turn must thank Colin for his very generous words and his even more generous donation of royalties.

Fundraising Update

Since Phil McGowan started officially as WPA Conservation Director on 2 April, much time has been spent on planning and devising our fundraising and conservation strategy. There is plenty of work to keep us both well occupied for the foreseeable future and a more complete update will be prepared for the next **WPA News** – which in fact will be the Annual Review.

Talking of the Annual Review... there are always plenty of items to be included but if there is anything in particular you feel should appear, please get in touch with editor Keith Howman.

Two events which are getting closer at a remarkable speed is the annual Red Grouse Charity Clay Pigeon Shoot – held on 17 May – and The Country Landowners Association Game Fair which is at the end of July and is being held this year at historic Woburn Abbey just north west of London. Both are important fundraising events for WPA and The CLA Game Fair is always somewhere where we make a lot of new members. This year we are joining forces with The Game Conservancy Trust. It will be WPA's 25th consecutive stand at a CLA Game Fair. As we are an international conservation body and GCT concentrates very much on UK issues, we are the perfect partnership. Displays planned for the stand are very exciting and will attract an enormous amount of press and public attention so we are hoping for a record number of visitors to WPA. The theme planned for our part will concentrate on conservation work in Nepal and Myanmar. We hope as many members as possible will be able to come along and any who can help in any way will be greeted most enthusiastically!

Anyone wishing to take part in the clay shoot should contact WPA HQ on office@pheasant.org.uk. We have ten teams so far and have sponsorship of around £1,200 – again Famous Grouse are helping with prizes and by putting a team in for the day, for which we thank them, they are great supporters of WPA.

Finally, I received an email after the last **WPA News** asking why we didn't make more mention of Gift Aid. So, if there is

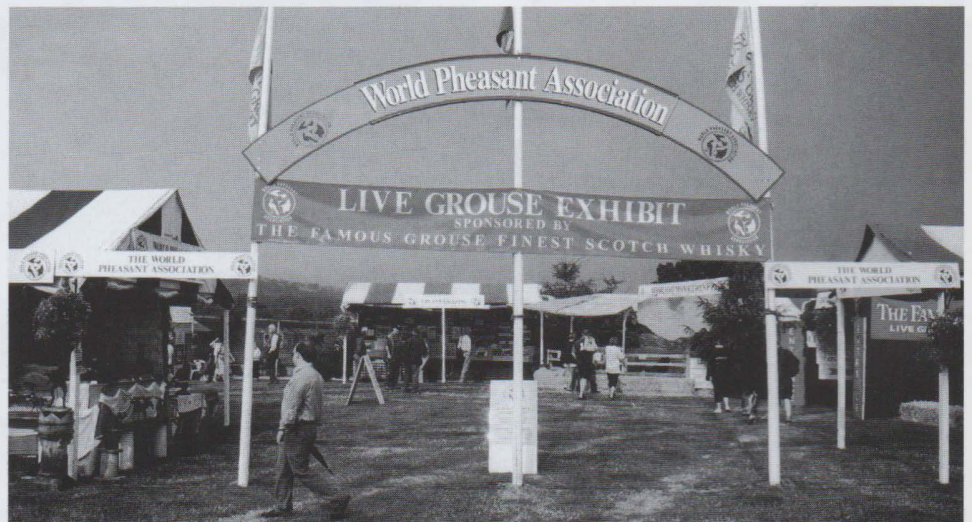
any UK member who hasn't filled out a Gift Aid form, we have enclosed one for you, just fill it in and send it back to head office, it makes an enormous difference to us. Thank you in advance.

Send us your money!

Everyone I know has a pile of old coins gathering dust in a jar or cluttering up the bottom of some drawer – leftovers from foreign holidays or forgotten when new coins were introduced – whatever they are, we can turn them into usable funds.

Anything is of use although non-UK coins are worth more than old pennies and if you have any old medals, these are also more valuable. Once we have a good collection they are taken away by auctioneers who will sort them into collectable and non-collectable and then sell them on our behalf – the proceeds usually work out at £80 to £100 per batch but can be a lot more if there is anything interesting. If they find anything very valuable they let us know.

So please empty your jam jars, piggy banks, old socks or wherever you keep your old change, and send it to us. We are not charged any commission and all coins are collected from us free of charge so anything you do send will benefit WPA one hundred per cent. The easiest way to send coins via the post is wrapped up in newspaper and then inside a padded envelope. Please address your envelope to Mrs Jill Court at the usual address - WPA, PO Box 5, Lower Basildon, Reading, Berkshire, RG8 9PF. Thank you in advance.



Entrance to WPA's 1999 CLA Game Fair stand.

