



UGANDA PROTECTORATE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

GAME DEPARTMENT

FOR THE

Year ended 31st December, 1936.

Published by Command of His Excellency the Governor.

Signed p. 51 (R) Pitman

Ch. H. H. 21 Feb 1937

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1937.

(629)

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3. Game and Special licences, and Governor's permits were issued:

	1936	1935
Resident's (Full)	214	162
Visitor's (Full)	6	3
Resident's (Fourteen-day)	5	5
Visitor's (Fourteen-day) .. .. .	..	2
Resident's or Visitor's Two Elephants	82*	31
Resident's or Visitor's Third Elephant	36*	4
Resident's or Visitor's Three Elephants	22*	1
Native's Two Elephants	42*	12
Native's Third Elephant	8*	3
Native's Three Elephants	5*	..
Special Licence for One Rhinoceros .. .. .	..	..
Governor's Permit	11	5
Bird	674	617

With the exception of one, the fees for which are included in the figures for "Resident's or Visitor's Two Elephants" and "Third Elephant", all Governor's permits were granted free of charge: three are restricted to buffaloes and three apply exclusively to birds.

4. The revenue obtained during 1936 has fully justified the alteration in the conditions under which Special Elephant licences are granted, and as anticipated there has been a considerable and welcome increase in the number of Resident's (Full) licences taken out.

The hope expressed in paragraph 4 (1935) that the 1936 revenue would be "nearer £3,500" has been fulfilled. In two years the annual revenue from the sale of game and elephant licences has increased by £1,562 13s.

Bird licences are increasingly popular.

5. Uganda Government ivory was sent to Mombasa for sale, and during the year two auctions were held at which the total weights sold and average prices realised were as follows:

	Weight	Grain price realised.	Approx. average price per lb.
	lbs.	£ shs. cts.	Shs. cts.
MAY—			
Ivory	23,427½	6,719 17 77	5 73
Rhino horns	638½	401 12 32	14 14
Hippo teeth	173½	9 7 72	1 08
NOVEMBER—			
Ivory	20,500½	6,381 11 69	6 22
Rhino horns	137½	87 3 32	12 72
Hippo teeth	233½	12 0 47	1 04

6. The total of 43,927½ lbs., or approximately 19½ tons, of ivory sold is, as expected, a few tons lower than the quantity disposed of in 1935, but agrees with the estimate of 44,000 lbs. The average price per lb. realised also agrees with the *original* estimate of Shs. 6 per lb., but is well below the revised estimate which anticipated an average price slightly in excess of Shs. 6/50.

* The conditions and fees for Special Elephant Licences were altered on 15th October, 1935, and in consequence 1936 figures must be read in conjunction with paragraph 3 (1935).

7. Ivory, etc.:—

	£	shs.	cts.
(a) Balance in store at Mombasa on 31st December, 1935—			
Ivory	13,387½		
Rhino horns	344		
Hippo teeth	108½		
(b) Received at Mombasa between 1st Jan., 1936 and 31st Dec., 1936			
Ivory	41,468½		
Rhino horns	741½		
Hippo teeth	302		
(c) Balance in store at Mombasa on 31st December, 1936—			
Ivory	10,821½		
Rhino horns .. .. .	..	
Hippo teeth	44		
(d) Balance at Mombasa on 31st December, 1935	13,387½		
Received at Mombasa during 1936	41,468½		
	54,856½		
Sold during 1936	43,927½		
Shrinkage	107½		
	44,035		
Balance at Mombasa on 31st December, 1936	10,821½		

Illegal Killing of Game and Breaches of Game Laws.

8. There have been few serious infringements of the Game Laws, though 1936 has seen the usual quota of convictions for minor offences, mainly connected with the unlawful killing of game. In outlying areas a good deal of illicit trapping of antelopes continues, and the use of the *emiriti* foot trap is still widespread.

Illegal dealings in ostrich eggs are on the decrease, though it has been necessary to confiscate about a dozen eggs acquired in contravention of the law.

