

The Asian Rhino Project : by Kerry Crosbie

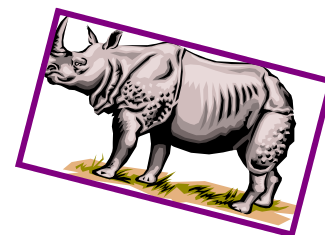


Introducing the Asian Rhino Project

The Indian Rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis* - population 2,619), The Sumatran Rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis* - population 275) and the Javan Rhino (*Rhinoceros sondaicus* - population 40-60) are all seriously endangered due to rampant poaching and habitat loss caused by human encroachment. Poached for their horn, the rhino are caught by snares, pit traps, poisoned or electrocuted by wires hung from overhanging power lines. The horn is used in traditional Chinese medicines and in Yemen to make dagger handles. The illegal trade in wildlife is second only to the trade in illegal drugs and firearms and is the primary threat to rhino in Asia. Illegal logging and human encroachment due to agriculture is seeing the rapid destruction of Asia's forest and all its inhabitants. Conservation of this flagship species in the wild not only ensures there will be rhino around for future generations, but will also assist to ensure the survival of other threatened species of Asia's rainforests such as the orangutan, Asian elephant, tiger, rafflesia flower and many, many more. But we have to act now!

The Asian Rhino Project (ARP) is an Australian non-profit, volunteer organization raising awareness and support for the three Asian rhino species. By actively seeking funding from donors, corporate sponsors and memberships, merchandise sales and funds raised through events and educational programs; we contribute to programs in-situ through partnerships formed with conservation organizations in the field. Strong relationships are formed with conservation specialists through our active role in conservation workshops and positions on conservation boards such as the Sumatran rhino Global Management Propagation Board, the IUCN Species Specialist Group and the more recently formed Indonesian Rhino Foundation. We work together with these people to achieve outcomes as a united force with our partners. The ARP was founded in 2003 by a small group of Zoo Keepers in Australia who were keen to do the best they could to raise awareness and provide support for the three Asian rhino species. Perth Zoo rhino keeper Kerry Crosbie learnt about the plight of the Asian rhinos whilst researching information about the rhino in her care. She was appalled at how low the rhino populations were and at the little success conservationists and Zoos had in trying to turn the numbers around. Even more upsetting was the fact that no one knew much about these rhinos even though they were on Australia's doorstep. Something had to be done and so the Asian Rhino Project began!

In November 2003, a devastating event occurred. One of the four captive breeding program centers (Sungai Dusun Sumatran Rhino Breeding Center) lost their whole population of captive Sumatran Rhino due to a devastating illness which wiped them out within two weeks. The current captive population of this species then stood at 8. Not a great record from a population of 40 founding individuals. After hearing the news of this terrible disaster and learning more about the plight of the Sumatran Rhino, ARP Patron Peter Hall contacted us and wanted to help. He donated \$10,000 immediately to assist us in our mission and has continued to contribute to Sumatran Rhino conservation ever since. His company Hunter Hall Investment Management Limited is now our major corporate sponsor. With them on board, the Asian Rhino Project has been able to grow.

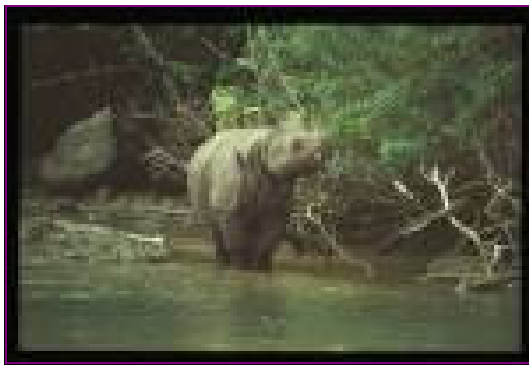


Indian rhino courtesy of Brooke Squires

This last financial year we were proud to be able to contribute over \$341,000 of funding to Asian rhino conservation.

Achievements in the last year have included:

- 2 year funding commitment to the Javan Rhino Protection Unit (RPU) in Vietnam
- further support for the SOS Rhino RPUs in Borneo (Sumatran Rhino)
- funding for a volunteer coordinator position for SOS Rhino Tabin Wildlife Reserve Ecotourism Project
- financial support for a Sumatran rhino survey in Kerinci Seblat National Park, Sumatra
- the development of an ARP Specialist Veterinary Support Team providing emergency assistance to programs
- funding of a rhino boma at Manas National Park in India for the release and relocation of rescued rhinos
- funding a bufferzone community program at Chitwan NP "Empowering People for Rhino Conservation" in Nepal
- ongoing support and funding for the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Way Kambas NP, Sumatra
- further financial support for the International Rhino Foundation 'Rhinoceros Conservation Medicine Program'



Javan rhino courtesy of Alain Compost



Sumatran rhino courtesy of David Jenike

We have redeveloped our website and launched a new fundraising program 'Adopt A Rhino' while continuing our regular fund raising events. The ARP now has three offices within Australia (NT, WA and NSW) with the head office operating from the NT. ARP Patron Peter Hall and his company Hunter Hall Investment Management Ltd has continued its outstanding support for Asian rhino conservation which provides funding for the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary and Rhino Conservation Medicine Program as well as covers all ARP operational costs. This support ensures that all funds raised by the ARP are directly committed to the Conservation of these flagship species.

We welcome members from far and wide; your support is vital for us to continue our important work. We guarantee that your financial support assists with spreading the word about the plight of Asian rhinos, and contributes to their in situ conservation. So please; if you can; donate today, become a member or adopt a rhino and help us help them!

For further information on us, and to learn about our important projects, please visit our website www.asianrhinos.org.au or contact Kerry Crosbie - e-mail info@asianrhinos.org.au phone +61 8 89760952.