WPA Annual Convention – Latest Update

This year's Annual Convention is being held at WPA's headquarters at Beale Park on Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 September – and apologies for having to switch it from Jersey. It was felt that the costs involved were just too much. However, what we have planned is sure to be useful, interesting and entertaining for all of you who come. The draft programme which is detailed below has been shaping up well although there are one or two gaps which still need confirming. Anyone who is interested in attending should contact Jill Court at the WPA office, she is also preparing an accommodation list so you can make your reservations in plenty of time. Either telephone, email or fill in the form enclosed.

We are planning to have an informal gathering on Friday evening at one of the local hotels where most will be staying – again details will be available once you book with Jill.

This year's theme focuses very much on aviculture but there will also be an update on the ground-breaking DNA Project as well as a fascinating report from Alexander Pack-Blumeneau's mission to Myanmar (see page 6). For Saturday's pre-lunch session, veterinarians, Michael Clark and Keith Warner will be talking about diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease – with some apparently appetising picture slides to put you in the mood for lunch! Michael and Keith have formed a new veterinary practice which concentrates solely on avian work. Their talk will be followed by a question and answer session which is sure to be of great interest to many of you.

Saturday evening we are hoping to hold a barbecue in the grounds of Beale Park but British weather being British weather we will not confirm that until at least the morning before! But whether inside or out it will be excellent opportunity to relax and discuss the day's business. We also plan to have a talk by WPA member and author Colin Willock who, in his days as a wildlife film producer made over 300 Survival films although only one exclusively on pheasants.

Sunday's session will close at about 12 noon and after lunch we have organised a visit to The Old House Bird Gardens courtesy of WPA Patron, Michel Klat.

WPA Annual Convention 28-30 September 2001 Beale Park, Pangbourne, Berkshire, UK

Draft programme

Friday 28 September 2001

Reception and Supper - Venue to be confirmed

Saturday 29 September

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 0900 – 0910 | Opening address - Chairman WPA |
| 0910 – 0930 | WPA AGM |
| 0930 – 10.45 | DNA: weeding out hybrids
Chairman: John Corder *
Speakers: David Parkin, Andrew Sheppy, Alain Hennache |
| 10.45 – 11.15 | Coffee |
| 11.15 – 12.00 | Veterinary practices in game-bird aviculture
Chairman: Prof TWI Lovel *
Speakers: Michael I Clarke, BA, VetMB, MRCVS,
Keith Warner, BVM&S, BSc(VetSc)Hons, MRCVS |
| 12.00 – 12.30 | Discussion and Questions |
| 12.30 – 14.00 | Lunch |
| 14.00 – 14.30 | Management of a large collection of birds
Specialist breeding of endangered species
Chairman: Keith Chalmers-Watson
Speakers: Mike Cook, Piet Kreefte,* |
| 14.30 – 15.00 | WPA in Action
Chairman: Dr Peter Garson
Speaker: Dr Philip McGowan |
| 15.00 – 15.30 | Tea |
| 15.30 – 16.30 | On the trail of Blyth's and other pheasants in Upper Myanmar
Chairman: Dr Peter Garson
Speakers: Alexander Pack-Blumenau, Theo Pagel |
| 16.30 – 17.00 | General Discussion |
| 20.00 hrs | Barbecue
Speaker – Colin Willock |

Sunday 30 September

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 09.30 – 10.30 | The Role of the Conservation Breeding Advisory Committee
European Regional Collection Plans
Chairman: Han Assink
Speakers: Han Assink, Gary Robbins* |
| 10.30 – 11.00 | Coffee |
| 11.00 – 12.00 | Peacock-pheasants
Modern video techniques in aviculture and education
Chairman: Han Assink
Speakers: John Corder, Peter Paul Vanderlugt |
| 12.00 – 12.15 | Closing Session
Remarks and Summary
The President |
| 12.30 – 1330 | Lunch |

Depart for tour to The Old House Bird Gardens by courtesy of Michel Klat
End of Convention

* still to be confirmed

Thanks to Paul North

Monique Gudgeon



WORLD PHEASANT ASSOCIATION

Conserving the Galliformes and their Habitats

Our Role

Field Conservation

Conservation Breeding

Avicultural Advice

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News

Events

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I'm sure that very few people reading February's *UK Bulletin* realised that it was Paul North's last issue. But sadly, this is the case. Paul has decided to hang up his boots - metaphorically speaking - and after eight years as editor, chief copy writer, proof reader and advertising sales manager, he will edit WPA's *UK Bulletin* no longer.

Firstly, I'm sure all UK members who enjoyed and relied on Paul's carefully gathered information, advice and useful tips will join together in saying thank you to him for all his time and effort in the past. But I hasten to add this does not mean we won't be seeing any more of Paul, in fact, quite the reverse.

Paul cites one of the many reasons for deciding to stop producing the *Bulletin*, as the increasing amount of time that so many other aspects of his WPA activities are taking up. Spending more time with his quail is also an important priority, and as a member of the PQF Group he is responsible for editing *PQF News* and maintaining their membership database too. As members of the Scottish Avicultural Group and NIOPS will attest, Paul has been an enthusiastic and active participant in both groups and he says he is looking

forward to being able to devote even more time to these kind of activities. But one of the more surprising aspects of his increased involvement with WPA has been through one of its newest marketing tools - the website (shown above).

