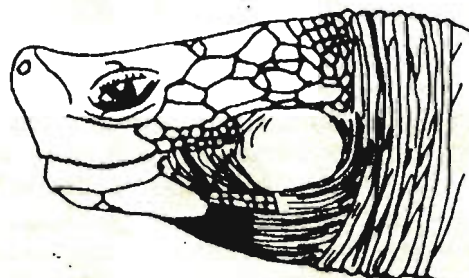


IUCN/SSC FRESHWATER CHELONIAN GROUP

NEWSLETTER

Editor: E.O. Moll
 Dept. of Zoology
 Eastern Illinois University
 Charleston, Illinois 61920
 USA



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 September 1982

TEMPORARY ADDRESS CHANGE

Beginning September 15, 1982 until June 1983 all correspondence should be sent to
 me c/o R. Whitaker
 Madras Snake Park Trust
 Guindy Deer Park
 Madras 600022
 India

I will be in India investigating the status and distribution of threatened chelonians along with FCSG members there. I will try to turn out at least one edition of the Newsletter from India so continue to send me items which you would like included

E.O. Moll

SSC ORGANIZATION

Due to an increasing number of specialist groups concerned with reptiles and amphibians, Gren Lucas chairman of the Species Survival Commission has appointed René Honegger as Commission Vice Chairman for Reptile and Amphibian Matters. The former Reptile and Amphibian Specialist Group which Honegger chaired has not been reconstituted. In addition to the FCSG, the following reptile specialist groups have now been approved:

Group	Chairman
Tortoises	Ian Swingland
Marine Turtles	Archie Carr and George Balazs
Crocodiles	F. Wayne King
Snakes	Romulus Whitaker

GUIDELINES

The IUCN/SSC has recently published a pamphlet entitled "Guide Lines for Specialist Group Chairman". As certain sections deal with functions of the group and responsibilities of members, I have appended a copy for each member.

The newsletter is supported by the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, World Wildlife Fund US. and Eastern Illinois University.



NEW ORGANIZATIONS

Chelonian Documentation Center

John H. du Pon and Professor Don Riemer have established a data center for chelonians. Building on the data and library assembled for the now defunct International Turtle and Tortoise Foundation, their intent is to develop the CDC as a referral center for chelonian information. A more complete statement of their objectives, taken from CDC Newsletter #1, has been appended. CDC has requested FCSG comments on the usefulness of filing such data, as well as what data should be filed and how it should be filed. Comments can be sent to the address provided in the appended material. Persons wishing to receive the CDC newsletter should also send a \$6 donation and additional \$4 mailing cost outside of Europe.

Turtle Trust

This recently established organization describes itself as a charitable trust for the protection of turtles especially through captive breeding. The stated purposes of TT are:

1. To acquire, maintain and propagate as many species of turtles as possible.
2. To report the methods used and the results obtained from these efforts.
3. To cooperate with other organizations and individuals to promote turtle propagation
4. To protect turtle habitat; and
5. To inform the public of the benefits of turtles as an enriching part of our environment.

For a \$10US donation you will receive the "TT occasional papers" (containing reports and news) and discounts several turtle books. Write Turtle Trust, Westport Point, MA, 02791 USA

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

- Broadley, Donald G. 1981. A review of the genus Pelusios Wagler in Southern Africa (Pleurodira: Pelomedusidae). Occas. Pap. Nat. Mus. Rhodesia B. Nat. Sci 6(9): 633-686.
- Dodd, C.K. 1982. A controversy surrounding an endangered species listing: The case of the Illinois mud turtle. Smithsonian Herp. Infor. Serv. (55): 1-22.
(copies may be obtained by writing G. Zug, Division of Reptiles and Amphibians, National Mus. of Nat. Hist., Smithsonian Inst. Washington D.C. 20560. USA)
- Ilani, G. and A. Baskila 1982. Soft-shelled turtles. In Wildlife news Israel-Land & Nature 7(3): 125 (discusses a hatchery for Trionyx triunguis).
- US. Fish and Wildlife Serv. 1981. Plymouth Red-bellied turtle recovery plan. Region 5 US Fish and Wildl. Serv. 13 pp. (available from Fish and Wildlife Reference Service, Denver Publ. Library, 3840 York St., Denver, Co. 80205 USA)
- Ross, J.P. 1982. The Cat Island turtle. Oryx 16 (4): 349-351. (this is FCSG Misc Contrib. #2 and reports on the March '81 Cat Island survey described in Newsletter 2. Address: J.P. Ross, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard Univ., Cambridge, MA 02138 USA)
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REGIONAL NEWS

Australian Region:

Dr. John Legler has received a grant from the Animal Research and Conservation Center to study the ecological requirements of Carettochelys insculpta in Arnhem Land, Australia from August-November 1982. Uranium mines, a national park and an aboriginal reserve all overlap with the planned study area. Objectives of the study include:

1. determining the geographic distribution and abundance of the turtle within the region.
2. determining the ecological requirements of the species and how they are affected by the humans and human works in the area.

