



UGANDA PROTECTORATE

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

GAME DEPARTMENT

FOR THE

Year ended 31st December, 1948



Published by Command of His Excellency the Governor

Signed p. 7) C R S PITMAN, ENTebbe

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THE GAME DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year ended 31st December, 1948

SECTION I.—ADMINISTRATION

Expenditure and Revenue

1. Figures are as follow:—	£
Expenditure	19,868
Revenue (gross)	25,021
Balance of Revenue over Expenditure... ..	5,153

The revenue was derived as follows:—

(a) Sale of ivory, rhinoceros horns and hippo teeth	19,038
(b) Game licences	5,983

Receipts from (a) show an increase of 28 per cent., and from (b) an increase of 5 per cent.; in the case of (a) £18,979 was derived from the sale of ivory.

2. At the two ivory auctions, held at Mombasa, the average price realised per lb. was Shs. 16/05 and Shs. 14/75 compared with Shs. 13/32 and Shs. 11/88 in 1947: an increase in prices respectively of 20 per cent. and 24 per cent.

3. Game and Special Licences issued:—

	1948	1947
Resident's (Full)	303	273
Visitor's (Full)	5	18
Resident's (Fourteen-day)	2	1
Visitor's (Fourteen-day)	2	4
Resident's or Visitor's Two Elephants	20	88
Resident's or Visitor's Three Elephant	13	45
Resident's or Visitor's Three Elephants	8	40
Native's Two Elephants	23	83
Native's Three Elephants	14	35
Special for First Elephant	160	22
Special for Second Elephant	100	...
Special for Third Elephant	96	...
Special for One Black Rhinoceros	3	4
Bird	935	932

4. With continued improvement in the ammunition situation, and with an appreciable rise in ivory prices, £302 more revenue has been derived from the sale of licences. Licences to hunt 526 elephants were taken out as compared with 608 in 1947.



5. The total weights sold and prices realised at auction were as follows:—

	Weight	Gross price realised	Approx. average price per lb.
	lbs.	£ s. cts.	Shs. cts.
MAY—			
Ivory	10,154½	8,150 17 00	16 05
Rhino horns	31½	27 18 23	18 00
Hippo teeth	120½	5 15 73	0 96
NOVEMBER—			
Ivory	14,680½	10,828 10 37	14 75
Rhino horns	19½	23 15 12	25 00
Hippo teeth	16½	0 11 89	0 74

The total of 28,834½ lbs. of ivory sold is approximately one ton more than in 1947, i.e. an increase of 9 per cent.

6. Ivory, etc.:—

(a) Balance in store at Mombasa on 31st December, 1947—	lbs.
Ivory	7,934½
Rhino horns	31½
Hippo teeth	81½
(b) Received at Mombasa between 1st January, 1948, and 31st Dec., 1948—	
Ivory	18,959½
Rhino horns	87½
Hippo teeth	187½
(c) Balance in store at Mombasa on 31st December, 1948—	
Ivory	1,083½
Rhino horns	68
Hippo teeth	53

IVORY FIGURES—

Balance at Mombasa on 31st December, 1947	7,934½
Received at Mombasa during 1948	18,959½
TOTAL	25,994½
	lbs.
Sold during 1948	24,834½
Shrinkage or condemned	75½
	24,910½
Balance at Mombasa on 31st December, 1948	1,083½

Illegal Killing of Game and Breaches of Game Laws

7. Illegalities in connection with elephant hunting, the acquisition of ivory, and the selling of game meat have again been prevalent and are widespread.

The high price of ivory is sufficient inducement for law breaking on an extensive scale, and as there are many who share in the profits the necessary evidence to bring cases to Court is rarely forthcoming.

8. Unfortunately, owing to lack of adequate control due to the absence of the necessary supervisory staff, game guards for many years have been able to reap a rich harvest by shooting elephants for African licence holders, retaining for licence holders the larger tusks obtained in the course of control operations, and selling for high prices ammunition otherwise unobtainable by the public.

In Ankole two game guards were dismissed, having previously been given adequate warning, for shooting antelopes and selling the meat.

9. The Protectorate Police have recovered stocks of illegally possessed ivory on a considerable scale: the existence of others is known.

10. *Poaching*.—Systematic poaching in Singo, Buganda, continues. The poachers possess a number of unlicensed, modern firearms, and, in addition, their armament is now being augmented by serviceable, locally made shot guns fashioned from ¾ inch or one inch piping.

The results of the war years, when a sadly depleted Game Department staff and an overworked Administration tried to deal with meat-hungry poachers and illegal arms, are still apparent, but with the increasing interest and help of the Administration and Police, the situation is slowly improving.

One District Commissioner redoubled his already keen anti-poaching efforts after himself having fallen into a game pit when on safari!

The ravages of poachers along the Kagera river on the Uganda-Tanganyika border is alarmingly apparent. This area was once the stronghold of eland, roan, waterbuck, reedbuck and topi but few are to be found there now.

Throughout the Protectorate poachers have destroyed game by every possible means—shooting with legal and illegal arms, hunting with dogs, nets, spears and bows and arrows, snares, cart-wheel traps, gins and game-pits. Slowly but surely these are being dealt with but it is a long and difficult task.

Legislation

11. Legislation affecting game was as follows:—

(i) *No. 3 of 1948, An Ordinance to Amend the Game Ordinance*, which—

(a) varies Special Elephant licences and fixes the fees therefor, c.g.:—

First elephant	Shs. 100
Second elephant	Shs. 200
Third elephant	Shs. 300

(b) abolishes Native Special Elephant licences which were Shs. 100 cheaper than the non-native Special Elephant licences.

