

after the fruit has lain on the ground for about a year, though the seedling remains attached to the nut for three to four years. The cotyledon stalk is up to 12 ft (3.7 m) long, the leaf-stalk being up to 20 ft (6.1 m) long (or 30 ft in some saplings).

There are already so-called 'reserves' containing groves of this fine Palm on the island of Praslin, and it seems most important that these at least should be meticulously preserved for the scientific study not only of *Lodoicea* but also of other endemic trees of the Seychelles as well as, of course, the birds. It would indeed 'be wonderful' if these areas, and at least one suitable montane one on Mahé or Silhouette, could be set aside with the tiny island of Cousin as a Seychelles system of sanctuaries or at least reserves for scientific study — though concerning the practicability of this suggestion it would be good to hear from those who have first-hand recent knowledge of the local situation and especially of the status of this unique Palm and other local endemics.

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SUMATRAN RHINOCEROS IN MALAYA

As envisaged at its inception by the originators (Malayan Nature Society and Zoology Department, University of Malaya), the project would consist of two stages: firstly, a field study of the surviving rhinoceroses in Malaya (West Malaysia), to be followed by, secondly, implementation of conservation practices based on results of the field work. It was recommended that both stages be concentrated on the Sungei Dusun Game Reserve, in the state of Selangor, where a small population of the Sumatran rhinoceros, *Didimoceros sumatrensis*, was known to exist in relative security.

During the period under review, a major contribution towards the first stage of the project was realized by Mr David L. Strickland (see his 'Ecology of the Rhinoceros in Malaya', *Malay. Nat. J.*, 20(1 & 2), pp. 1-17, pls. I & II, 1967), who was supported by a research studentship from the Malayan-American (Fulbright) Commission on Educational Exchange, supplemented by grants from the World Wildlife Fund (channelled through the Fauna Preservation Society, U.K.), and another from the Conservation Foundation, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Mr Strickland resided for 10 months in Malaya (from September 1965 to June 1966, inclusive), much

of this time being spent in the Sungei Dusun Game Reserve. He was able to demonstrate that at least three full-grown rhinoceroses occur in the Reserve. He also confirmed that the Reserve boundaries were satisfactorily placed except in the northwestern corner, where an extension of approximately half a mile was essential in order to enclose the normal range of movement of these rhinos.

Mr Strickland also investigated the feeding habits of the Sungei Dusun rhinos. His published list of food plants is the most comprehensive available, and shows that a major part of the natural diet consists of the leaves and shoots of young trees and shrubs that are characteristic of disturbed or regenerating forest. It is thus clear that suitable feeding areas could be provided indefinitely within the Sungei Dusun Game Reserve by regular selective felling and/or forest clearance, which should be included in any future management programme. Mr Strickland has suggested that, with suitable management, the Reserve, at least if effectively managed in the manner indicated above, could support double its present population of rhinoceroses.

Finally, in addition to the creation of feeding areas, Mr Strickland recommended that artificial wallows and salt-licks should be used to attract the rhinoceroses to specific locations. Together with the filling in of peripheral wallows, such alterations to the habitat could function as a relatively inexpensive method of containing the rhinoceroses within the central parts of the reserve, and also within the patrolling range of resident game rangers.

Since Mr Strickland's return to the United States (present address: Department of Biology, University of California, Santa Cruz, Calif.), steps have been taken by the Game Department, States of Malaya, to increase the effectiveness of the Sungei Dusun Game Reserve as a sanctuary for the rhinoceros. Accommodation for visiting staff of the Game Department has been constructed at the road-head, at a point where a small check-dam across the Bernam Canal permits vehicular access to the Reserve. The sum of \$550, donated by WWF, has been used to purchase a boat and outboard motor needed by game rangers on patrol. In the near future, funds permitting, the Game Department also plan to initiate an active programme of habitat management for the benefit of the rhinoceros.

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