Newsletter #3 reported that Mark Rose had been funded by WWF to carry out a project with similar objectives in Papua New Guinea. Mark writes that reorganization of the PNG government offices has slowed his progress but that some headway has been made in respect to reproductive biology and hatchling rates. A full report will be sent soon.

Eastern Palearctic and Oriental Region:

Congratulations to Rom Whitaker, FCSG coordinator for this region. On March 2, Prince Philip, President of the World Wildlife Fund announced in Madras that Rom had been awarded World Wildlife Funds' commendation for conservation of reptiles.

In addition to Rom's position on the FCSG, he is also chairman of the new IUCN/SSC Snake Specialist Group.

A recent TRAFFIC bulletin (undated) lists the protected freshwater turtles of Indonesia as Batagur baska, Orlitia borneensis of the Emydidae; Chitra indica of the Trionychidae and Chelodina novaeguineae, Elsea novaeguineae of the chelidae. The listing of Chitra is surprising. I am aware of no records for Chitra off of continental Asia. Possibly the law was meant to cover Pelochelys bibroni which was incorrectly identified

Tom Milliken has recently organized TRAFFIC (Japan) an IUCN sponsored organization which will monitor the wildlife trade in the land of the rising sun. Tom writes that "Kiban" (the Japanese equivalent of "Guiban" described in Newsletter III) is used in a variety of 'Kanpoyaku' medicines as a source of calcium. The species most frequently imported into Japan for this use are the emydids Cuora amboinensis and Cyclemys dentata along with the tortoise Geochelone elongata. Most come from Thailand.

Tom also reports that the trade in live reptiles is increasing in Japan. Four large pet shops presently exist which deal solely in reptiles. The following representative freshwater turtles and prices (\$US) were taken from a recent supply list from one of these shops.

Chelydra serpentina \$16-50
Chelondina longicollis \$500.00
Chelus fimbriatus \$117-158
Chrysemys picta belli \$16.

Clemmys guttata \$54
Cuora amboinensis \$4
Emydura australis \$208
Graptemys geographica \$3.50-5.00

Heosemys spinosa \$67
Kinosternon sp. \$10.50
Mauremys mutica \$16
Malaclemys terrapin \$17-20

Pelusios niger \$58
Phrynops nasutus \$160
Platemys areolata \$500
Platysternon megacephalum \$21
Podocnemis unifilis \$117

Sternotherus sp. \$3.50 - \$6.50
Terrapene carolina \$25
Trionyx muticus \$16-25

Although the pet turtle trade in most developed nations has been declining in recent years the expansion of the trade in Japan could well reverse this trend.

India is reviewing the status of 9 species of freshwater turtles currently listed on Appendix I of CITES. A FCSG/WWF sponsored survey of markets in West Bengal indicated that certain of these species (e.g. Lissemys punctata, Trionyx gangeticus) are still common and should be reclassified. FCSG member P. Kannan will be in charge of this review for the Indian Government. Members having information or comments on the current status of the Indian turtles on Appendix I should contact:

Shri P. Kannan
Assistant Director, Wildlife Preservation
Wildlife Regional Office
11, Air Cargo Complex
Sahar, Bombay 400 099
India

Nearctic

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory, a state natural heritage program sponsored by the Nature Conservancy and the state of Florida, USA is assembling a comprehensive, computerized data base of ecological and precise distributional data (plotted on USCG 7.5 minute topography maps) for Florida's most threatened animals, plants and terrestrial and aquatic communities. The data base will be continually updated as data become available. Data will be utilized by private conservation groups, utilities planners, all levels of governmental agencies, academic researchers, and many others. Zoologist Dale Jackson has assembled a list of approximately 400 species of vertebrate and invertebrate animals for which he is gathering data to incorporate into the data base. This list includes the following "freshwater" turtles: Clemmys guttata, Graptemys barbouri, Graptemys pulchra, Kinosternon bauri bauri, Macrochelys temminckii, Malaclemys terrapin rhizophororum, Pseudemys alabamensis, Pseudemys concinna, and Trionyx muticus calvatus. If you can provide precise data on populations of any of these species IN FLORIDA and would like to receive the appropriate forms, please contact:

Dr. Dale Jackson, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, 254 East Sixth Avenue,
Tallahassee, Florida 32303 USA

Neotropical Region

J. Perran Ross has completed the first of four field visits to Cat Island (April 24-May 3) for the Cat Island Turtle Project. In addition to meeting with government authorities and teachers concerning the educational aspects of the study, 20 new P. felis were caught tagged and released. Five additional locations were identified by local informants but these remain to be verified. The second field visit now in progress should provide data on reproduction.

