



BY AGUAMALA
ART BY K BUNNY

Species Obituary

Of the millions of species that have perished over the years, the *Journal* dedicates these pages to name just a few that have left us in the last 30 years. Though much larger lists exist, none can ever be complete. The roll call of species sacrificed on the altar of industrial civilization grows by at least six organisms every hour.

The Pyrenean Ibex, a kind of wild goat, once ranged the Pyrenees mountains from France to Spain, spreading through the Basque region, Navarre, Aragon and Catalonia. The last of its kind, a female named Celia, died under a fallen tree in 2000. Her only companion for much of her life had died one year before from old age. In an odd bit of scientific madness, the Pyrenean Ibex is also the only species to have become momentarily “unextinct” in 2009 when a cloned female, extracted from the DNA of Celia, was born and lived for seven minutes before dying of breathing complications.

The Atitlan Grebe was a large, flight-impaired bird endemic to Lake Atitlan in Guatemala. Their diet consisted almost entirely of crab until the introduction of largemouth bass into the lake. The Grebes were well known locally for their very elaborate and dramatic mating rituals. Their extinction has been linked to reed cutting along breeding sites, loss of habitat through tourist development, falling lake levels, and the murder of the game

warden of the national park around Lake Atitlan. The species was declared extinct in 2008.

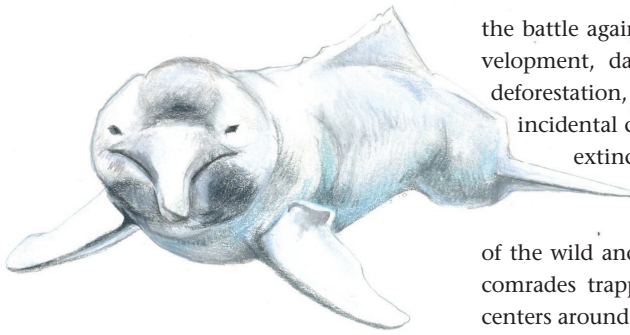
The Levuana Moth was declared extinct in 1996. It was considered by many a pest to coconut plantations in its home in Fiji and as stowaways of commercial traffic in other tropical islands. A biological control program, (aka, ecocidal psychopathology) helped strip the Earth of the beautiful blue moth.

The West African Black Rhino, sometimes nick-named "Hooked-lip rhino," was native to northern Cameroon, where they enjoyed their favorite habitats: bushy plains, rugged hills and scrub lands. They were declared extinct in 2006. We fondly remember these shy and solitary creatures with the prehensile lip. We'll forever miss the funny way in which they would attack trees, rocks and the tourist Jeeps of yuppy eco-adventurers by mistake due to their poor eyesight. They were inspiring and wonderful mothers, known for being very affectionate towards their young. The Earth will miss their characteristic way of feeding, which had an effect like pruning shears and served a very important role in their habitat (as heavy browsers), restricting woody plants from over-growing, and thus allowing for grasses to grow, providing food for many other animals of the plains. They were amazing and inspiring

creatures and a huge piece of our hearts and of the world is forever gone with them. Poachers hunted the animals for decades for their horns to supply markets in Yemen and Asia, where they are believed by some to possess aphrodisiacal and medicinal powers. Our eyes, hearts and actions now turn to the African Northern White Rhino, who are also looking extinction in the face. Ground and aerial surveys of their last known holdout, in Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, identified just four Northern White Rhinos left.

The 'Alala, a large, dark and heavy-billed Hawaiian crow, last lived in harmony with their habitat in the Kona Forest of Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge, where they upheld their important role in the delicate balance of their biodiverse home (previously they were also found in wet 'ohi'a-koa forest, scrub, and rangelands). The planet will miss and mourn the omnivorous 'Alala who were especially fond of the fruit of native understory plants, but also greatly enjoyed invertebrates, eggs and nestlings of other forest birds, as well as nectar, flowers and carrion. These mysterious crows were rather secretive, often detected first by their strange-sounding calls, but sometimes seen flying high above the forest. Like other crows, the 'Alala were raucous, gregarious and





vocal. Individuals were known to form long-term pair bonds (but extra-pair copulations had also been observed), and both sexes participated in nest construction. The small, wild community decreased dramatically in past decades, declining from 11 or 12 birds in 1992 to just two individuals as of April 2002. They lost their battle against habitat destruction due to logging and agriculture, severe degradation of native plant life by introduced pigs, predation by introduced rats and mongoose, avian malaria and pox diseases transmitted by introduced mosquitoes, hunting, and susceptibility to Toxoplasmosis (carried by feral cats). The 'Alala were declared extinct in 2004. Historically, at least five crow species occurred in Hawaii and the 'Alala were the last surviving. A part of all living beauty and inspiration dies with them. They will be greatly missed.

