

Rhino



Inside

page 3

What makes a Rhino a Rhino?

page 10-11

Are Rhinos going EXTINCT?

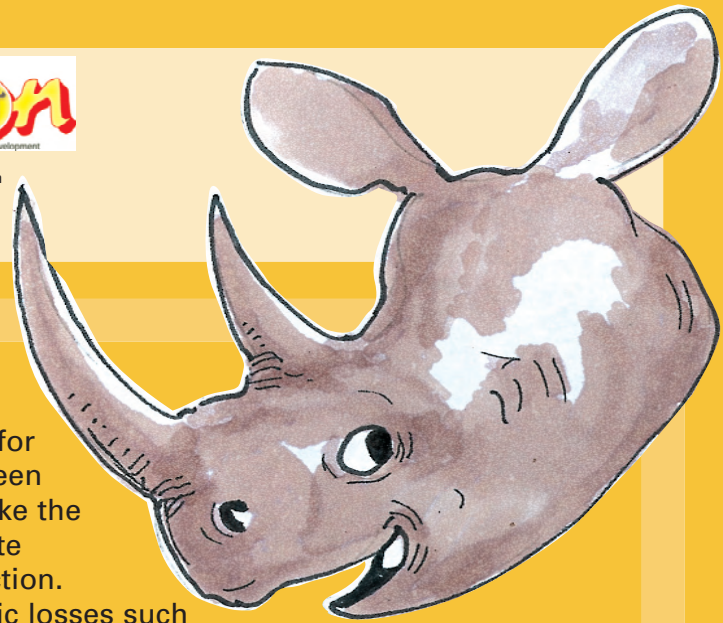
page 15

What can we do to help?

2 Ancestors



Designed and produced by N. Anderson and Action team
design@action.co.zw
Printed by Action Originated by Action

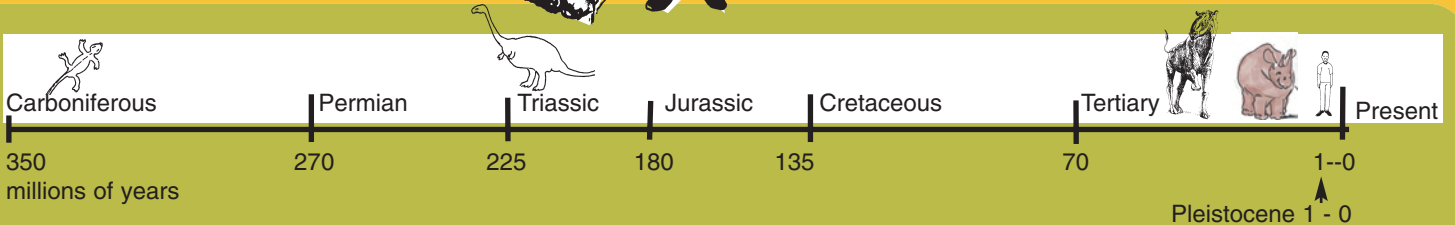


Africa has been struggling to save its rhinos from extinction for over 100 years. There have been some great success stories, like the recovery of the Southern white rhinoceros from virtual extinction. There have also been dramatic losses such as the killing of over 95% of all black rhinoceroses since 1970. Today, all of Africa's rhinoceroses depend on conservation efforts for survival. In this magazine you can find out more about rhinos, why they are threatened with extinction and what is being done save them.



Ancestors of the modern day rhinoceros first walked the earth 50 million years ago. Rhinoceroses have been the most diverse and successful large herbivore (plant eater) ever. Some prehistoric rhinos looked like small horses. Others, such as the giant giraffe rhino, at almost 6 metres tall and with a skull over 2 metres long, are thought to be the largest land mammals that ever lived.

