Oryx

Latest issue: Plant conservation

By Cecilia Derrick, 22nd October 2026

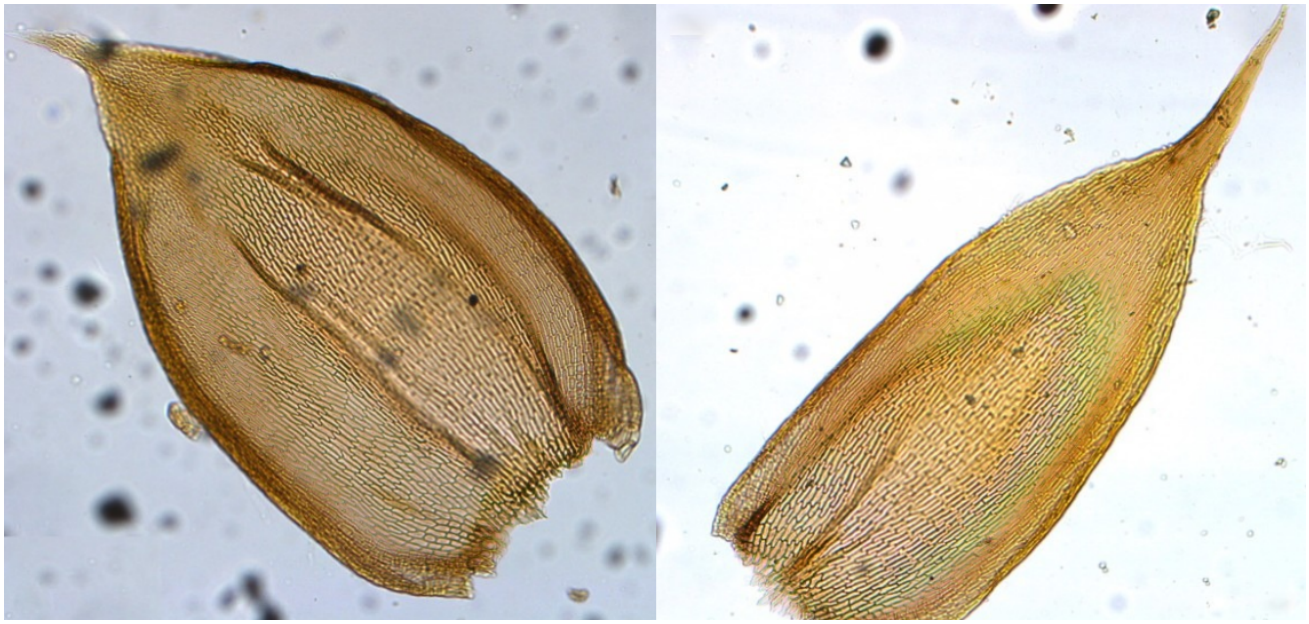
The latest issue of *Oryx* highlights the challenges and opportunities of conserving plant diversity in a rapidly changing world. The issue features studies documenting extraordinary plant richness in Tanzania's Ngezi–Vumawimbi Forest Reserve, the first extinction risk assessment of an Antarctic bryophyte, and urgent conservation concerns for the Critically Endangered Uzbek endemic *Astragalus centralis*. Other contributions report the rediscovery of plant species thought to be lost for decades or even centuries, including *Ravenea latisecta* in Madagascar and *Indianthus virgatus* in Sri Lanka, alongside efforts to restore the threatened *Plantago fengdouensis* in China. Beyond plant conservation, the issue presents research on species reintroductions, human–wildlife coexistence, conservation planning, and the status of threatened mammals, birds and other taxa across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Explore the full contents and our Editor's picks below:

Editor's picks

- First extinction risk assessment of a bryophyte species in Antarctica — *Amorim et al.*
- Restoration of a lost species: *Plantago fengdouensis* in the Yangtze River Basin, China — *Chen et al.*
- Successful reintroduction of the land snail *Poecilozonites bermudensis* on the Bermuda archipelago — *Outerbridge et al.*
- Anthropogenic foods sustain free-roaming cats on a Mediterranean island, but neutering reduces wild bird consumption — *Cecchetti et al.*

"When people think of Antarctica, they probably picture ice sheets and penguins rather than plants. Yet the continent is home to around 116 species of bryophyte, including mosses and liverworts. Despite this, no native Antarctic plant species had ever been assessed for extinction risk. In this issue of *Oryx*, we present the first such assessment, which concludes that *Roaldia revoluta* (Pylaisiaceae) is Endangered and has not been documented in any Antarctic Specially Protected Area. Elsewhere in the issue, there's positive news for molluscs, with a report on the reintroduction of the Critically Endangered land snail *Poecilozonites bermudensis* on Nonsuch Island, Bermuda, following a successful breeding programme. There is further good news from China, where the endemic plant *Plantago fengdouensis*, once presumed extinct in the wild after the construction of the Three Gorges Dam, is now being re-established thanks to the discovery of a previously unknown wild population and the successful propagation of collected seeds. There are also insights on how to manage the ecological downsides of free-roaming cats on islands. In an Italian study, cats that were neutered consumed less wild bird prey, including migratory songbirds and individuals from the largest Scopoli's shearwater breeding colony in Europe, and instead relied more heavily on pet food." — Viola Ross-Smith, Editor.



Close-up views of small leaves of *R. revoluta* under light microscopy. See Amorim et al.