Set up only a little over three months ago by Gary Robbins and devised by his daughter Sarah, WPA's website has been a huge success. Gary reports at the latest count (just before the Easter holiday) it was getting 79 visits a day. One of the most successful pages has been the advice section where visitors can email queries directly to each of the different groups. There is a WPA member for each specialisation: Mike Cook deals with tragopan pheasants and John Corder with peacock-pheasants while Gary Robbins will answer general pheasant enquiries and also any incubation questions; Keith Chalmers-Watson can be quizzed on grouse and finally Steve Bishop is your man for cracids. Paul North, of course, is the PQF contact. The number of emails he receives has increased dramatically he says and the subjects covered are incredibly diverse. For instance, last month as well as a batch of 'to be expected' questions on quail

breeding - What sort of housing is best? Where can you buy breeding pairs? What do you feed them on? - there was also one from a fellow looking for quail feathers for fly tying and another from someone wanting to know where to get hold of quail eggs to feed to his snake!

So if you haven't yet checked out WPA's website - hurry up and do so now! The address is www.pheasant.org.uk

To all those UK members who will miss their regular updates from Paul through his *UK Bulletin* we can offer some comfort - Paul will still be supplying information but through the pages of *WPA News* rather than separately as happened before. There will be a section in each issue which deals with avicultural news and advice and it will be an opportunity for members to air their views as well.

Unfortunately, this plea goes out every issue and seems to be roundly ignored but, if you have any piece of news you'd like to share please, please send it to us.

Finally... we all thank Paul for putting together the *UK Bulletin* for the last eight years - which will be sadly missed - but also look forward to seeing a lot more of him too!

Pipar Project Update



The Jimmy Roberts Memorial Fund

Since the February newsletter went to press, we have received further substantial and wonderful support to the Jimmy Roberts Memorial Fund. Firstly a donation of £500 from Travelling Light who will be known to many members for their excellent high quality clothing much of which is particularly suited to warmer climates. Their Managing Director, Freddy Markham travelled twice to Nepal in 1999 and trekked with Tensing Tashi who was a Sirdar with Mountain Travel and was recruited by the late Colonel Roberts and stayed also at the Pokhara Mountain Lodge which houses his collection of books and photographs.

Fiona and John Earle visited the schools in January and have not only donated £1000 but have given us much valuable feedback after visiting some of the schools during their trek. John is a doctor and they particularly wanted their donation to go towards the installation of water and latrines at the rebuilt Danfe School - which had neither! Being a doctor, John suggested testing the source of the water supply before installation. Advice which we are adopting.

A third major donation of £1000 has come from 'The Wargrave Gentlemen Group', a group of very generous people, all from Wargrave in Berkshire, whose donation will be used mainly to make a start on updating old and supplying new school furniture all of which will be made locally thus using the money in effect twice in Nepal. Once for employment in making the units and then for improving the work places in the schools.

With all the emphasis on help to the schools in the valley between Pokhara and Pipar it is easy to forget that our prime objective is the conservation of the galliform species in the Pipar area. In fact this is far from being forgotten and in May an expedition put together by our affiliate organisation in Nepal, Bird Conservation Nepal and supported by Dr Rahul Kaul from our office in Delhi, will carry out a survey of an area immediately adjacent to Pipar called Santel with a view to possibly extending the size of the Pipar area that we protect. Santel is relatively unknown area compared to the Pipar pheasant reserve

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where WPA has been involved for over two decades. Santel lies within the boundary of Annapurna Conservation Area specifically in the administrative unit of Kaski district, Nepal. It is located on a steep ridge and forms the north-eastern part of the Seti river catchment area.

The Annapurna Conservation Area Project management has recently recognised Pipar as one of the five zones of high biodiversity (biodiversity hot spots) on the basis of climatic conditions, geotopographical features, intensity and land use pattern and the floral and faunal components. These indicators have been

broadly exploited in allocating certain areas for further biodiversity studies. Similarly Santel is also given equal importance because of its proximity to Pipar, similar habitat types and possibly a potential area for galliformes. More on this in future **WPA News**.

In the meantime, do please keep the support coming in. The more we have the more we can do and remember if you are planning a trekking holiday to Nepal do let the WPA office know if you would like help in paying some of the schools a quick visit to see what we are doing.

Pheasant taxonomy: a cunning way to remove species from the Red List!

Peter Garson

Chair, WPA/BirdLife/SSC Pheasant Specialist Group

Peter Garson, chair of the WPA/BirdLife/Species Survival Commission Pheasant Specialist Group wrote the following piece for Species. It may help to clarify in readers minds the current position on the Vietnamese pheasants. It also highlights how valuable captive breeding can be in providing data and clues to unlocking some of the puzzles over the taxonomy of some pheasant species. Peter Garson can be contacted at Email: Petergarson@ncl.ac.uk.

