HSBC, BGCI, Earthwatch and WWF
Launch Investing in Nature

HSBC, one of the world’s largest financial services organizations, is creating a $50 million partnership with Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), Earthwatch and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) entitled “Investing in Nature.” Launched in February, Investing in Nature will help save 20,000 rare plant species from extinction, resuscitate three of the world’s major rivers, train 200 scientists, and send 2,000 staff to work on vital conservation research projects worldwide.

Plants are one of the world’s greatest renewable resources. They provide food, fiber, medicines, timber and fuel, helping to maintain the ecological balance of the planet. Many species, however, face extinction. HSBC and Botanic Gardens Conservation International are working together to protect threatened species. Over the next five years, a living gene bank will be created in botanic gardens worldwide, protecting 20,000 endangered plant species. Also underway is an effort to revitalize conservation programs in 16 botanic gardens in Argentina, Brazil, India, Indonesia, and the Middle East.

HSBC and WWF are working in partnership to breathe life into some of the world’s major freshwater systems. “Freshwater is the world’s next big environmental issue,” says Garo Batumanian, CEO of WWF-Brazil. The goal is to restore around two million hectares of river basin habitats in the Amazon in Brazil, the Rio Grande in the U.S., and the Yangtze in China by 2007. These projects will return the natural flow of rivers, protect fish and other freshwater species, and secure fresh drinking water for millions. “We must act now to avoid potentially devastating implications for people, plants and animals right around the world,” says Batumanian.

HSBC and Earthwatch will mobilize 2,000 fieldworkers to become active conservationists in the field and back at home. Earthwatch will place these staff, and a further 200 young scientists in need of training, on conservation projects worldwide. They will work on environmental issues as diverse as researching why populations of frogs are threatened with extinction in Australia, to monitoring the effects of acid rain in the Czech Republic, putting in place reforestation programs.

For more information, visit the Investing in Nature Web site at http://www.investinginnature.org/.

Future Meetings

The “International Colloquium on Medicinal Plants, Health, and Environment” and the “International Workshop on Sustainable Trade and Conservation of Medicinal Plants Resources” will be held in Rabat, Morocco on 2-4 May 2002, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture and the University of Rabat. The Symposium will focus on issues relating to medicinal plants for traditional human and veterinary medicine, aromatic and cosmetic plants, phytomedicines and other plants-derived natural products. The meeting will attended by government and donor representatives, scientists, researchers, policy-makers, conservationists, NGOs, private companies, health professionals, herbalists and traditional practitioners. For more information, visit the Web site <http://www.conserveafrica.org>.

The Society for Conservation GIS (SCGIS) will be hosting “The 5th Annual SCGIS Conference” on 5-7 July 2002 to discuss and promote local and global conservation of natural and cultural heritage. A diverse conference agenda will explore a variety of issues ranging from the technical applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in conservation to recurring philosophical and ethical issues faced by conservationists throughout the world. The conference will be held at La Casa Del Zorro in Borrego Springs, about two hours east of San Diego. The
theme of this year’s conference is “Embracing Diversity.” Presenters will be encouraged to address the community building efforts of their conservation activities, emphasizing the efforts made by government agencies, academics, nonprofits, activists, and commercial groups to work together and communicate. The conference format will include concurrent sessions of formal presentations, posters sessions, discussion panels, user group meetings, hands-on training sessions, technical workshops, and organized socials. Deadline for abstract submission is 15 April 2002. For details and additional information visit the conference Web site at <http://www.scgis.org/2002_conference/conference_2002.html>.

Invasive species are an enormous threat to native plants, animals and ecosystems all around the world. In the United States, invasive plants and animals are threatening the environment and economy. Nearly half of the species listed as threatened or endangered are at risk due to competition with or predation by non-native species, and the non-native species are costing the country nearly $125 billion per year. This year, the Chicago Botanic Garden’s annual conservation symposium will focus on invasive plants. The conference, entitled “Invasive Plants: Global Issues, Local Challenges” will be held 27-30 October 2002 at the Congress Plaza Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. Registration materials will be available in July 2002. For more information and a call for papers, visit the conference Web site at <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/symposia/jmpsyrmp.html>. For more information, contact Dr. Kay Havens, Director, Institute for Plant Conservation Biology, Chicago Botanic Garden, via e-mail at khavens@chicagobotanic.org or phone at (847) 835-8378.

**New Publications**

Over the past decades, the fascinating phenomenon of animal migration has been studied applying new, highly sophisticated methods. Surprising new insights into this old phenomenon have been revealed by using satellite tracking, genetic analysis and new information technologies. “New Perspectives for Monitoring Migratory Animals - Improving Knowledge for Conservation,” edited by Klaus Riede, illustrate how these new technologies might help to improve the conservation of migratory species. They were presented at a workshop bringing together scientists and conservationists, who met during the 20th anniversary of the “Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals” (Bonn Convention), celebrated in Bonn, June 1999. This convention covers a wide variety of migratory taxa, including mammals, birds, sea turtles, fishes and insects. Protection of their habitats, routes and staging areas against old and new threats requires a firm stance of conservationists, which has to be backed up by hard data. Several conservation programs tailored to the conservation of migratory species are presented here and illustrate the great potential of these data sets. For more information, visit <http://www.lv-h.de/bfn>; Tel: 02501/801-300; Fax: 02501/801-351. Available in paperback: ISBN 3-7843-3819-4, €12. 164 pp.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) announces the publication of the report “Global Trade and Consumer Choices: Coral Reefs in Crisis.” The report features papers by five experts on the global trade in coral reef species and coral reef conservation. The papers analyze the causes and consequences of trade in coral reef animals and the role of the U.S. as both a major importer and leader in trade and conservation efforts. The report also presents solutions to reduce the negative impacts of trade on reefs while promoting long-term benefits to local communities through sustainable resource use. Authors address scientific concerns such as how to determine sustainability of resource use, policy issues (how to certify and regulate trade), and public awareness. The report is available free of charge at <http://www.aaas.org/international/ssa> or from Africa Program, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005; Tel: (202) 326-6651; Fax: 202-289-4958; E-mail: africa@aaas.org.

**Current Literature**


Balke, M. 2001. *Papuadessus pakdjoko* - a new genus and species of rheobiont diving beetle from New Guinea of potential use for environmental impact assessments (Coleoptera,


The Biological Conservation Newsletter is a monthly publication provided free of charge. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, contact Dr. Gary Krupnick, Department of Systematic Biology - Botany, Smithsonian Institution, PO Box 37012, NMNH MRC-166, Washington DC 20013-7012, or send e-mail to krupnick.gary@nmnh.si.edu. You may also subscribe to receive e-mail notification when new issues are posted to the web. Send an e-mail message to listserv@sivm.si.edu containing only the following text: “SUBSCRIBE BCN FIRSTNAME LASTNAME”. For more information, go to the web page http://rathbun.si.edu/bcn.

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