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We present our greetings to Colombia - a rapidly developing country that today can supply Sweden with much more than coffee.

VÄRLDSMARKNAD

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28th YEAR AUG. 1971 SPECIAL ISSUE

AXEL M. MURRAY,
Publisher of Världsmarknad

La Federación de Agentes Comerciales de Suecia considera un gran honor y un placer dedicar este número de su revista a Colombia.

Ha habido bastante discusión acerca de la conveniencia y posibilidades de compilar una edición especial para esta nación, sobre la cual poco se sabe en Suecia. Sin embargo, he insistido en mi punto de vista de que el solo hecho de que un país sea tan relativemente poco conocido, es en sí suficiente razón para editar un número especial de información sobre él. Habiendo tenido el privilegio de pasar un mes estudiando el país y su potencial industrial, sobre todo en lo que se refiere a sus posibilidades de exportación, considero que, no solamente en el interés de Colombia, sino en alto grado en el de Suecia, nuestras relaciones deben ser consolidadas y que ha de realizarse un esfuerzo más grande para aumentar su intercambio comercial.

Como ha sido el caso muchas veces antes, cuando se trata de introducir los productos de un país "desconocido" a los compradores suecos, toca a los agentes comerciales el trabajo preliminar. El contenido de este número debería demostrar claramente que no hay escasez de proveedores potenciales y proyectos atrayentes, y ahora es la ocasión para vendedores y compradores interesados de encontrar maneras de ponerse en contacto.

Yo, por mi parte, estoy especialmente ansioso de tomar esta oportunidad para agredecer a todos los que me han asistido en la edición de este número — ninguno nombrado y ninguno olvidado.

The Federation of Commercial Agents of Sweden considers it a great pleasure and honour to devote this number of its magazine to Colombia.

There has been a good deal of discussion about the suitability and possibilities of compiling a special number for this country, about which little is known in Sweden. However, I have persisted in my view that the mere fact that the country is so relatively unknown is in itself sufficient reason for issuing a special information number about it. Having had the privilege of spending a month studying the country and its industrial potential, not least as regards its possibilities to export, I consider it not only in Colombia's interests but to a great extent in Sweden's too, that the relations between our countries are strengthened and a far greater effort made to achieve increased trade between them.

As has been the case so often before, when it is a question of introducing an "unknown" country's products to Swedish buyers, it is up to the commercial agents to do the spadework. The contents of this number should make it abundantly clear that there is no shortage of potential suppliers and interesting projects, and now is the time for interested sellers and buyers to find ways of contacting each other.

I for my part am particularly anxious to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped me produce this number — none named and none forgotten.

COLOMBIA — a Naturalist's El Dorado



Rolf Blomberg, the author of this article, explains the working of his Swedish Hasseblad camera to a Cofán Indian of Southern-eastern Colombia.

"... Shortly after we had passed this place and walked along, as usual with the peon ahead and me behind him, the former suddenly stopped and pointed to the side of the trail calling out: "*Vea el tigre!*" — Look at the tiger!" — and at that moment we saw a rather big jaguar leisurely trotting off between the thick trees and the shrub which soon hid him from our view. Such surprises are not unusual here, although these animals are not so very dangerous in the daytime."



Searching for anacondas in Villamizárs small canoe. From the left Torgny Anderberg, Kurt Wahlgren and Obdulio Villamizár — the latter described as "the best hunter and fisherman on the Putumayo". He and Jorge Sanclemente, a former Colombian officer with 25 years' experience of Amazonas, were of indispensable help to the Swedish film group.

This is a short passage from Carl August Gosselman's book *Resa i Colombia år 1825 och 1826* (Journey in Colombia in 1825 and 1826), the first of a considerable number of books on Colombia written by Swedes during the years. The incident referred to took place on a trip in the Andes and is an example of what a traveller could, and still can, experience in this fascinating tropical country.

Gosselman and his contemporary and adventurous compatriot Carl Ulrich von Hauswolff, who also travelled widely in Colombia, were the first Swedes to collect ethnographical material and zoological specimens from Colombia and bring them back to Sweden, where they were presented to the Royal Academy of Science in Stockholm.

