

P.O. Box 67981, Los Angeles, California 90067 • Tel. (213) 274-3169



DIRECTORS

Stefanie Powers
Deane Johnson
Don Hunt
Iris Breidenbend
Paul Ziffren



P.O. BOX 67981, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A. 90067
Telephone (213) 274-3169

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Dear Friends,

A few months ago, I had the great pleasure of joining a group of scientists on an expedition to some of the more remote parts of Indonesia, to study the wildlife and report on the condition of the habitat.



Among the most exotic species we viewed were the Komodo Dragons. We visited the National Zoo to learn of conservation efforts there. We visited rehabilitation centers for Orang-utans; we trekked through dense forest, tracking Sumatran Rhino, but could not spot one in the wild; and we spent five days river rafting down the Alas River to Study the condition of the rain-forest habitat. The sad news is that, even within Park boundaries, we saw slash and burn, logging operations and fisherman's traps.

Clearly, mankind has impacted on every remote area of the World. There is no more wild; thus, more than ever we must assume our responsibilities as custodians of the natural world, without which our own species has little chance to survive.

Education is a powerful tool and with your help, our efforts in Kenya will have an impact.

Warmest regards,

Stefanie Powers



The largest monitor lizard in the world is found on the tiny Island of Komodo in the Indonesian Archipelago, South East of the Islands of Java and Bali. Little was known about these formidable creatures until the present century, although studies of fossil remains indicate that 60 million years ago, relatives of these creatures roamed over Wyoming!

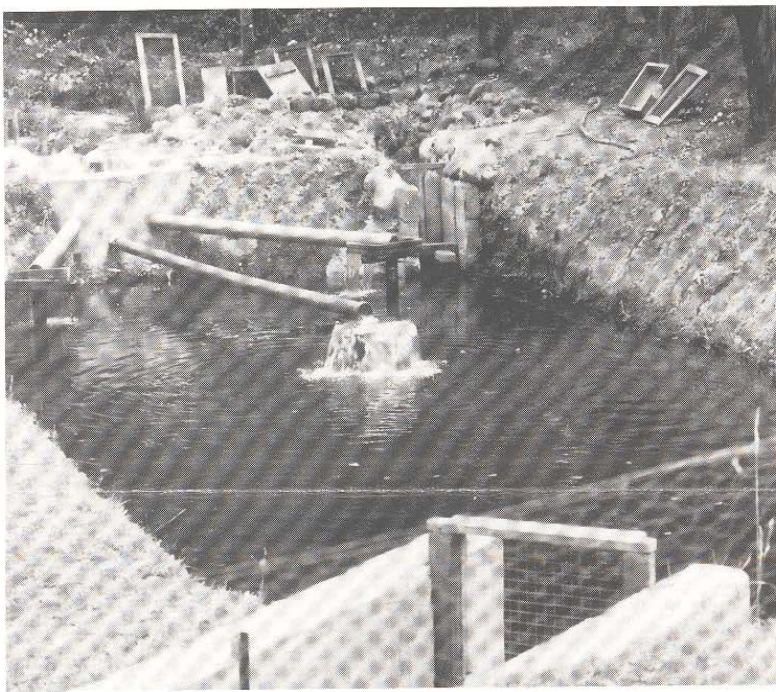
It is hard to imagine that these 10 foot long, 200 lb. lizards lay tiny eggs that incubate for 8 months. The young, mere inches in length, hatch and scamper up available trees to spend their youth inside a variety of holes. Once the baby dragons are too large for their "tree houses", they begin their life as a ground lizard and their diet changes from insects and rodents to larger animals and carrion.

Since the dragon is the largest meat eating mammal on the Island , they are free from competition from higher animals and roam their habitat with the arrogance of their position. As with their close relative the snake, dragons use their forked tongues, together with the smelling organ in the roof of the mouth to keep track of their prey from a distance. Also, like the snake, they have a detachable jaw, allowing them to swallow their prey whole. In fact, the Komodo Dragon is an extremely efficient predator, equipt with a variety of skills and devices. The saliva, which is generously produced, has an extremely toxic effect. Smaller prey can be paralyzed



from the bite of a dragon, while large prey eventually die of toxemia. The dragons have a choice of when to consume their victims; and since the their teeth are largely for tearing, they can also leave the meat until it has rotted and is easier to devour.

It is difficult to conjure a feeling of affection for this most dramatic of reptiles; however, one can stand in awe and respect for the natural order that produced a creature of this kind and the role it plays in the chain.

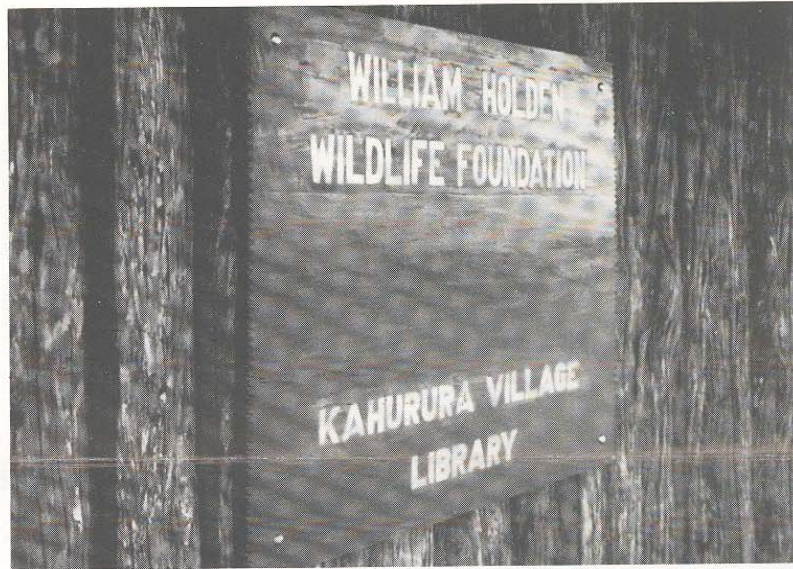


Trout Pond

Our first "cash" crop was realized by the sale of trout from our own trout pond. This will be reinvested in more fingerlings. With this program, students and adults can see how nature can be used, not abused. The adjacent stream provides water, which is "borrowed" and refed back into the stream, after circulating through the trout pond. Furthermore, the tiny slip of land that the "farm" occupies has very little crop potential. By this project, we prove how a little imagination can provide a viable business, whose impact on nature is not at all negative.

Kahurura Library

The first of our village libraries has completed construction and is currently being stocked with books. We can use all the books we can get. If your garage contains any atlas, National Geographics, or any books or magazines that stress knowledge of nature, PLEASE contact our Office. Perhaps, someone you know has a group that would organize a "paper" drive for magazines, etc. We need all sorts of books for ages 5-19 years.



Just a reminder that the Foundation has WHWF t-shirts! The shirts sell for \$10.00 plus postage (\$2.00 handling).

Checks can be made out to:
THE WILLIAM HOLDEN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
P.O. Box 67981, Los Angeles, CA 90067

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