The Baiji Dolphin was endemic to the fresh-waters of the Yangtze River in China. Nicknamed "Goddess of the Yangtze," the Baiji were included in Chinese records dating back 2,000 years. The Baiji is remembered as an easily frightened and shy creature and a devourer of long, eel-like catfish. Left behind to mourn are their close friends, the Finless Porpoise, with whom the Baiji shared a special bond. Before extinction the two species swam together and bonded in friendship. We will never forget their beautiful, thin, long nose—turned up at the end. Sadly, the Baiji lost



the battle against pollution, industrial development, dam construction, riverbank deforestation, overfishing, hunting and incidental capture—they were declared extinct in 2006. Their spirit lives on in our resistance as we attempt to save what's left of the wild and our dearly loved cetacean comrades trapped in aquatic amusement centers around the world.

The Holdridge's Toad was a peculiar little black toad once endemic to Heredia's Chompipe Mountain Range in Costa Rica. The universe will forever miss their rugged, bumpy skin and bright orange-and-black markings. They always did things their own way. Their extinction in 2007 leaves a hole of sorrow surrounded by mystery. They were deaf and mute, a very strange trait among frogs—unlike most species, they did not communicate through noise, which means that they emitted no call or song. According to experts, this only makes sense if the species developed in an area with so much noise that other forms of communication were necessary. Mysteriously, the Chompipe Mountain environment is not loud, and is the only area where these peculiar toads were ever found. The Earth will sadly

never again see another mating frenzy of raucous, passionate toad assemblies.

Aguamala is a radical criollita from Los Teques, Venezuela. She is an organizer with Everglades Earth First! and an editor on the Earth First! Journal Collective. In her spare time she speaks with crows, outdrinks her redneck comrades and cries with the ferocity of a soul at odds with the Earth-brutalizing industrialism machine. She has also worked on campaigns against borders and racism, and stands up to patriarchy and speciesism all day long.

A Small Cross Section of Species Extinctions 1979-2010

- Alaotra grebe (2010) Madagascar
- Madeiran large white butterfly (2007) Portuguese Archipelago
- Po'ouli bird (2004) Hawaii
- Spix macaw (2004) Brazil
- Australian gastric-brooding frog (2002)
- Southern day frog (2002) Australia
- Zanzibar leopard (1996) Tanzania
- Saint Croix racer (1994) Virgin Islands
- Lake Tahoe benthic stonefly (1994) California, Nevada
- Ochlockonee moccasinshell (1993) Florida, Georgia
- White catspaw mollusk (1993) US Midwest
- Fresno kangaroo rat (1992) California
- Chiricahua mudwort (1992) Arizona, New Mexico
- Four angeled palea flower (1991) Hawaii
- Curtus's pearly mussel (1990) Alabama, Mississippi
- Golden toad (1989) Costa Rica
- Little aguja pondweed (1989) Texas
- Amak Island song sparrow (1988) Alaska
- Cuyamaca raspberry (1988) California
- Dusky seaside sparrow (1987) Florida
- Eskimo curlew (1987) North America
- Large Kauai thrush (1987) Hawaii
- Valdina farms salamander (1987) Texas
- Bishops 'O'o bird (1986) Hawaii
- Narrow-leaved hoary pea (1985) Florida
- Oregon giant earthworm (1985)
- Rich Mountain cave beetle (1985) West Virginia
- San Gabriel Mountains blue butterfly (1985) California
- Guam white-throated ground dove (1984)
- Guam cardinal honey-eater (1984)
- Little Mariana fruit bat (1984) Guam
- Black spotted damselfish (1984) Galapagos
- 24-rayed sunstar (1984) Galapagos
- Hoffman jewelflower (1984) California
- Haha flower (1983) Hawaii
- Breckenridge Mountain slender salamander (1983) California
- Texas Henslow's sparrow (1983)
- Tecopa pupfish (1982) Mojave Desert
- Giffard's 'Ohe hedyleptan moth (1982) Hawaii
- Emerald seaslug (1981) Florida
- Virgin Islands screech owl (1980)
- Penasco least chipmunk (1980) New Mexico
- Dutch Alcon blue butterfly (1979) Netherlands
- Javan tiger (1979) Indonesia