They have had many followers in the 20th century.

The late Professor Gustaf Bolinder undertook several expeditions, often together with his wife Ester, to remote parts of Colombia, and he wrote many interesting books about the Indians and brought home to the Ethnographical Museum of Sweden large and valuable collections.

Other Swedes who have contributed successfully to ethnographical and archeological research in Colombia are Erland Nordenskiöld, Sigvald Linné, Henry Wassén, Nils M. Holmer and more recently Lars Persson.

Among the zoologists Professor Georg Dahl should be mentioned. He is an outstanding ichthyologist, has spent more than twenty eventful years in Colombia, and his many memorable and remarkable experiences have provided material for several captivating books; he is an excellent writer and I think but few people have given such a true and vivid description of the South American jungle and its inhabitants as Dahl.

As superintendent of the natural

history museum at the Popayán University we find another Swedish naturalist, Kjell von Sneidern, who during his many years in Colombia — his family migrated to that country when he was a boy — has made innumerable collecting expeditions for museums and scientific institutions in all parts of the world and discovered many new species.

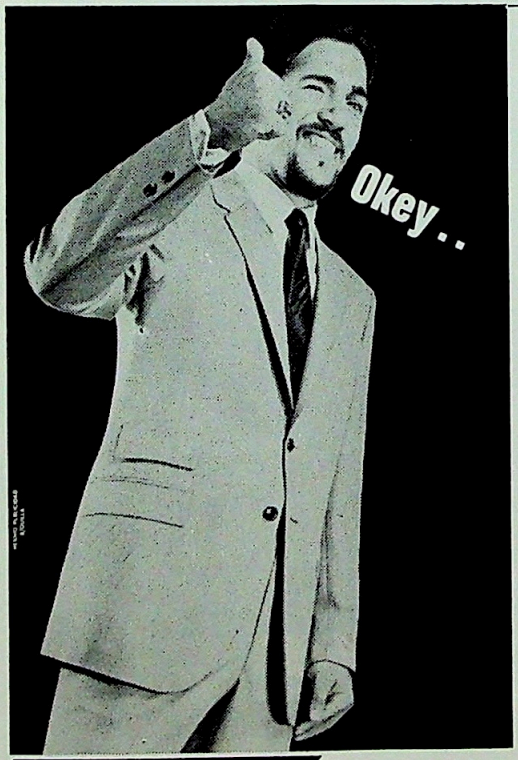
I was once told that Popayán has two great sights: the liberator Simon Bolivar's heart preserved in spirit — the genuineness of which is doubted by the experts — and a stuffed elk shot by King Gustaf V. The elk is in Kjell's museum. He acquired it from the court curator Tore Hanson at Örebro in exchange for a number of tropical animals.

When the grand nine-pointed beast received the place of honour among the museum's exhibits — the first northern animal to appear among them there was, according to Kjell, a regular rush to see it. In four days 10,000 of the then 38,000 inhabitants of Popayán visited the museum. They were greatly impressed by the elk's size — for no South American animal is so large — and their pride in the acquisition was immense when they read on the label that "*este ejemplar fué cazado por Su Majestad el Rey Gustavo V de Suecia*" — "this specimen was shot by H. M. King Gustaf V of Sweden."

On the fourth day there were so many people in the museum that the floor gave way under the weight of all the visitors! Luckily no one was seriously injured, and the entrance fees paid by the 10,000 paid for a new floor of very fine mosaic.

I met Kjell von Sneidern for the first time some twenty years ago.

It so happened that, while visiting the Galapagos Islands, I got to know an old Colombian who told me a rather incredible story about a giant frog or toad which existed in the province of Nariño, in the southern part of his native country. I suppose most people would have laughed the story off. But I am curious, always on the track of unknown animals and monsters, and I hopefully reminded myself that where there's smoke there's fire. And thanks to this incurable curiosity I discovered



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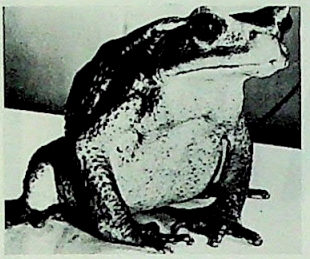
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the largest toad in the Americas, maybe the world's largest, a real giant that caused quite a sensation in the scientific world and was later described as *Bufo blombergi*. (One can gain immortality in many ways, also as a toad hunter.)