Ever since Edwards's pheasant *Lophura edwardsi* and the imperial pheasant *L. imperialis* were discovered in the Annamese lowlands of central Vietnam in the 1920s, they have proved to be enigmatic. Edwards's was never seen again in the wild until 1996, the captive population of imperial in Europe died out, and the only recent specimens from the wild date from 1990 and 2000. In 1975 another form in this genus from the same small area (<10,000 km²) was named as the Vietnamese pheasant *L. hatinhensis*. In the 1995-99 edition of the Pheasant Action Plan, all three of these taxa were listed as Critical.

In 1998-99, Pamela Rasmussen (Smithsonian Institution and Michigan State University Museum) presented morphological and historical evidence from all existing specimen material of the imperial pheasant. She concluded that all the available data strongly supported a hybrid origin for the imperial, and involving the silver pheasant *L. nymthemera* as one of the parents.

In response to her findings, Alain Hennache (National Museum of Paris) set about trying to mimic the crucial wild hybridisation events in captivity at Clères Zoo, using Edwards's x Berlioz's silver pheasant *L.n. berliozii* crosses. Three male offspring were obtained and moulted into their adult plumage during 2000. Two were very like the type-described imperial, and the third closely resembled the only two recent wild specimens of this taxon from Vietnam (both immature males). It is also worth noting that European aviculturalists 'reconstructed' a line resembling the imperial after the demise of the original

population founded on birds brought from Vietnam. Mitochondrial DNA sequences, produced by Ettore Randi (INFS, Italy), from the 2000 wild specimen suggest that this bird had a form of silver pheasant as its mother. The results of DNA microsatellite analyses, which should reveal the identity of the father as well as confirming that of the mother, are still awaited, but suspicion is focused on Edwards's pheasant.

Turning to the third of these taxa, the key diagnostic characteristic of the male Vietnamese pheasant is the presence of several white central tail feathers. Such white feathers have also been noted recently by Hennache in three captive specimens bred from Edwards's parents in France, USA and Germany, and making these birds indistinguishable from Vietnamese pheasants. The populations producing these individuals are recognised to be highly inbred, and similar plumage variations have been noted in the small captive population of the closely-related Swinhoe's pheasant *L. swinhoii* in Australia.

An analysis of plumage variation in Vietnamese pheasants in captivity in Vietnam and Europe shows that the number of white tail feathers is variable and asymmetrical, with the extent of their development increasing with age. The feathers in question are not always fully white, sometimes being spotted or patched with brown. It appears that wild birds are as variable as captive bred individuals in these respects, and a wild male trapped in 1999 even had some white wing feathering in addition.

All these observations are consistent with the notion that inbreeding in very small and isolated Edwards's populations may produce the birds that have thus far been classified as the Vietnamese pheasant. And the extreme levels of forest destruction and fragmentation that have been wrought in the Annamese lowlands provide exactly the circumstances in which this should be expected to happen repeatedly. This second hypothesis by Hennache, again based mainly on observations in captivity, is now also under investigation by Randi, using

DNA sequence analysis on the largest sample of captive bred and wild specimens that can be assembled.

Pending any definitive results, however, Edwards's and Vietnamese pheasants are classified as Endangered, and imperial is listed as Data Deficient in the new edition of the Pheasant Action Plan for 2000-04 and the parallel BirdLife publication, *Threatened Birds of the World*. But the expectation must be that only one of these taxa, namely the Edwards's pheasant, will survive (albeit Red Listed) for much longer!

Latest News

A brief note has just arrived from Thomas Donegan to say that the Colombian EBA Project team has just returned safely from the field after some excellent fieldwork in the north of the Central Andes in Colombia. The isolated Serrania de San Lucas massif has never before been subject to biological surveys. They spent four weeks surveying four sites from 100 to 1400 m elevation and found several threatened bird species, including a new bird species for Colombia. However, most importantly, they were able to assess the environmental catastrophe which is currently affecting the area.

Full details of their activities and plans for conservation in the zone are being written up over the next few weeks and we look forward to reporting further.

* * * * *

Congratulations to Hem Sagar Baral on the award of his PhD from the University of Amsterdam. Hem is President of Bird Conservation Nepal, WPA's affiliate organisation in Nepal.