9. *Vide* paragraph 11 (1935): the measures taken to combat the fraudulent traffic in rhinoceros horns purporting to originate in the Congo have achieved complete success. Certain consignments of illegally possessed rhinoceros horns totalling 176 horns, weighing 570 lbs., were seized and subsequently confiscated, thanks to the vigorous action taken by the Criminal Investigation Department.

Game Ordinance, 1926.

10. Minor alterations in legislation concern fishing (mentioned on a later page), the declaration of a sanctuary in southern Ankole, and the complete protection (*i.e.*, transfer to First Schedule, Part A) of the Greater Kudu in the Chua District.

11. A Trout Protection Ordinance (referred to later) was enacted in December.

Game Reserves.

12. *Bunyoro and Gulu.* Game generally is plentiful in this reserve and believed to be on the increase. Elephants, hippopotamuses and buffaloes are particularly numerous; lions are fairly common and the black rhinoceros is increasing.

13. *Semliki.*—Reliable reports indicate that this reserve continues to harbour plenty of wild life, particularly elephants and buffaloes. It is a region difficult of access, and in consequence somewhat conflicting claims are made concerning the status of the game. There appears, however, to be no reason for disquiet.

14. *Lake George*.—This is a well-stocked reserve and the game, as is at once evident to those who habitually use its boundary high road, is steadily increasing. In addition to an abundance of elephants, buffaloes and hippopotamuses (these are thick in Lake George), species which are numerous are waterbuck, kob and wart hog. During the long-grass season the game is not so easily seen from the main road, though nevertheless it is there. Wild (hunting) dogs are occasionally reported.

15. *Lake Edward*.—This reserve and the extensive stretch of closed Sleeping Sickness area to the north lying below the escarpment to the west of Lake Edward and Lake George, constitutes a wonderful sanctuary for elephants in particular, hippopotamuses, buffaloes, and other species of game such as waterbuck and kob. Both along the shores of Lake Edward and Lake George hippopotamuses are found in incredible numbers.

16. *Damba*. Damba Island has not been visited this year, but it is hoped to investigate this situtunga reserve during 1937.

Game Trophies.

17. The approximate number of elephants obtained by licence-holders during the year can be estimated from the permits issued for the export of tusks.

18. These figures give the lie direct to those who claim that outside the reserves and closed areas there are no longer any big tuskers left in Uganda.

A party of five who were able to devote a few months to elephant shooting obtained the following excellent tuskers in the Chua District:—

91 and 80, 78 and 76, 78 and 72, 72 and 64, 70 and 69½, 70 and 59, 66 and 63, 64 and 59, 63 and 56, 63 and 42, 54 and 51½, 54 and 51, and 48 and 17 lbs., totalling 1,663 lbs. The average weight per tusk of these thirteen elephants is 64 lbs.

In view of the annual toll of selected elephants taken by licence-holders it is remarkable that so many fine elephants are still to be found, and it is evident that in many parts of the Protectorate ivory growth must be rapid.

19. Return of tusks from elephants shot by licence-holders:—

District	Over 100 lbs.		Over 60 lbs.		Over 40 lbs.		Over 20 lbs.		Over 10 lbs.		Total
	Over 100 lbs.	Over 60 lbs.	Over 40 lbs.	Over 20 lbs.	Over 10 lbs.	Over 10 lbs.	Over 10 lbs.	Over 10 lbs.			
Mengo	3	10	20	25	7	1	..	..	..	..	66
Mulondo	4	12	20	9	8	4	..	..	..	..	59
Musaka	2	3	13	9	5	3	1	..	..	..	36
Ankole	..	6	14	12	8	4	5	..	..	..	49
Toro	4	8	11	7	18	11	8	1	..	..	68
Bunyoro	..	3	11	7	13	8	1	2	..	4	52
West Nile	..	2	8	19	13	17	4	2	1	1	66
Gulu	..	..	1	14	10	22	23	1	1	1	78
Cesa	..	1	6	8	16	19	17	4	2	1	96
Lango	..	..	2	..	2	1	6	..	..	..	12
Moroto	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Businga	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
TOTAL	23	61	133	110	121	79	44	8	4	5	588

1 = 4 single tuskers.