Western Palearctic and Ethiopian Region

Donald G. Broadley, Curator of Herpetology at the National Museum of Zimbabwe

reports that none of the Pelomedusidae in southeastern Africa seem to be endangered or threatened. Fishermen eat these turtles when they are caught incidentally but the eggs are not sought by the local people. Nests of Cycloderma frenatum may be raided by man and Broadley is currently trying to determine whether such predation is significant in Mozambique.

Dr. Bill Branch, Curator of Herpetology at the Port Elizabeth Museum of South Africa writes that there are few freshwater terrapins in his country. Trionyx has been recorded from Namibia. Its status is unknown but it is at best marginal in the region. Pelomedusa subrufa occurs throughout the region and is nowhere threatened. An isolated relict population of Pelusios rhodesianus at Durban is in danger of extirpation due to industrial development but this is a local problem having little total effect on this wide-ranging species.

MEMBERSHIP

The following have been recommended to SSC Chairman Dr. Grenville Lucas as members or consultants in the SSC.

Dr. Don Broadley - W. Palearctic & Ethiopian Region
Department of Herpetology
National Museum
Centenary Park
Po Box 240 Bulawayo,
Zimbabwe

Dr. Federico Madem - Neotropical Region
Apartado Aereo 22-61
Villaviciencio (Meta)
Colombia
South America

Mr. Mark Rose - Australian Region
FAO/UNDP Regional Crocodile Manager
c/o Dept. of Primary Industry
Po Box 35
Kerema
Gulf Province
Papua New Guinea

Mr. John H. du Pon, Executive Director CDC - Consultant
Po Box 125
Workumertrekweg 17
8700 A C Bolsward
Netherlands

ERRATA - NEWSLETTER III

In article on drugs, "Gui Ban" was described as a preparation made from the plastral scutes. This appears to be incorrect-the result of mistranslating an article in Chinese. "Gui Ban" is apparently derived from the bony plastron. Perhaps some of our Chinese members can supply more details on the preparation.

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION

GUIDELINES FOR SPECIALIST GROUP CHAIRMEN



MARCH 1982

SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION

- 2 -

GUIDELINES FOR SPECIALIST GROUP CHAIRMEN

You have been chosen as Chairman of your Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) because of your expertise and commitment to conservation and because the Commission feels that you are able to organize an effective conservation effort on behalf of the species with which you are concerned.

There are no hard and fast rules for this task; indeed, innovation is most welcome. However, it will be helpful for all concerned if you follow certain procedures with respect to practice and policy. To this end, the Commission has developed the following guidelines to explain what is expected of you and your members, and to suggest ways in which you might help your group become and remain an effective force in species conservation.

FUNCTIONS OF SPECIALIST GROUPS

Groups are established to provide advice and data to the SSC, and through it to IUCN. The main functions of each group should be:

1. to ensure the survival and maintenance of genetic diversity of the endangered and vulnerable taxa concerned;
2. to determine and review on a continuing basis the status and needs of the taxa and the current research and management measures available and needed;
3. to make these known through published books, scientific and popular articles, films, newsletters, symposia and meeting proceedings; and
4. to ensure the conservation of the taxa through the development and implementation of conservation strategies and specific projects.

The SSC, other elements of IUCN, and WWF all try to provide some of the resources for making these things possible. Annually, each group should prepare or revise their Action Plans. These are then amalgamated and become part of the overall SSC Action Programme which, in turn, is used to develop the IUCN "Conservation Programme for Sustainable Development", a set of desirable conservation projects identified for possible funding.

The next step is for groups to generate action projects with real conservation potential, and to make sure that they get properly considered, both by the IUCN/WWF funding review process, and by any other potential sources of funding. If funds are granted, it will be the group's concern to help see that projects are properly carried out and the results applied and published.

Another responsibility of the group is to review for SSC, IUCN and WWF questions, reports, documents and decisions bearing upon the group's area of expertise. It is vital that these be responded to promptly, since the entire review process depends on it.