Workshop on captive rearing of Indian galliformes

Morni, Haryana - April 3-6 2001

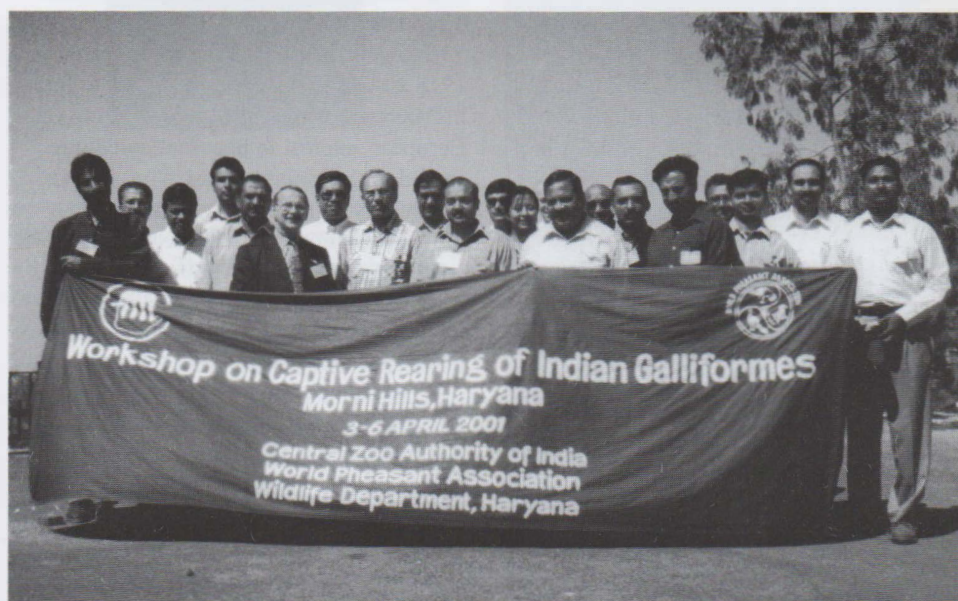
Rahul Kaul

The workshop began with a welcome address by Prof Musavi, Secretary WPA-India. This was followed by an introduction to the workshop by Dr Rahul Kaul, the organising secretary. He set the background to the workshop and its aims and objectives. Mr P R Sinha, Member Secretary, Central Zoo Authority emphasised the importance of using technical know-how in aviculture, and outlined the policies of the Central Zoo Authority and the Government of India in this regard. Then Mr K L Manhas, Chief Wildlife Warden of Haryana, outlined the efforts of his Department in enhancing the captive breeding facilities in the Morni pheasantry. He hoped that the inputs provided during this workshop would go a long way towards augmenting and improving the capacity in the Morni pheasantry.

Technical Sessions began with presentations by participants who spoke about various collections kept in their zoos and breeding centres. These were interactive sessions where questions and clarifications were sought from the speakers. In the afternoon, participants were taken to the Morni pheasantry where Mr R S Lamba, Dy Chief Wildlife Warden, Haryana, showed the participants around. The day concluded with an informal slide/video show by John Corder on parent-rearing pheasants and the role of *ex-situ* studies in *in-situ* conservation.

The technical sessions on day two began with a lecture by John Corder on 'Location and Aviary Design', which included all aspects of design and aviary furniture for galliformes. After this, the participants were divided into three groups. Each group was assigned a group of pheasants and asked to design an aviary or group of aviaries, taking the species and local conditions into consideration. A representative from each group then made presentations about their designs.

In the afternoon sessions, Gary Robbins discussed feeding and nutrition, which was followed by exercises where the existing groups were asked to devise diets for their pheasants. In a pre-dinner slide talk, Gary Robbins spoke about the process involved



in re-introducing a species into the wild, illustrating his talk with a 'real' example of re-introduction of the Houbara bustard in Morocco.

The main focus of the morning session on day three was incubation and rearing of chicks. This covered diverse themes including broodies, artificial incubation, embryology and egg development. John Corder and Gary Robbins combined to deliver the lectures.

In the afternoon, taking advantage of the presence of Mr S K Mukherjee, Director Wildlife Institute of India Dehra Dun, resolutions from the floor were invited and discussed. The major resolution involved a proposal to establish a Galliformes Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) for India. Regional and local training workshops with local trainers will be initiated where staff also may be allowed to attend and the Wildlife Institute at Dehra Dun was offered for the first formal TAG meeting.

The last day of the workshop began with a talk by Dr R Somvanshi on the diseases of captive galliformes in India. He also suggested procedures required for taking samples for post mortem tests. His lecture was followed by a practical demonstration of how an autopsy is conducted and how tissue samples are collected and stored.

After this elaborate talk, a process for Regional Collection Planning was put before the house for discussion. Mr John Corder chaired this discussion and recommendations were made regarding the objectives of the Indian Galliformes TAG. These included the following decisions:

- 1) To assess, manage and monitor a breeding programme for galliformes in captivity in India.
- 2) To conduct a survey of all captive Indian galliformes.
- 3) To collect, analyse and prioritise galliforme species with due consideration of the in situ and ex situ status of the species.
- 4) To maintain regional registers and nominate register keepers.
- 5) To adopt a standardised record keeping system with individually identifiable birds (eg by using closed rings).
- 6) To develop husbandry guidelines which may be circulated to all participating agencies.

