

appreciable in the *K*-fractions. It should be noted that the particle spectrum in a sample collected a long time after the explosion is quite different from the original due to the change in settling rate with particle size. Thus the fact that the *K*-fractions sometimes constitute quite a large part of the samples does not contradict the explanation given above.

¹ Adams, C. E., *USNRDL-TR-209*, 1958.

² Sisefsky, J., *Nature*, **182**, 1437 (1958).

³ Sisefsky, J., *Brit. J. App. Phys.* (in the press).

⁴ Sisefsky, J., Report Res. Inst. Nat. Def. (in preparation).

⁵ May, R., and Schneider, H., *Atomkernenergie*, **4**, 28 (1959).

⁶ Sittkus, R., *Naturwiss.*, **46**, 399 (1959).

⁷ Prawitz, J., Report Res. Inst. Nat. Def. (in preparation).

⁸ Grummit, W. E., and Milton, G. M., *AECCL-453* (1957).

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A NEW SERVICE FOR NATURALISTS

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THE Intelligence Unit of the Council for Nature, which was set up in May 1959, with the aid of a grant of £5,000 a year for three years from the British Broadcasting Corporation, is now ready to deal with requests for information about field natural history in the United Kingdom. The Unit has a staff of four and maintains contact with active field naturalists and natural history societies in all parts of the United Kingdom, and is especially interested in their field work. Some two hundred of these societies are already members of the Council for Nature, and the Unit hopes, before long, also to extend its intelligence system to those societies which are not members.

The Unit will act as a clearing house rather than an information bureau and primary source of information. It will aim to pass inquirers on to the best sources of information and works of reference, rather than give direct answers to factual queries, though, of course, these will be given whenever possible. The sort of queries the Unit hopes to be asked are of the type: "Who are the leading experts on the otter or the peregrine falcon in the British Isles?" or "Who is an authority on the effects of toxic sprays on bird and insect life?", or "Who can say what is likely to be the effect on wild life in the vicinity of a nuclear power station on the coast of Suffolk?" Questions that can be looked up in a work of reference, such as "How long can an otter live?" or "What is the breeding season of the peregrine falcon?", will, it is hoped, not be directed at the Unit in too great numbers, as this will stultify the real aim of the service the Unit seeks to provide. The Unit will also not expect to be asked to identify specimens (though it will advise on where such help may be obtained), or to give advice relating to pets, domestic animals or cultivated plants.

The broader aims of the Intelligence Unit are to build up a picture of the field work being carried out by naturalists all over Britain, ascertain what gaps there are, and put naturalists working on similar problems in touch with each other. Among other services which the Unit provides for the Council is the editing of the Council's half-yearly bulletin, "News for Naturalists", the second issue of which is being published in December. This bulletin is not for sale, but is available free to member societies and their individual members.

The work of the films officer, Stanley Jeeves, covers the whole field of still and ciné photography by amateurs interested in natural history, but to start with is mainly concentrating on the ciné aspects. Recently, a most successful experimental beginners' course of instruction for amateur cinematographers

was held at the offices of the Council for Nature, in South Kensington. Twenty-three 'students' attended and heard talks on technique and equipment by Stanley Jeeves and on the work of the British Broadcasting Corporation Natural History Unit at Bristol, by Tony Soper. Afterwards, they watched films taken by three of their number, on vole damage, by Oliver Hook, on waxwings, by J. W. Carr, and on terns, by F. G. Hollands.

The experimental course was so successful that the Unit plans to organize another one on similar lines in the north of England, perhaps at Manchester, early in the New Year, and possibly also in Scotland. There will probably also be a two-day course, with a slightly more advanced syllabus, in London in the New Year, and this may also be repeated in the north. A still more ambitious scheme is planned for next May, when the Unit will hold a week's course for amateur cinematographers at Brantwood, Ruskin's Lake District home, which is now run by the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Manchester as an adult education centre. At this course it will be possible to give instruction actually in the field, and to make and edit one or more short films.

Another activity of the Films Section of the Unit is the organization of two competitions for amateur cinematographers interested in wild life. The first, for 35 mm. (and 16 mm. at 24 frames) films, is being organized jointly by the Council for Nature and the British Broadcasting Corporation, which has generously offered two prizes, £500 for a full-length 20-30-min. film, and £50 for a 3-8-min. sequence. This competition is not open to those who have already had more than 10 min. of consecutive film shown on television. The aim of the competition is to stimulate new talent in the field of natural history cinematography, of which, of course, the British Broadcasting Corporation, and especially its Natural History Unit at Bristol, are big consumers.

The second competition is for 8 mm. (and 16 mm. at 16 frames) film, and is primarily for the many amateurs who cannot yet aspire to a 16 mm. camera. The prizes are being presented by manufacturers of equipment, the first prize being a Paillard Bolex reflex camera worth about £400. Further information about both competitions and the instructional courses can be obtained from the Films Officer, Council for Nature, 41 Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7.

A further activity on the films side is the compiling of a comprehensive list of natural history films, and more especially those available for public showing. This is being carried out in collaboration with Mr. Michael Gwynne and the Botany Department of the University of Oxford.