

nium risk to humans. He stated that something fell in that area, but it is not known if it was the plutonium capsule or only a piece of the probe.

The following day it was reported that a B-707 Condor, an electronic vigilance plane of the Air Force, was headed for the zone where the probe fell. This report stated that a portion of the probe landed some 1,255 nautical miles northwest of Santiago at latitude 31 South, longitude 93 03 West.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 21 November 1996

Editor's note: other latitudes and longitudes have been stated in Chilean papers, and none are quite the same as either of the above. There was also a report that a piece of the probe landed off the coast of Peru or maybe in the desert of Northern Chile.

The President of the Court of Appeals in Valparaíso, Manuel Silva Ibáñez, is urging the construction of a prison on Easter Island, saying that the project should be given a high priority and professional prison guards should be stationed there. He noted that now the *carabineros* guard the jail, something that they are not trained for nor normally expected to do.

The current conditions are deplorable. The regular jail annex is more than 70 years old, there is no section for women prisoners, and it is located inside the area where the *carabineros* live with their families.

In 1996, Silva Ibáñez stated that 180 criminal cases and 230 civil cases were handled by the local court; 71 involved minors, 58 cases involved inebriation, and there were 212 minor police actions (presumably traffic tickets). The most common arrests are for robberies and fights resulting in injuries.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 13 December 1996

The Toromiro (*Sophora toromiro*): an international program to assess, manage and restore biodiversity

Alistair Culham, Wolfram Lobin, Mike Mauder, Catherine Orliac and Georg Zizka

The Toromiro (*Sophora toromiro*) is a species of the leguminosae, Faboidcae, endemic to Easter Island. The history of this treelet by now has become quite well known: For decades (since the beginning of this century), there probably remained only one living plant on Easter Island. This last specimen disappeared in the 60s, and the species seemed to have become extinct. By chance, 5 plants survived in the Botanical Gardens of Göteborg, Viña del Mar and Bonn.

The international Toromiro Management Group was founded to combine various fields of expertise and research to prepare the reintroduction of the Toromiro to Easter Island and—if possible—assure its future survival in combination with conservation and restoration of the remaining idiochorous flora.

The few surviving specimens were propagated by various methods and, in the first step, distributed to additional Botanical Gardens to assure the species' survival. The specimens were successfully propagated by seeds, cuttings and in vitro. After few unsuccessful attempts in the past, 170 offspring

were brought back to Easter Island in 1995 for experimental plantation. With the recent upcoming of other "Toromiros" of doubtful origin, a fast and absolutely reliable identification of species and genotype became an urgent need. The best methods to identify the specimens—even to the single clones—turned out to be DNA studies (RAPD and Microsatellite). For future management of as high genetic variety as possible, the documentation of the represented genotypes is of vital importance for propagation and reintroduction.



The CONAF plant nursery at Mataverí, Easter Island (photo: José Miguel Ramírez)

Of importance for the intended reintroduction has been the production of a flora of Flowering Plants and investigation of its changes through Man as well as wood-anatomical and archaeobotanical studies of subfossil plant remains to reconstruct the former flora and vegetation of the island. Important information was also taken from palynological investigations by John Flenley and collaborators.

With the data and the plant material in hand, for the future survival of the Toromiro and of the few other remaining endemic and idiochorous species of the island, the TMG is supporting the setting up of a Botanical Garden on Easter Island. This garden could also be used to collect and conserve the old local cultivars of plants used by the islanders and thus contribute to education and agronomy of the Island.

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND

The second technical mission to Orongo, which WMF had tentatively scheduled for the past month of October, had to be delayed in order to resolve technical and logistic problems.

The objective of this second mission is to determine the exact location of the sound rock front into which the retaining wall has to be anchored. The construction of the retaining wall along the sea-side and the reconstruction of the original platform around the Mata Ngarau sacred precinct were the solution proposed for the stabilization of this site by the first WMF mission to Orongo in 1995 (1, 2). This mission was carried out by Profs Vouvé and Clement of the University of Bordeaux I, with the collaboration of Prof. Marchetti of the University of Chile.

To determine the sound rock front behind the weathered exposed basalt, analysis of drillings taken at the site are necessary. These drillings require equipment sufficiently powerful to bore deep enough without inducing any damage to the site. The identification of such equipment (drilling



The sacred center of 'Orongo with its carved boulders

machine, core drillers, cooling water reservoir, etc.) is currently underway and has taken longer than anticipated. Furthermore, the selected equipment will have to be transported from mainland Chile to the island and alternative transportation systems have to be investigated to keep the budget of this interim mission within a reasonable amount. It is hoped that this second mission will take place before mid-year 1997.