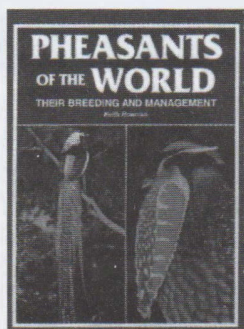
A brief closing ceremony followed, involving a summary of the workshop proceedings by John Corder followed by a feedback on behalf of the participants by Mr M S Jain, and finally a vote of thanks by Dr S Sathyakumar. Certificates of participation were distributed to the participants.

CHANGING TIMES

Keith Howman

I came across the text of the speech I made to introduce the Captive Breeding Symposium organised by WPA Benelux and the Captive Breeding Advisory Committee, both chaired by Han Assink in 1993 at Antwerp Zoo where Roland van Bockstaele was the curator of birds. It is I feel worth repeating including as it does, a pretty pessimistic conclusion.

'The beauty of pheasants has appealed to man since ancient times as has their meat for food. In China there are records of the brown eared-pheasant *Crossoptilon mantchuricum* going back 2500 years and we know the Romans brought the first pheasants from the Caucasus to England about 2000 years ago.



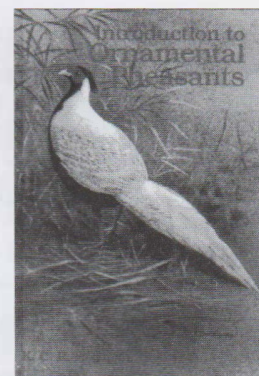
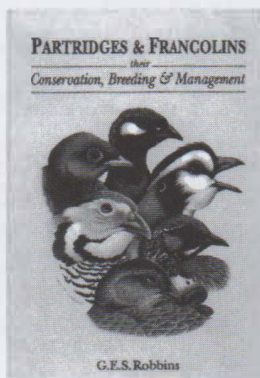
However, pheasant aviculture really began in the late 1800s. Brilliant naturalists like Hume and Marshall studied and described the beautiful gamebirds they found and as these became better known so did the interest in them increase. Knowledge of the pheasants species only came slowly to Western biologists. In 1758 Linné recorded seven species of three genera and no subspecies; Elliot in 1872 recorded 63 species of 12 genera; Beebe in 1918-22 recorded 63 species of 19 genera and 49 subspecies and Delacour in 1951 recorded 49 species of 16 genera and 122 subspecies. His classifications have more or less remained undisputed to the present day.

France was the leading Western country for the great early collections and the period 1860-1900 saw the build up of the many large collections and the establishment of many species in captivity which have survived through to the present day. These early superb collections were all kept by amateurs who were highly successful and

were according to Delacour, most generous with their knowledge. Sadly most of them disappeared during the 1914-18 war.

However, new enthusiasts appeared in 1918 and Delacour himself started to build his second collection. At that time too the European interest in pheasant aviculture spread to the United States. This spread was highly significant since sadly once more, the majority of European collections were wiped out in the 1939-45 war.

Delacour built up the finest pheasant collection ever assembled at his home in Clerés but he did much more than that - he recorded with accuracy observations on egg numbers laid, hatching periods etc. and set the example that modern aviculturists should seek to follow. Delacour's early life however was lived in an era very different to today's. He was able to go on bird collecting expeditions, the first to French Indo China in 1923 resulting in the discovery of literally hundreds of new birds including the Imperial pheasant *Lophura imperialis* and a year later he collected the birds that form the nucleus of all known Edwards's pheasants *Lophura edwardsii* in the world today - just imagine trying to go and do the same today - every BirdLife International and WWF member the world over would be up in arms. That said, Delacour and his friends were very much more than just collectors. He and several others such as Professor Ghigi were also good scientists and almost all were excellent aviculturists. Their establishment of pheasant species around the world is largely responsible for the reason that so few have had to be imported to maintain stocks during the past 40 years. However, though much was recorded by Delacour and others there was nothing very scientific about their record keeping or attempts



outside their own collections to avoid inbreeding. Nevertheless, large numbers were bred and widely distributed with no restrictions on movement of birds or licence requirements.

Today we have moved into a very different era. One in which studbooks are the order of the day and every bird movement is licenced and controlled. I fear that this new era with its controls from Cites, controls from European Community, controls from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery, fine though it may sound, may quickly lead to the rapid decline and final destruction of pheasants in captivity unless we are very careful.'

Times do move on and so they should. In WPA's early days we held training days in pheasant aviculture each year and articles on pheasant aviculture were regularly featured in our **WPA News** and annual Journal. However as WPA progressed, more and more of the information written by members like Gary Robbins, Arthur Anderson-Brown and myself were collected into the series of publications that we now have available to members. The need for articles has gone and small queries are much better answered by our panel of experts on the WPA website (see page 14).