The goggle-eyed, broad-mouthed giant toad Bufo blombergi found in south-eastern Colombia by the author.

The place of discovery was not far from Popayán, so I decided to look up my compatriot von Sneidern, of whom I had heard and read a lot. It was a nice meeting, and since we had our zoological interests in common, we were soon planning a joint expedition to the Putumayo River area in order to search for anacondas; we were both keen on catching a record specimen of this giant snake.

I went on this anaconda chase in 1952—53 as the leader of a film expedition sponsored by Nordisk Tonefilm. But Kjell, who was made for expeditions of this kind, was unfortunately prevented by urgent work at the University from joining us.

Our film *Anaconda*, a full length documentary, which together with a good sized zoological and ethnographical collection was the result of eight months' hard but inspiring and thrilling work in the jungle, was a great success and was screened all over Europe, in the USA and many other parts of the world. But — honour where honour is due — although the film director, Torgny Anderberg, is an unusually gifted fellow who did a marvellous job, and although the photographer, Kurt Wahlgren, and the sound engineer, Olle Bohlin, excelled themselves, the undeniable merits of this successful operation were above all due to the magnificent subject: the throbbing Amazonian jungles, the rivers, the fauna, the aborigines — this world that has been given the hackneyed cliché "The green hell", but which in my opinion ought to be called "The green paradise". At least for a naturalist this *is* an El Dorado!

Now — what about our anaconda? Well, we bagged several of them. And — as a lively end to my contribution to VÄRLDSMARKNAD — let me quote a passage from my book "*Buried Gold and Anacondas*" about the capturing of the largest one.

"We had travelled a long way up the Cucayá River in our big canoe, and in Villamizár's little canoe we entered narrow *quebradas* — winding streams blocked by fallen trees and debris — and passed out into small lakes and marshes. We tramped for miles, dripping with sweat, through the deep jungles, always on the lookout for the giant snake. We caught

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reptiles of many kinds, both poisonous and non-poisonous, but we saw no anacondas. We found traces of them, but nothing more. We were firmly resolved not to give up, even if we had to stay a month or two in this unhealthy jungle country, which had already given two of us malaria.

But the rainy season was approaching, and when it came our chances would be exceedingly small. We must find the anaconda now!

We intensified our search: we were at it from sunrise to dark, and took no more days off. And at last, on a little tributary of the Caucayá, our efforts were crowned with success!

An anaconda twenty-three feet long, nearly as thick as a telegraph post, had been incautious enough to go ashore; and thereby its fate was sealed.

We surrounded it five strong and launched something like a lightning war. We fell upon it with notched sticks and lassos and a firm resolve that it should not escape us. A wild struggle and something of a circus performance followed. We waved our arms and pulled and hauled and fell down in the mud, we cursed and yelled and perspired, while the anaconda hissed and struck out all



The performance is over. The anaconda is ours. From the left: the expedition's taxidermist Laurentino Munóz, the author and Villamizár.

round and made ceaseless but unsuccessful attempts to seize and crush us. Meanwhile Kurt leapt about with his ciné camera, dancing around us and the anaconda to get every possible angle. He was everywhere, sometimes nearly in the snake's jaws. *He* was a real cinema photographer! Olle Bohlin had his sound-recorder at work; he tore at his beard in his excitement and came dashing in now and again, bent double, to take a few photographs. Torgny, the director, quite ignored his directing: he was hauling at the anaconda with the rest of us and having a grand time, and for that matter the anaconda did all the directing!

But at last the performance was over. The anaconda was ours and had to submit to being packed away in a big box which we had brought with us for the purpose. When this was done we were all equally tired, the anaconda and ourselves.

— "Thank heaven", said Torgny. "Now we can use *Anaconda* as the name of the film!"

— "Don't talk so much", Kurt said. "Bring out the whisky!"

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