

## Editorial

This 'Summer' number of *Aquatic Mammals* is being printed somewhat later than the Editor intended, but this delay enables him to report a very important statement by the British Government on the keeping of Cetacea in captivity. Both in the States (see 'News' p. 34) and in this country pressures are growing to end the keeping of these animals in captivity and it is to be hoped that the British Government, after the full independent enquiry has reported, will take the lead in Europe and establish guidelines for all to follow. The statement, issued 6 June 1985, is as follows:

The Government is to hold a review of dolphinarium and marine parks in the United Kingdom to establish whether their educational, research or breeding benefits are enough to justify the import and display of live dolphins and killer whales, Environment Minister William Waldegrave announced today.

In answer to a Parliamentary Question from Michael Portillo (Enfield and Southgate) about future applications for import licences Mr Waldegrave said:

"My Department has not granted any permits to import dolphins or killer whales since 1983. I am aware of public concern, and it is clear that there are widely differing opinions about the value of dolphinarium.

"I have therefore decided to appoint an independent adviser to consider whether the educational, research and breeding benefits of dolphinarium and similar establishments in the UK are of sufficient value to justify the import and display of live cetaceans (whales). Advice will also be sought on the standards that should be applied to dolphinarium if they can be justified on educational, research or breeding grounds. The review will also take account of legislation, including the recent EC Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Regulations which increased the conservation status of small cetaceans. The views of operators and conservation bodies will also be sought.

"I am currently arranging for a suitable adviser to be appointed, and I hope to make a further announcement shortly. Any applications to import further dolphins or killer whales to the UK will be determined in the light of this review, which I expect to complete within six months from the date of the appointment of my adviser".

The EAAM has already responded by welcoming the statement and offering any help which its members can offer, but like all Governmental moves results will probably not appear this year. As the position clarifies so it will be reported.

Volume 11 No. 2 publishes a number of papers on behaviour both in the wild and in captivity and of particular interest may be the communication by Videler and Kamermans which although it admits it investigates only 'slow swimming speeds', seems to negate Peter Purves' original view on the importance of the upstroke of the tail. It is to be hoped that this article will stimulate a 'correspondence column' in the next issue which the Editor would like to think would very much enliven the journal and attract much needed extra subscribers. This latter would result in lower subscription rates to all!

Finally, Professor K. Ronald of the University of Guelph, has recently published his Newsletter Number 8 of the League for the Conservation of the Monk Seal emphasizing the need for ACTION if the Mediterranean Monk Seal is to survive and setting out in detail the priorities required. Copies may be obtained either from Professor Ronald at Guelph, or Professor Duguy at La Rochelle, France.

The Editor hopes that the 'Autumn' number will contain an outline programme for the Fourteenth Symposium of the European Association for Aquatic Mammals to be held in Barcelona from 9 to 12 March 1986.

V. J. A. Manton  
Editor

## News

The American Cetacean Society in its Winter '84 number of 'Whale Watcher' heads the whole issue with the question 'should Cetaceans be kept in captivity?'. The editorial quite rightly points out that as an organization the 'American Cetacean Society cannot draw a conclusion on the question of Cetaceans in captivity'. Nevertheless, in the journal are presented a number of views, namely an animal rights view, a census and a view of the significance of those held in captivity. The latter article concludes, 'as we gather data for the census the successes in breeding longevity and care were immediately evident and impressive. The roles of the marine zoological park in captive propagation, in biological research, in the conservation of endangered and threatened species... and in education were self evident and considered of prime importance'. They also quote 3 examples of care and longevity, such as a captive born Manatee now 45 years old, a 41 year old Harbour Seal that has been captive for 38 years, and a 30 year old Bottle Nosed Dolphin, born in captivity, that is now herself a grandmother. 80% of the Bottle Nosed Dolphins recorded in the census have been in captivity between 4 and 30 years ago, and some of the oldest specimens were captive born. It also quotes Sam Ridgway's report to the Congressional Marine and Fisheries Sub-Committee that 'the average mortality for Cetaceans in the wild exceeds 15%', and that 'infant mortality in many Pinniped species can be as high as 80% in the wild'.

The article on Cetaceans in captivity (an attitudinal impact and value as educational resource) concludes 'marine zoological parks are and can continue to be a bridge between man and nature. Perhaps we should concentrate our efforts on improving the quality of that bridge rather than plotting how to burn it'. There follows a report by Sidney Holt on the work of the IWC in saving whales.