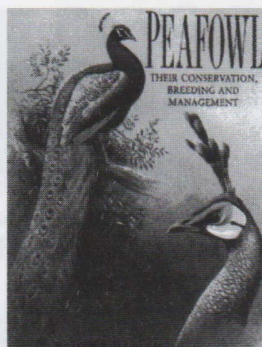
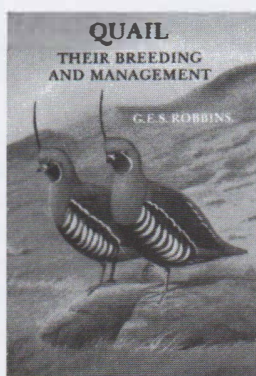
The publication of our books has undoubtedly killed the enthusiasm of members to write articles and fewer and fewer have been offered over the past ten years - by contrast more and more field research work has been and is being undertaken and this takes up the highest proportion of space in our newsletters. I think this is probably as it should be since quite frankly we know 99% of the answers to modern avicultural problems - as always

the problem is in the applying of them. If I am wrong, I do hope members will write in and say so.

The one area I feel there is always room for and that is truthful articles by beginners recounting their problems. However much one reads actually putting things into practice is never quite so easy and if anyone out there falls into the beginners category and is willing to put pen to paper with a series under the title of 'The Learning Curve', do please write to me.

Having said that WPA has available books covering all aspects of galliforme propagation a quick review of the main avicultural books available might be helpful at a time when the new breeding season is getting well under way.

Introduction to Ornamental Pheasants by KCR Howman is a very comprehensive introduction to keeping and breeding pheasants but only has brief species accounts and few colour photographs of them. It still costs only £14.95. *Pheasants of the World: their breeding and*



management on the other hand has over 300 wonderful colour photographs covering all the species. The text is comprehensive on all aspects of captive breeding and it costs £45.00. Two books by Gary Robbins in the breeding and management series on quail and separately on partridges and francolin, both deal comprehensively with the rather different problems of rearing the smaller galliformes as well as including clear species accounts. Also available is the late Tom Gardiner's *Peafowl: their conservation, breeding and management*. This is a detailed account of peafowl including their history as well as all aspects of keeping them in captivity.

Finally incubation is covered by *The New Incubation Book* by the late Dr Arthur Anderson-Brown and updated by Gary Robbins. This book is just out of print from WPA HQ but some copies are still available through distributors. We are planning a reprint of this book to include a full index which was inadvertently left out of the last edition.

Edward's pheasant studbook

A restricted captive population of Edwards's pheasant *Lophura edwardsi* in Europe is now being managed through a highly restricted (EEP) studbook by Alain Hennache (Clères Zoo, France) to minimise genetic losses. He has also excluded birds shown to be the descendants of Edwards's x Swinhoe's pheasant *L. swinhoii* hybrids as a result of mtDNA sequence analysis by Ettore Randi (INFS, Bologna, Italy).

Pheasant surveys in Sabah

Andrew Sheppy (Rare Breeds Survival Trust, UK) and others are planning to carry out surveys of wildlife including Galliformes such as Bornean peacock-pheasant *Polyplectron schleiermacheri* in Sabah, East Malaysia (Borneo) in August-September 2001.

Avicultural workshop

Gary Robbins and John Corder (WPA, UK) ran a workshop in early April 2001 on avicultural techniques, in collaboration with the Central Zoo Authority of India. A report will appear later.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2001

- 7-8 July Game Conservancy Scottish Fair, Scone Palace, Perthshire, Scotland
- 13 July PSG Core Committee Meeting, Game Conservancy, Fordingbridge, UK
- 27-29 July CLA Game Fair, Woburn Abbey, UK
- 3-7 September XXVth Congress of the IUGB and Perdix IX, Lemesos, Cyprus
- 7 September WPA Red Grouse Charity Clay Pigeon Shoot, Dunkeld, Scotland
- 18-23 September EAZA Conference, Prague
- 29-30 September WPA International Annual Convention, Beale Park, Berkshire

2002

- early August 9th International Grouse Symposium, Beijing, China
- August 23rd International Ornithological Congress, Beijing, China

Please let us have any dates of interest for inclusion.

Articles printed in **WPA News** do not necessarily represent the views of the World Pheasant Association.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY

**Leaving a legacy to WPA,
whether large or small,
will ensure continuing
galliform conservation well
into the future.**

*For further information or advice
please contact WPA, PO Box 5, Lower
Basildon, Reading, Berkshire RG8 9PF,
UK Email: admin@pheasant.org.uk*

A tribute to the wonderful world of pheasants by Colin Willock

Members may have wondered at the relevance of the flyer that came with their last WPA News for Colin Willock's new book A Life on the Wild Side. Apart from the fact that the proceeds from the sale of this book have been given by Colin to assist WPA, the following extracts from his introduction to the book under the title above may put it in context. Members can greatly help WPA by buying copies for families, relations and friends.