One very important function of the Specialist Group is to have an input into the Conservation Monitoring Centre (CMC) at Cambridge and Kew, which amongst other tasks produces the Red Data Books. Chairmen are requested to pass on relevant information to the Centre; in some instances to prepare draft data sheets, read draft sheets critically, and provide continued updates on the status of taxa. Again, rapid communication is requested since the quality and effectiveness of the Red Data Books depend on their completeness and the compilers' ability to use the Specialist Groups as resources and referees.

Chairmen are welcomed and encouraged to promulgate stated IUCN policy and to speak out on behalf of their colleagues in the Specialist Group, but they must be careful not to speak in an ad hoc manner for IUCN or SSC, nor to appear to be setting overall policy. Before a particular position can become IUCN policy it must be approved both by the SSC and the IUCN Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAIRMEN

The duty of the Chairman of a Specialist Group is to organize and coordinate his or her group. Chairmen are expected to:

1. gather and disburse information of importance to the conservation of the taxa covered by their group, in such a way as to initiate, influence and thereby ensure conservation results;
2. establish priorities and direct the impact of their group toward the highest priorities;
3. attend SSC meetings, at least once a year if possible;
4. provide for each SSC meeting a written group report (however brief) suitable for publication by SSC; or to present a brief oral report when present at meetings.
5. communicate with group members and with the SSC Chairman and Executive Officer as often as is necessary to fulfill the group's objectives. This includes keeping the computer file at Gland up-to-date on name and address changes in the Group.

Attendance at SSC meetings is important. It is a matter of policy to hold meetings in various parts of the world. If Chairmen cannot attend, they may appoint a regional member to do so and report in their stead.

A Deputy Chairman might also be appointed to attend meetings on a regular basis should the Chairman not be able to do so. Since Group members do not receive direct invitations to SSC meetings, the Group Chairman should disseminate such information to his Group, and, for each event, suggest to SSC the names of members or cooperators who should also be invited.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GROUP MEMBERS

The Chairman should brief each member as to relevant IUCN and SSC policies. Members are encouraged to promote the conservation of the taxa concerned but should not speak on behalf of the Group or the SSC or the IUCN without prior consultation with the Chairman. On the other hand, a Chairman may occasionally wish to ask a member to speak on behalf of the Group. All relevant correspondence should be photocopied to the Chairman, who may also wish to advise the SSC Chairman and Executive Officer.

PERIOD OF SERVICE

You are asked to serve as Group Chairman from the time you are appointed until the next General Assembly of IUCN, unless circumstances make it necessary for you to step down earlier. At the General Assembly (held every three years), all the Commissions (including Specialist Groups) are dissolved under IUCN Statutes (Article VIII Para 2 and accompanying Regulations). Renewed service of Group Chairmen and members is at the discretion of the SSC Chairman. Normally, active Chairmen and members are asked to continue for an additional three years. Should you become too busy to carry out the duties of Chairman or member, you will be expected to resign in order that someone else may actively attend to the Group's affairs.

CHOOSING MEMBERS

You will be asked to nominate as candidates for membership in your Group the top international experts in your field. It is the SSC Chairman's prerogative to review the candidates suggested and approve appointment of these and/or other specialists to serve as members of your Group. Their three year term of service is the same as yours, between General Assemblies. After receiving approval from the SSC Chairman, the Group Chairman will inform group members of their appointment following each General Assembly. Should the Group Chairman wish to change members, the General Assembly is the appropriate time to do so.

The people you suggest as members should be selected for their expertise, their concern for conservation and their responsiveness. Do not look solely to professional scientists for members, since qualified amateurs or other experts frequently make excellent members. They should be aware that some commitment of time will be expected of them.

The size of a Specialist Group should suit the subject and your plan of operations; for example, the Odonata Group has only seven full members, whereas the Lepidoptera Group has nearly fifty and the Primate Group seventy. Size should be based in part on the Chairman's ability to communicate with the SSC and the membership on a regular basis.

You may also wish to consider categories of membership, so that a larger number of specialists may take part as correspondents without the responsibility accorded a smaller number of full members. However else a group may be organized, it is most important that as many members as possible be nationals of the countries (or region) involved. The international make-up of a group is important whether its work is organised on taxonomic or biogeographic grounds or some mixture of the two.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman may wish to adopt a letterhead with a logo symbolizing the group's area of interest, as a number of groups have already done. The connection with SSC and IUCN should be prominently displayed using the approved IUCN (1981) symbol as on this letterhead. The draft of this should be submitted to the SSC Chairman for approval before printing. All members should hear from their Group Chairman with some frequency - if not by personal letters, then perhaps through an internal newsletter issued at intervals appropriate to the pace of developments. Such an internal newsletter might also be usefully circulated to others in SSC and IUCN, as well as to other agencies, conservation groups and potential funding sources. In addition to any internal newsletters, members currently receive the IUCN Bulletin, and it is expected that a regular SSC newsletter will soon be inaugurated.