(ii) *Legal Notice No. 100*, which, consequent on (i) (a) above, varies the Eighth Schedule to the Game Ordinance, in respect of the precise forms of the various Special Elephant licences.

(iii) *Legal Notice No. 102*, by virtue of which a valuable agricultural area of small extent has been excised from the Lake George Game Reserve, and at the same time an area of equal size added.

(iv) *Legal Notice No. 142*, which re-defines the boundaries of the Lake Edward Game Reserve, which previously had not been clear.

(v) *Legal Notice No. 143*, by virtue of which the hippopotamus, elephant and buffalo are specially protected in the Kazinga Channel, a twenty miles stretch of water linking Lakes Edward and George, and where these large species are abundant.

outfit within a few yards of the nearest hippo but the animals just snorted at him. However, he was persuaded to wait quietly, and out of sight. After a while a hippo bellowed and was answered by another and a short recording made, then the animals became quiet again. It was then suggested that the recording of these two hippos be played back at them. This did the trick and was an immediate success, as it started all the hippos bellowing in return and as soon as the chorus eased off the recording was played back to start them off again.

132. *Hippopotamus Fat*.—A sample of hippopotamus fat was sent to Cambridge for analysis.

133. *White Rhinoceros*.—This strictly preserved species continues to thrive, almost unmolested, in West Nile.

In April, however, ten men were arrested for killing a white rhino. When tried at Arua they claimed that the animal had attacked them and they had to kill it in self defence. They were acquitted.

134. In September a Game Ranger on safari in West Nile reported much spoor in a swamp northwest of Laufori. He also saw four white rhino which he stated appeared to be quiet and docile and although they got his wind they walked off quite happily.

In October the Ranger reported that the white rhino had moved away from their normal habitat in the region of Rhino Camp, probably as a result of the increased population.

135. *Black Rhinoceros*.—Several incidents occurred to maintain the popular reputation of this animal as a stupid but dangerous nuisance and the usual yearly quota has had to be destroyed.

136. In January an Indian Tsetse Ranger in Acholi was charged by a pair of rhino when travelling with his porters along an elephant track through high grass. The Ranger stood his ground and waited for a clear shot at close range, but at the last moment the first rhino swerved to follow a running porter and with other porters in the line of fire the Ranger was unable to shoot. The second rhino, a young beast, was speared by the porters and finally shot as it charged a tracker. In the meantime the first rhino had succeeded in tossing and badly injuring one man before disappearing into the grass with its horn entangled in the sling of a spare rifle which the man had been carrying.

137. In Acholi, in May, a couple of rhino attacked the camp of a pair of Tsetse Department hunters at midnight when they were sound asleep. Roused by wild yells they emerged from their tent with their rifles and saw the two rhino stamping on the fire and charging towards a yelling porter who had slept by the fire to dry meat. They both fired causing the rhino to swerve thus saving the man. The beasts continued to be aggressive and the hunters had to fire again to stop another charge. The next day, although a quantity of blood was found the wounded animals were not traced. The porter was untouched by the rhino but was badly burnt by the fire which had been kicked over him by the charging beasts!

138. A Tsetse Department officer had an unpleasant experience on the Kaecheri Range in Karamoja in May, when his party was cornered in a narrow, rocky valley by three rhinos. He managed to shoot the bull

and the cow, at close range, when they charged and finally persuaded the calf to retire. The rhino in this area appear to be very aggressive and invariably take umbrage at being disturbed.

139. A series of eyes collected from black rhinoceros, killed during tsetse control operations, have been sent to an investigator in Tanganyika.

140. *Giraffe*.—Every year a few of these animals are poached for the sake of their tails.

141. In June two Tsetse Department hunters were convicted for illegally shooting a giraffe in Acholi. They were sentenced, by the native Court, to pay a fine of sixty shillings each or six months imprisonment. The fines seemed little enough since the Acholi say that as many as twenty hoes are exchanged with Sudanese for a giraffe's tail and in Karamoja their current value is said to be one full-grown ox.

142. In September reports were received of a herd of giraffe on the East Madi bank of the Nile with three animals very much darker than the rest. Old giraffe males are often very dark, sometimes liver color.

143. *Zebra*.—This gaudy animal appears to be holding its own in the areas to the north and south of the Katonga river, and also on the Sebei plains.

(iv) TUBULIDENTATA

144. *Ant Bear*.—A pair of ant bears fell into a shallow well close to the Lia river below a house at Moroto in Karamoja. The female was drowned but the male was hauled up with the aid of ropes. He was obviously very tired and hungry and after being photographed was released. He made slow progress at a clumsy canter, in bright sunlight, until he reached the undergrowth when he greatly increased his speed and eventually went to ground. It is thought that the male was probably pursuing the female preparatory to mating until the accident brought their love-life to a sudden and tragic end.

It is reported that the male was very "photophobic"!

(v) NOMARTHRA

145. *Ground Pangolin or Scaly Ant-eater (Smutsia temminckii)*.—A specimen of this curious creature was collected in West Madi by the scientist who is engaged on elephant biological research.

(vi) RODENTIA

146. *Anomalure or African Flying Squirrel*.—A specimen of this uncommon forest species was collected in the western Kayonsa Forest by Mr. P. O. Matthews when a large tree about 100 feet high was felled. The skin, skull and skeleton were sent to the Game Warden and these have been presented to the Uganda Museum. Formerly in this locality some ten years ago and more, it is said that this little creature was the Batwa dowry given by the aspirant swain to his father-in-law to be: nothing else won him a wife.

147. *Ground Squirrel*.—The common ground squirrel *Euxerus erythropus lacustris* is out of favour with the Forest Department at Kaechung (Lango) where it digs up and eats the seeds of *Gmelina arborea* in the forestry nursery.