This book is not about filming pheasants, a fact which makes me all the more surprised, honoured and delighted to have the WPA as my publisher. However, in nearly thirty years of wildlife film-making for the long running ITV wildlife series 'Survival', we were never far away from the galliformes and frequently right among them. In many 'Survival' films, galliformes played a walk-on and, not infrequently, a starring part. And when they did, I knew where to turn for advice and invariably did so, usually to Keith Howman and always to the WPA.

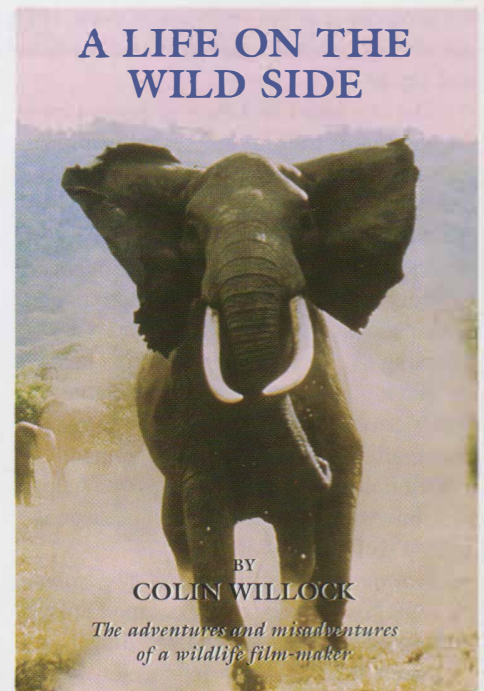
In the field we were often close to some of the more exciting members of the WPA's avian members—even the megapodes. In Australia, Des Bartlett, the daddy of all wildlife cameramen, who features prominently in this book, shot a remarkable film about the malleefowl, the clever bird that buries its egg in compost heaps and returns daily to test the temperature of the heap for incubation purposes. In Sulawesi,

'Survival's' cameras covered the even smarter megapode that has discovered that hot volcanic ash or sand can do the job equally well for it.

I never, alas, saw a Congo peafowl though in Africa our cameras were never far away from pheasant relatives, the helmeted guineafowl that haunt the waterholes of Namibia and the Vulturine guineafowl of northern Kenya with their bare predatory beaks and faces and striped blue, black and white breast feathers that excite the acquisitive instincts of fly-tyers! I am not sure if the diminutive button quail qualifies for inclusion. For some reason, this tiny game bird lacks the rear toe of true quails but I've no doubt they can still find shelter under the WPA's worldwide umbrella.

And, of course, there were the truly straight wildlife films in which galliformes played the leading roles. At 13,000 feet in the Himalayas of Nepal, Ashish Chandola made a brilliant study of the national bird of that country, the Monal, *Impeyan* or, as it sometimes known, and the film was called, 'The Bird of Nine Colours'. I recall, too, that blood pheasants and kalij pheasants also played prominent parts in Ashish's film.

Toby Bromley, a talented amateur film-maker with real professional ability, shot a brilliant half hour about red grouse and peregrines in which it was conclusively proved that the grouse could outfly the falcon in level flight and even knew how to



evade capture by flying between the strands of a barbed wire fence.

Blackcock on a lek, yes, and 'The Old Man of the Woods' featuring a bird in the wild forests of Tayside that stars frequently at WPA Game Fair displays, the largest grouse of all, the capercaillie.

This book is mainly about the adventures and misadventures of wildlife film-making with the larger members of the animal kingdom. But I hope I have said enough to reassure my readers that the galliformes were usually in the supporting cast and not infrequently in leading roles.

FINAL NOTE: Members are in luck due to a printing error and we are extending the pre-publication offer until the end of May.

WPA Photo CD

John Corder has just completed a CD which holds over 900 images of Galliformes. Many of these have been donated to WPA over the years for publication in annual reviews and newsletters. They include originals by Ken Fink, Keith & Jean Howman, Gary Robbins, and many others. In addition, there are also two video clips, amounting to more than 16 minutes of breeding displays by captive and wild pheasants in Malaysia and there is a PowerPoint presentation about WPA which users might like to modify for their own use. The CD is only readable on a PC, preferably with Windows 95, 98, NT or 2000.

The CD costs £15 and can be ordered directly from WPAHQ, PO Box 5, Lower Basildon, Reading RG8 9PF. Cheques should be made payable to WPA. All proceeds will be used to finance the WPA project on the conservation genetics of Galliformes being undertaken by Ettore Randi (INFS, Bologna, Italy). In its first year, this project has already obtained important results relating to the Imperial and Vietnamese pheasants.

STOP PRESS: Interest has been expressed from the American Fisheries and Wildlife Department in this CD in order to help them identify the different species.

Pheasant Photos World Pheasant Association

More than 450 Photographs of Galliformes



plus 11 minutes of Video

Pheasant Photos World Pheasant Association