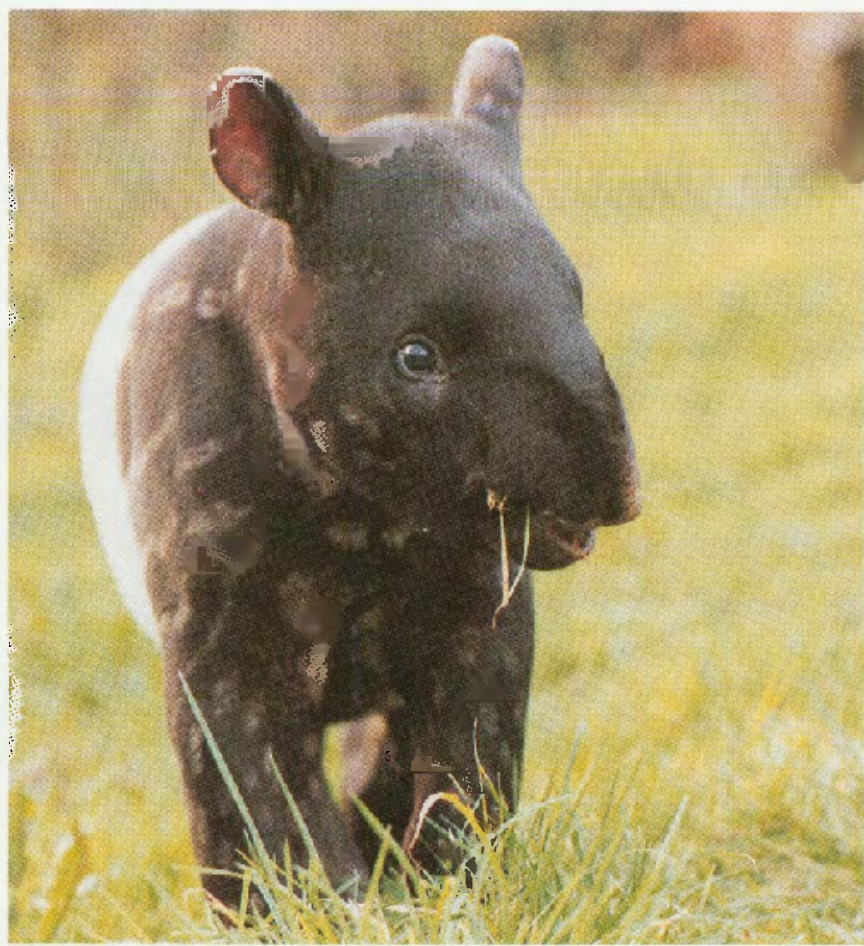


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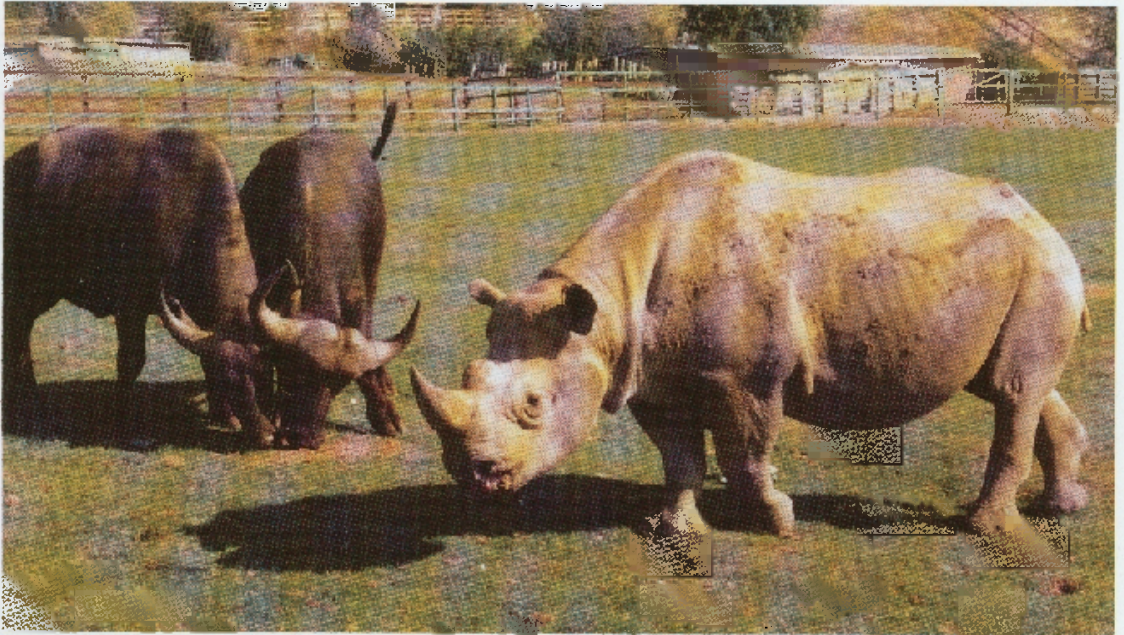
Help Newsletter No 11



*Friends of Howletts
and
Port Lympne*

INTER-ZOO COOPERATION

by Tom Begg B.V.M.S., M.R.C.V.S.



Reference to the animal stock list at the end of the newsletter highlights the cooperation that exists between zoos today on a national and international level. Exchanges and loans of animals imply mutual respect and trust, and on this basis we are involved with a number of other collections.

Purely on the grounds of rarity and prestige I would draw attention to the black rhino, the bongo, the lowland gorilla. These species have been discussed by colleagues elsewhere in the newsletter, but I would make mention of our involvement with the Zoological Society of London over the rhino and the bongo. Only ZSL and ourselves have in this country made any significant impact in the captive breeding of the black rhino. Discussions with Mr David Jones, ZSL's Director, led to the loan of Bwana M'Kubua and Mama Kidogo. Our facilities are fairly extensive and we are able to assimilate these animals into our herd. Thank goodness for Bwana's impending fatherhood, for he is the only male in this country presently breeding. Our first-born, Basha, now 12 years old, should shortly be moving to ZSL in the hope that a change of environment and partners may stimulate him into action.

Our bongo bull was found on veterinary examination

to be infertile (though not necessarily irreversibly so), and he has gone to Whipsnade Zoo as an exhibit animal. ZSL loaned us their proven male who, although slightly related to our cows, has sired three fine calves. It is planned that for their next pregnancy the cows will meet up with an unrelated bull born in Dvur Kralove Zoo in Czechoslovakia, who is currently based with ZSL. Our joint intention is to increase the UK herd of this striking animal to a safe level where genetic defects through inbreeding are minimised or even totally absent.

On the gorilla front, we have recently loaned Kibobo, a socially educated though unproven male, to La Palmyre Zoo in France. Once his fertility is proved, we hope to receive in return an unrelated female to ensure continuing genetic diversity. The loan of Kibabu to Apocnheul Zoo in Holland has paid dividends in that he has sired two youngsters who are being raised by their mothers. They are in an ideal environment within a true family group, where they will grow up socially educated to produce the next generation of gorillas.

Our thanks go to all those collections who entrust their animals to us; may the mutual benefits thereby achieved continue.