Plant conservation

- New assessment reveals extraordinary plant diversity at risk in Ngezi–Vumawimbi Forest Reserve, Pemba Island, Zanzibar, Tanzania — *Orsenigo et al.*
- First extinction risk assessment of a bryophyte species in Antarctica — *Amorim et al.*
- The Uzbek endemic *Astragalus centralis* E. Sheld. is Critically Endangered and at serious risk of extinction without urgent conservation action — *Khabibullaev et al.*
- Rediscovery of *Ravenea latisecta* Jum. (Arecaceae) after a century, and the conservation implications — *Aureglia et al.*
- Rediscovery of the monotypic *Indianthus virgatus* (Marantaceae) in Sri Lanka after 170 years: a conservation priority — *Vishnu et al.*
- Restoration of a lost species: *Plantago fengdouensis* in the Yangtze River Basin, China — *Chen et al.*

Behind the cover

The Ngezi–Vumawimbi Forest Reserve is the largest remaining patch of natural vegetation on Pemba Island, Zanzibar, Tanzania. This evergreen coastal forest is dominated by *Intsia bijuga* (pictured) of the family Fabaceae, a tree valued for its high-quality timber. Its native range is from Madagascar through to Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific, and it is categorized as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List. Formerly, this species was only known from Pemba Island based on a single herbarium specimen, collected in 1929, but in a 2024 baseline biodiversity survey, researchers found *I. bijuga* widely distributed in the forest. The survey revealed a hitherto unrecognized plant diversity, including species likely new to science, endemic and threatened species, and species not previously recorded on Pemba Island. One of the areas richest in plant diversity is designated for development of a new tourist resort, which would replace most of the unique plant and animal communities found in the Vumawimbi evergreen coastal forest, highlighting the urgent need for conservation measures and sustainable development. (Photograph © Simone Orsenigo)

Editorial

Towards a more open, inclusive and creative conservation journal — *Simon Pooley et al.*

In the editorial, several of our Editors (Pooley, Chua, Fisher, Hochbach, Holmes, Milner-Gulland, Newing, Redford and Sandbrook) argue that achieving the transformative change needed to meet global biodiversity goals will require conservation to become more open, inclusive and creative. Conservation journals can play an important role in broadening participation beyond traditional academic and NGO circles, inviting contributions from artists, writers, musicians, activists and other voices, whose perspectives are often absent from the scholarly literature, for an upcoming issue. By embracing new formats, narratives and forms of expression, we hope to foster more diverse conversations about conservation and explore new ways of inspiring action for nature.

Indianthus virgatus. See Vishnu et al.

Other content

Successful reintroduction of the land snail *Poecilozonites bermudensis* on the Bermuda archipelago — *Outerbridge et al.*

Anthropogenic foods sustain free-roaming cats on a Mediterranean island, but neutering reduces wild bird consumption — *Cecchetti et al.*

Zenith placement of camera traps can individually identify the güiña Leopardus guigna: implications for population studies and conservation — *Gálvez et al.*

Integrating biodiversity goals with community needs in Wallacea, Indonesia — *Boedhihartono et al.*

Current status of the Nubian ibex *Capra nubiana* in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia — *Stirnemann et al.*

Leopard attack trends in Kashmir Valley, India: the challenge of coexistence — *Mir et al.*

Genetic analysis reveals occurrence of Pallas's cat *Otocolobus manul* in the Karakoram Wildlife Sanctuary, Ladakh — *Wangmo et al.*

The Pemba flying fox *Pteropus voeltzkowi*: status, distribution and increasing urbanization — *Caro et al.*

Distribution and conservation status of the silver-backed chevrotain *Tragulus versicolor* in Vietnam — *Hoang Quoc et al.*

Species diversity, pricing trends and conservation concerns in a major ornamental fish hub — *Ho et al.*

Lost and found: Madagascar's walking shark *Chiloscyllium caeruleopunctatum*—CORRIGENDUM — *Fanomezana et al.*

Plantago fengdouensis. See Chen et al.

Conservation news

- Illegal Plant Trade Coalition—think twice, trade right — *Aggarwal & Barstow*
- Rediscovery of *Cyananthus hookeri* (Campanulaceae) in India after 158 years — *Lahiri et al.*
- Enhancing the monitoring and management of wetlands: new guidance to improve data flow for National Wetland Inventory — *Stephenson et al.*
- When stakeholders speak: co-creating conservation avenues for mangrove-based vector control — *Cruz-Laufer et al.*

- Hope for the Mekong's rarest megafish — *Chan et al.*
- Lost and found: Madagascar's walking shark *Chiloscyllium caeruleopunctatum* — *Fanomezana et al.*
- Three decades of conserving the Endangered Javan hawk-eagle celebrated with science, culture and action in Indonesia — *Hidayat et al.*
- Centering young people in transboundary conservation and peacebuilding — *Bouyssou et al.*
- South Korea advances engagement with international conservation breeding for the Critically Endangered Amur leopard — *Hong et al.*
- Public space, public message: China's biodiversity commitment displayed at an international airport — *Xie*

Cecilia Derrick

Cecilia joined the Oryx team in 2025, excited to support the dissemination of research that informs conservation action. Since completing a Biological Sciences MSci at University College London, Cecilia has worked in academic science publishing for various journals including the Nature Portfolio and the Natural History Museum's journals. Alongside her professional work, Cecilia has volunteered with several conservation charities, including the RSPB and the London Natural History Society.