

# Small Mammal Protection in Europe

## Gustav H. Kirk

Britain lags behind many European countries in the protection of wildlife other than birds, although there is a move now to promote a general wildlife protection bill which could be used to protect particular species as and when the need arose. In this article Herr Kirk, who has written a book on mammal protection in Europe, has listed the European countries in which particular small mammals are protected.

Over a century ago, in 1868, the autonomous Diet of Galicia (the part of Poland under Austrian rule after the Partition) promulgated two laws, one to protect many species of birds and bats, the other the marmot and the chamois in the Tatra mountains. This was on the initiative of Dr. Eugeniusz Janota and Professor Dr. Maksymilian Sila Nowicki. The first regulation was never put into force, but the second has been strictly observed, and has saved these two mammals from extinction; both are still to be found in that part of the Carpathians (Kawecki, 1968).

In 1813 Dr. Johann Philipp Achilles Leisler of Hanau in Germany, after whom Leisler's bat is named, proposed the protection of insectivorous bats, but not until after 1900 was there any legislation. Bats are now legally protected in the following countries: Hungary since 1901, Finland 1923, Denmark 1931, Liechtenstein 1933, Portugal 1934, Germany 1936 (Prussia 1933), Austria 1939, Italy 1939, Yugoslavia 1947, Poland 1952, USSR 1960, Bulgaria 1962, Czechoslovakia 1965, Switzerland 1967 and Sweden 1968. They are not protected in Iceland, Norway, Great Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium, France, Spain, Albania, Greece, Roumania (Kirk, 1968\*).

Hedgehogs are protected in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, and in Czechoslovakia and Poland outside pheasant breeding stations. Shrews are protected in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland; the common mole in Germany (with restrictions), Austria (the Tyrol only), Poland (outside closed gardens and nurseries), Belgium.

The weasel *Mustela nivalis* is protected in East Germany, Austria (the Tyrol only), Poland and USSR; the stoat *M. erminea* in Austria (the Tyrol only), Poland and Yugoslavia; the European Mink *M. lutreola* in Slovakia and Poland. The polecat *M. putorius* in Liechtenstein.

The common dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* is protected in Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Poland and Sweden; the fat dormouse *Glis glis* in West Germany, Austria and Poland; the forest dormouse *Dryomys nitedula* in West Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland; the Tatra vole *Pitymys tatricus* in Slovakia; the root vole *Microtus oeconomus* in Slovakia; the harvest mouse *Micromys minutus*

\* Review in ORYX X, 2, p. 134, 1969.

in Austria (Salzburg only); the northern birch mouse *Sicista betulina* in Slovakia and Sweden; the southern birch mouse *Sicista subtilis* in Austria (the Burgenland only).

### References

- KIRK, G. 1968 Säugetierschutz (Erhaltung, Bewahrung, Schutz) Therio-  
phylaxe (Mammal Preservation). Gustav Fischer Verlag, Stuttgart.
- KAWECKI, Z. 1968 A Hundred Years of Modern Nature Protection in  
Poland (1868–1968). *Przeład Zoologiczny*, XII (3): 249–261.
- LEISLER, J. P. A. 1813 Letter to von Wildungen about the protection of  
bats. Reprinted in Kirk 1968.

### Short Reviews

*Penguin Guide to British Zoos* (5s), by Geoffrey Schomberg, Secretary of the Federation of Zoological Gardens, is useful, informative and clearly set out for quick consultation. Facts, such as the size of the zoo, times of opening, charges, catering facilities, bus routes, etc., are followed by a (usually brief) account of the zoo's special features and aims—if any. The author can be caustic: 'The owner claims that he has the largest tiger in Europe. If this tiger is more than forty-two inches at the shoulder he probably has. What is certain, however, is that the enclosures are neither the largest in Europe nor in Britain'.

*A Study of the Crested Tinamou of Argentina*, by Wayne H. Bohl, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Washington D.C., is a special scientific report on a game bird that has been selected for 'trial liberation' in the USA as part of the official programme to provide more game species for hunters, especially in habitats that are 'game-deficient' and those that have been so changed by man that native species can no longer survive there.

*The General Pedigree Book of the Przewalski Horse*, edited by Dr Jiri Volf and published by the Prague Zoological Garden, shows that on January 1, 1970, there were in captivity 161 Przewalski horses—67 stallions and 94 mares—in 43 breeding stations. In England and Wales they are in London, Whipsnade, Woburn and Colwyn Bay. Two were captured in the wild, one in 1938 and one in 1947.

*Africa's Bane*, by T. A. M. Nash (Collins, 42s), is an account of the tsetse fly and its effects on man and his domestic animals. It takes no account of the wildlife conservation angle or implications, for while the tsetse may bring disease and death to domestic animals, the wild animals, some of which are carriers, are unaffected.

*The Life of the Emu*, by Maxine Eastman (Angus and Robertson, 37s 6d), is a detailed account of long observations in the field of Australia's largest flightless bird, profusely illustrated with the author's photographs, one or two in colour. The emu is one of the species in which the male incubates the eggs and raises the chicks.

*British and European Birds in Colour*, by Bertel Bruun and Arthur Singer (Hamlyn, 25s), is a paperback edition of the large volume reviewed by Lord Hurcomb in the last ORYX, page 264.