Newsletters are especially useful to hand out during travels in regions of concern, and can double as the Group report to the SSC as well. As an aid in getting started, the Executive Office at Gland will reproduce and mail the first issue of any new Group's newsletter.

The Chairman should keep permanent files of Group correspondence. Formal letters directed to persons outside the Group should be copied to the SSC Chairman and Executive Officer.

It is most important that Chairmen communicate in some manner with their members from time to time, to keep them informed and to solicit their views and information. If members feel neglected, they may cease to respond. Communications sent out by Chairmen, whether letters, bulletins, research publications or periodic bibliographies on their subject, stimulate the return of valuable leads and information.

Similarly, it is vital that the Group Chairmen and members appreciate their important additional role as the world-wide eyes and ears of the organization. Any significant new developments in areas of interest to IUCN should be promptly reported to SSC.

MEETINGS

As already stated, Chairmen should try to attend SSC meetings as often as possible. In recent years, SSC has also begun to hold some regional meetings of Group Chairmen for which attendance may be easier to arrange. Group members are also always welcome at SSC meetings and Group Chairmen should take pains to notify any regional members of meetings so that they can plan to be present. Remember that Group members do not receive SSC announcements and minutes of meetings; it is up to you to pass on as much as you feel your members should have.

Full meetings of Specialist Groups are encouraged, yet they take place infrequently due to expense and complexity of arrangements. Therefore it is a good idea for Chairmen, when travelling in the regions, to meet whenever possible with national or regional contingents of their group membership.

By attaching Group meetings to other international assemblies such as SSC meetings, congresses or symposia, it is often possible to gather enough representatives for a useful meeting. Before full or partial group meetings take place, the SSC Chairman and Executive Officer should be notified and invited to attend; in any case a report or minutes of the meeting should be sent to them. In spite of the difficulties, all avenues should be explored for holding a full Group meeting at least once (and preferably at least once every three years), since such gatherings are usually extremely productive. Whenever possible, such meetings should produce written scientific reports on conservation status and ecology, which, when edited, should be published as the proceedings of the meeting. Such meetings should also aim to produce Action Plans defining priorities and needs for conservation actions.

FUNDING

A word about money: Obviously, there are expenses involved in being a Group Chairman. Given the size of SSC and the number of groups, it is impossible to fund each group. If the Chairman can utilize institutional support on behalf of his IUCN duties, as many do, then he or she has an operating advantage. Secretarial services, photocopying and postage may often be subsidized in this manner. Other Chairmen, lacking institutional bases, seek support from a friendly NGO, agency or private patron. Even a relatively small but reliable contribution can make regular group operations possible.

Active fund raising may be undertaken if expenses are greater. The role of Group Chairman is, however, voluntary, and no one receives a salary or other remuneration for running a Specialist Group.

In order to attend meetings, Chairmen are expected to raise their own travel funds. In some countries (such as the USA), out-of-pocket expenses may be tax-deductible if the conservation work thus undertaken bears upon one's profession. Occasionally, discretionary funds might be available from SSC to attend a given meeting should one's attendance be crucial and should no other source exist. It is intended that new Specialist Groups will receive some one-time financial assistance from IUCN with which to establish their operating procedures. Thereafter, groups should aim to become self-sustaining.

The SSC discretionary funds mentioned above are a small allowance made available to the Commission Chairman annually from IUCN to help with the costs of running the Commission. The amount is sufficient to allow only a few small, selective grants for Group purposes during each year.

A new "SSC Fund" is also being established within the IUCN framework to receive contributions toward an endowment whose income will thereafter provide an expanding source of funds for Group and other SSC activities.

Concerning WWF project funding, the "Conservation Programme for Sustainable Development" is neither a budget nor an allocation but a selected "wish list". Funds granted may at times only be "seed money", which not only helps get a project off the ground, but may provide the basis for obtaining additional governmental and non-governmental support. Groups that early in the year submit solid projects with real conservation promise as shown in an Action Plan stand the best chance of getting their projects funded by WWF. It is also wise to seek funding from a number of sources simultaneously so as not to lose time by taking WWF funding for granted.

Best wishes,

Grenville L.L. Lucas
Chairman SSC

March 1982
SSC/#52j