The above represent 296 elephants, not quite a 100 per cent. increase on last year's figure. There are 110 bulls with tusks of over 40 lbs., and under 60 lbs., 66 of over 60 lbs., and under 90 lbs., and five with tusks over 90 lbs. (five of these tusks exceed 100 lbs. each).

This leaves 109 licence elephants, or approximately 37 per cent. of the total, with tusks of less than 40 lbs., and indicates that the sportsman taking out a licence for three elephants should be fairly certain of bagging two with tusks in excess of 40 lbs.

20. The new elephant licences are responsible for the large increase in the number of elephants killed by licence-holders, and they have in consequence achieved their avowed object of obtaining assistance from the public in reducing the numbers of marauding bulls.

21. There are still vast areas in Uganda which function as reserves and reservoirs where hordes of elephants can wander unmolested. If they are so injudicious as to leave their sanctuaries, the better-endowed tuskers become the lawful quarry of the licence holder. Even if all the big tuskers were destroyed outside the reserves, there are incredibly large numbers of the best breeding bulls sheltering in the sanctuaries.

22. Endeavour is always made to prevent the activities of organised control conflicting with the interests of the licence holder. At times, however, the former do react to the disadvantage of the latter, but this is a risk which is well-known, and it is no good taking out an elephant licence willingly and subsequently complaining. Elephant hunting is always a gamble, organised control on occasion adds to the difficulties. Prospective hunters who are liable to object to the very necessary activities of "control" would be well advised not to take out elephant licences.

23. Export permits show that 197 leopard skins (61 less than last year), 3 lion skins, and 3½ tons (7,152 lbs.) of hippopotamus teeth were sent out of the country.

24. Eight rhinoceros horns, aggregating 23 lbs., were exported. In past years most of the black rhinoceros killed by licence-holders were not hunted for sport but solely for the purpose of obtaining a commodity, *i.e.*, the horn, which, when disposed of, would probably cover the cost of the game licence.

It is illuminating that since the black rhinoceros can only be hunted under a special licence costing £5 not a single licence has been taken out.

25. The unlawful trading in colobus, blue monkey and *mtalaganya* skins seems to be virtually suppressed; and the illegal traffic in ostrich eggs is evidently decreasing.

26. 222 lbs. of hippopotamus teeth valued at £12 6s., and miscellaneous trophies, including skins, horns, ivory, wooden and native curios, valued at £58 5s., entered Uganda, in transit, *via* the Merama Hill Customs Post.

27. 33 lbs. of ivory valued at £11 11s., hippopotamus teeth valued at £8 10s., and miscellaneous trophies valued at £11 5s., entered Uganda, in transit, *via* the Gisoro Customs Post.

145. *Greater Kudu*.—*Vide* paragraph 10, it has been considered advisable to protect this magnificent species in the Chua District. In the New Year (1937) this prohibition will automatically extend to the whole of the newly constituted Acholi District into which the Chua District is being absorbed.

146. *Eland*.—From various sources it has been ascertained that eland generally are doing well and on the increase, and so far no exceptional mortality due to rinderpest has been reported.

147. *Waterbuck*.—This is a very plentiful species in parts of Busoga, particularly in the closed sleeping sickness coastal region, and in the western rift. Males with exceptionally fine heads can often be seen from the road when traversing the closed sleeping sickness area south of the Kazinga Channel or when passing along the Lake George Game Reserve.

148. *Antelopes*.—Where settlement is either sparse or absent antelopes generally appear to be either holding their own or are on the increase. Density of settlement of course automatically excludes game.

149. *Wart Hog*.—Reliable observers frequently emphasise the abundance of wart hog in the Lake George Reserve. Quoting from a report referring to the Muhokya area: "I have never seen wart hog so plentiful (and in the open all day) in any other part of Africa".

