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Inquiry into disappearing hedgerows

A NEW survey has been started of Britain's disappearing hedgerows, says the National Environment Research Council in its annual report published yesterday.

The best evidence available indicates that an average of about 5,000 miles of hedgerow has disappeared each year since about 1945. But the figure might be wrong by as much as 50 per cent, the report says.

This is why the new study has been started by the council which is concerned about the effect of the loss of hedgerows on wild life.

The Ministry of Agriculture has indicated to the council that about 750 miles of hedges a year are removed with the aid of Government grants.

Bird deaths

The report says further investigations are being made into the unusually high concentration of an industrial by-product, polychlorinated biphanyls, (PCBs) found in seabirds washed up in the Irish Sea a year ago. Between 10,000 and 15,000 birds, almost all of them Guillemots were believed to have died.

The investigations are being carried out at the Nature Conservancy's experimental station at Monks Wood, Huntingdonshire.

The council has ordered specifications to be prepared for a £2 million ocean-going ship to increase the country's marine research programme.

National Environment Research Council Annual Report 1969-70. H.M.S.O. 13s.

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