The American Cetacean Society held its first biennial conference and symposium in September 1984 and discussed a number of problems both old and new. It highlighted the conflict between research workers using captive Cetaceans and the management in terms of public appeal. A report from Randall Wells and colleagues on reproductive patterns of free ranging Dottle Nosed Dolphins clarified the behaviour of animals as they grew up and highlighted the point when the calves were separate

from their mothers. This report was also duplicated for Australia by Elizabeth Gawain.

The first newsletter, edited by Bill Perrin, of the Cetacean Specialist Group was received. On this Dr Margaret Klinowska and Ray Gambell represent the United Kingdom, Alex Aguilar represents Spain, Anne Collet France, and Ivor Cristensen Norway, the rest of the Committee being from America, China, Japan, Australia, Canada, Argentina, Mexico, Bangladesh, in other words outside Europe. Their first report concerns the serious situation in China of the Changjiang Dolphin (*Lipotes vexillifer*) and notes that the population may now be as low as 200 animals, mainly due to the increase in river traffic, and accidental entanglement in fishing gear resulting in death. The species is restricted to a few localities in the river in its middle and lower regions. Despite protective measures it would appear that the 'bott' may well disappear very soon. It was worrying to read that in Chilean waters there is a deliberate and indiscriminate capture of small Cetaceans for use as bait to catch crabs. The article concluded that the populations of small Cetaceans in waters under the jurisdiction of Chile were currently strongly affected by 1) occasional incidental captures, 2) intentional capture for use as bait in the crab industry, and other national fisheries. Secondly they report some species are affected by direct elimination and removal for live export. The prime causes of the problems reviewed here reside principally in the need for a national policy of investigation and management of marine mammals resource and in the profound impact of the current fishing policy on the ecosystems and national marine resources'. It is a little shattering to realise that for the 2½ years from mid '76 to the end of '79, in excess of 7000 dolphins were caught for crab bait, and the average estimates for the years 1980 and 1981 are 204 metric tonnes. Although the figures include marine birds and seals, they consist mainly of *Cephalorhynchus commersoni* and *Lagenorhynchus australis*.

As a specialist group of the Survival Service Commission the Cetacean Specialist Group has put forward a number of action plans for Cetaceans to the Survival Service Commission. These include 1) work on Black Sea Dolphins and Porpoises, 2) a survey on the 'Cochito' (*Phocoena sinus*), 3) a survey on endangered Riverine dolphins both from the

Yangtze and the Indus Rivers, 4) to support the workshop on the by-catch of dolphins and porpoises in mono filament nets, 5) to survey Burmeister's Porpoise, *Phocoena spinipinnis*, 6) to undertake a survey of the Baltic sea Harbour Porpoise. They are also working on conservation of the Black Sea Dolphin and Porpoise population, protecting the calving and calf rearing areas of White, Humpback and Grey Whales, and supporting the multi organizational meeting on the role of

Cetaceans in marine ecosystems, developing an awareness of the habitat needs of Cetaceans and promoting an assessment of Southern Blue Whale population status. It was encouraging to read that there is a proposal by the Indonesian Directorate General for Forest and Nature Conservation that Lake Semayang in East Kalimantan, that's on the island of Borneo, is made a national park for the protection of the pessut—the Irrawaddy River Dolphin, *Orcaella brevirostris*.

rt was also duplicated  
vain.

by Bill Perrin, of the  
s received. On this Dr  
y Gambell represent  
Aguilar represents  
and Ivor Cristensen  
mmittee being from  
Australia, Canada,  
lesh, in other words  
report concerns the  
of the Changjiang  
and notes that the  
low as 200 animals,  
in river traffic, and  
hing gear resulting in  
to a few localities in  
wer regions. Despite  
appear that the 'beiji'  
i. It was worrying to  
re is a deliberate and  
l Cetaceans for use as  
le concluded that the  
s in waters under the  
ntly strongly affected  
ptures, 2) intentional  
e crab industry, and  
ondarily they report  
irect elimination and  
prime causes of the  
e principally 'in the  
of investigation and  
nals resource and in  
rent fishing policy on  
arine resources'. It is  
for the 2½ years from  
ess of 7000 dolphins  
the average estimates  
e 204 metric tonnes.  
arine birds and seals,  
*hynchus commersonii*

he Survival Service  
ialist Group has put  
ns for Cetaceans to  
on. These include 1)  
and Porpoises, 2) a  
*na sinus*, 3) a survey  
hins both from the