References

- (1) A.E.Charola. 1995. "WMF Sponsors French Mission to Help in the Preservation of Orongo" RNJ 9(4): 123-124
- (2) A.E.Charola. 1996. "WMF continues support to help in the preservation of Orongo" RNJ 10(3): 68

A.E.Charola
Consultant WMF Easter Island Program
Great Neck, NY, December 9th, 1996

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

Please allow me to correct a couple of minor matters in Jo Anne Van Tilburg's article on the transporting of statues, *Rapa Nui Journal*, Vol. 10(4), footnote 3.

Although it is no doubt that the Fijian *drua* (double canoe) was the largest and finest traditional vessel in the Pacific, and possibly the fastest too, it is not correct to refer to it as a Polynesian vessel, since Fijians are not normally classified as Polynesians.

Regarding the canoe named Rusaivanua ("perished inland"), it is not true to say that it was "too large to move," since it was successfully launched. It was given that name in triumph by its builders to taunt their critics who had claimed that it was too ambitious and would rot where it was being carved.

For the record, the Reverend Thomas Williams, who was stationed in Lakeba at the time, measured the Rusaivanua as follows: length 118 feet, deck 50 x 24 feet, height from keel to deck 6 feet, height of deck-house 6 feet, length of mast 68 feet, length of yards 90 feet. It was built in Vulaga and sailed to Lakeba on 19th November 1832 by its owner Roko Taliai, the Tui Nayau, paramount chief of Lau.

Dr Paul Geraghty, Director,
Institute of Fijian Language and Culture.

BOOK REVIEWS

☞ Moon Travel Handbooks have just issued four new blockbusters that deal with the Pacific or Southeast Asia: *New Zealand Handbook* (Fourth Edition); *Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos Handbook* (First Edition); *Micronesian Handbook* (Fourth Edition), and the *Thailand Handbook* (Second Edition). We hope to have in-depth reviews on *The Micronesian Handbook* the *Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos Handbook* and the *Thailand Handbook* in our next issue.

☞ *New Zealand Handbook* (Fourth Edition) by Jane King. Moon Travel Handbooks, PO Box 3040, Chico, CA 95927 US \$19.95. Soft cover. *New Zealand Handbook* has 82 maps, including maps of cities, towns, and national parks. Black/white photographs and line drawings are augmented by 8 pages of color photos. There is a book list and index.

The book is divided into North Island and South Island, and includes information on outdoor recreation, national parks and reserves, museums, ideas for traveling with children, and many "off the beaten path" destinations. The author focuses on outdoor activities with stress on conservation, tramping, mountaineering, river rafting, cycling, skiing, river rafting and bungy jumping, to name but a few.

The general tourist information is well covered. Under accommodations, the author stresses budget travel including home stay, hostels, inns, and camping places. This guide is aimed toward the younger traveler with back-pack and an interest in sports. A few "higher end" hotels are mentioned but first-class hotels are not listed individually; instead the reader is referred to visitor centers for this information.

The entire prehistory of the Maori is contained in less than one page of text and there is no mention of the rock carving and painting sites found in New Zealand. If this omission is due to objections by the present-day Maori, it is not mentioned. The reading list does not reference the classic book on the prehistoric rock art of New Zealand by Trotter and McCulloch.

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Bellwood, Peter (editor). 1966. *Indo-Pacific Prehistory: The Chiang Mai Papers*, Volume 1. Proceedings of the 15th Congress of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 5-12 January 1964. Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association 14. Canberra, Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200, Australia. Softcover, 249 pages, contains 25 papers presented at the 15th Congress. Future volumes are to follow.

Bierbach, Annette and Horst Cain. 1996. *Tangaroa: Another Final Demystification*. *Rongorongo Studies*, Vol. 6(2):67-76. (Part 1; to be continued in next volume).

Bulletin of the International String Figure Association, Vol.3, 1996. ISFA Press, PO Box 5134, Pasadena CA. This issue contains 3 papers concerning Polynesia: see Maude, Shishido, and Rjabchikov.

Le Bulletin du Cercle d'Etudes sur l'île de Pâques et la Polynésie. No. 10, October 1996. Délégation de la Polynésie Française à Paris, 28, boulevard Saint-Germain, 75005, Paris. The yearly subscription for this bulletin amounts to French Francs 250.00 or US \$60 for six issues and specialized papers. They can now be reached via email: hlb@ppm.u-psud.fr

Buckley, Michael. 1996. *Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos Handbook*, First Edition. Moon Travel Handbooks, Chico, CA. \$18.95,