150. *Bush Pig*.—There is no change in the situation reported in paragraph 237 (1935). In many Districts frequent organised effort is necessary to combat the incursions of the destructive droves of bush pigs: in Bunyoro these hunts are reported to have had a beneficial effect.

151. *Hippopotamus*.—The hippopotamus continues to be abundant throughout Uganda. Lake George, where this species is particularly plentiful, acts as a limitless reservoir for stocking the Toro highlands via the water route of the River Mpanga. It is believed that many of the Lake George hippopotamuses move to secluded parts of the Mpanga to breed.

152. This bulky species wherever it occurs is a constant source of complaint. In the neighbourhood of Mjanji on the Victoria Nyanza coast near the Kenya border the natives have speared about a dozen marauding hippopotamuses during the year. There have also been reports of damage from the vicinity of the Mpologoma swamp.

153. An unusual incident was reported from Mbale. An aggressive hippopotamus made its abode in a swamp about five miles along the main road to Tororo. The Magistrate, Mr. G. Campbell Low, responded to the local chief's appeal for assistance, and thanks to his much appreciated efforts the unwelcome intruder was destroyed. But unfortunately a native who had been mauled prior to the call for help subsequently died in hospital from the injuries received. It must be many years since a hippopotamus put in an appearance so close to Mbale township.

154. In many parts of Buganda these animals are a veritable pest and whenever possible assistance is afforded to the cultivators. The present rate of killing is considered sufficient. More than a dozen have been destroyed in native cultivation within Entebbe township, and two others had to be shot on account of the damage caused at Old Entebbe to the Veterinary Laboratory paddocks, many yards of wire fencing being constantly demolished.

155. From time to time reports have been received of the presence of a hippopotamus in Lake Nabugabo. It is not a particularly welcome companion for swimmers, and although not a member of the local Sports Club, on one occasion, uninvited, joined a nocturnal bathing party when some really fast times to the shore were achieved!

156. In April a man was attacked by a hippopotamus in the Sabawali of Buddu in the Masaka District. It was necessary to remove him to hospital, but he subsequently recovered.

157. *White Rhinoceros*.—The numbers of white rhinoceros in the West Nile District are said to be the same and not increasing, though no reports have been made of any having been found dead or killed. In West Madi this species has been seen fairly often, and is believed to be numerous.

158. During January, in the Laufori area of West Madi, a woman was attacked and gored by a white rhinoceros while she was picking cotton. This is a serious lapse from grace on the part of a member of this normally inoffensive species: according to native opinion in Madi a white rhinoceros will attack human beings if it has been wounded in the past. In this particular instance there is no evidence available to support this theory as the woman was alone when she was attacked.

In the mating season bulls sometimes fight furiously and often present a sorry spectacle as a result of these encounters so that a "wounded" rhinoceros is not necessarily due to human agency.

159. In the West Nile District, 20 natives of Terego and Madi counties were convicted for taking part in the hunting of a white rhinoceros which had been accidentally disturbed. The animal was wounded with a spear but was not killed and has since been reported as having recovered.

It is hoped in 1938 to take another census of the Uganda white rhinoceros population.

160. *Black Rhinoceros*. Damage to food crops and cotton plots caused by black rhinoceros has been reported from the Culu (Akiak) and Lango (South Maruzi) Districts. Loss has been due to both feeding and trampling. It may be necessary in the future to take energetic action against these creatures if they persist in their marauding tendencies.

161. In July, at the request of an intending importer, an enquiry was received from the Imperial Institute in connection with British sources of supply of rhinoceros horns, and in reply thereto the local situation was explained.

162. *Tree Hyrax*.—A juvenile collected by Mr. W. J. Eggeling, of the Forest Department, in the Budongo Forest proves to be a subspecies of *Procavia (Dendrohyrax) marmota*. According to the British Museum (Natural History): "This specimen appears to be near *marmota* from Entebbe, but the skin is much paler in colour, due possibly to fading or youth". The only two skins of *D. marmota* in the British Museum collection are much darker in colour.

163. *Giraffe*.—This interesting species in Karamoja and in parts of Chua is evidently plentiful and increasing steadily.