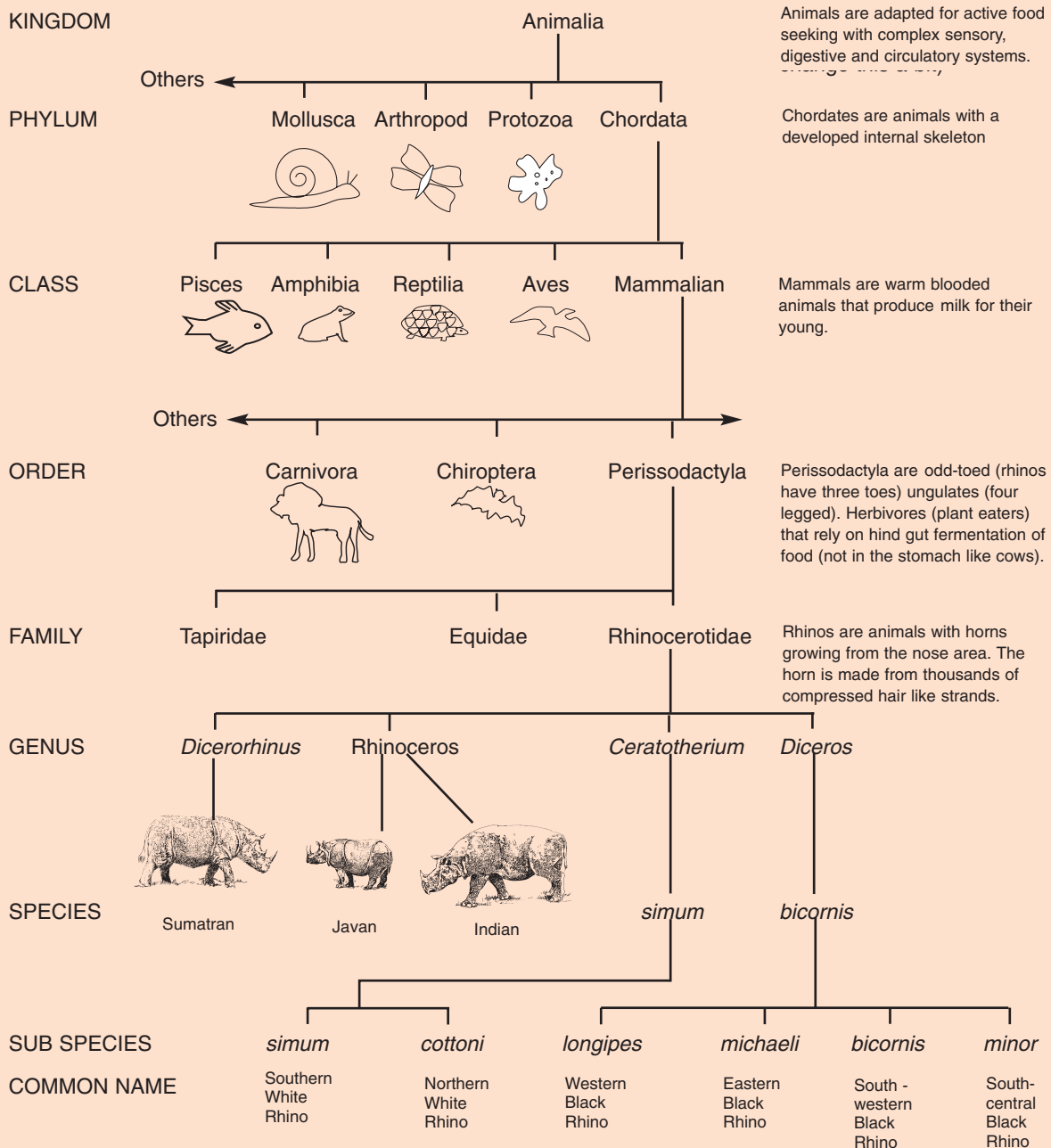
The more recent species of rhinoceroses have horns on their heads. The name rhinoceros comes from the Greek words "rhino" which means nose and "keros" which means horned. The rhinoceros is one of the oldest living species but is not a dinosaur. The modern rhinos that we see today evolved between 10 and 7 million years ago. Modern man has been on the Earth for less than half that time.



What makes a Rhinoceros... ...a Rhinoceros

A system of classification has been developed to help make sense of the vast number of different organisms that live on this planet. This system, called the "Linnaean hierarchy", groups all life forms based on their similarities and evolutionary relationships.

Follow the links from Kingdom through to Sub-Species level to find out more about the rhinoceros.



Note: Sub species are populations of animals that differ only slightly from others of the same species or are geographically isolated. For example *D.bicornis bicornis* are somewhat larger than the other sub-species.

White Rhinoceros

Wide Lipped rhino

Tshuguly

Witrenoster

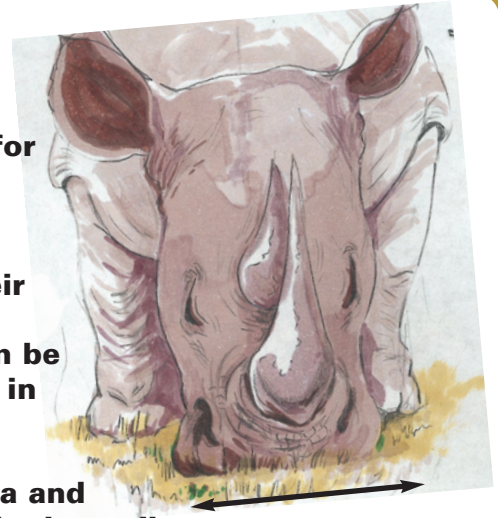
Chipembere

Chibejana



White rhinos are grazers. They have a very wide lip for eating grass.

White rhinos spend half their lives eating. They can often be found feeding in groups. White rhinos need between 200ha and 500ha to live in depending on how much grass is in the area.



20cm



Both rhinos may charge especially if they are caught by surprise or think they are in danger. They can both move very quickly. A black rhino can run at up to 55km/hr. A white rhino can charge at 40km/hr.

Weight: up to 2000kg
Height: up to 1.8m

can you?
RUN FASTER
than a
RHINO

If you get too close to a rhino it is best to get behind or up a tree and stay very still so it is difficult for the rhino to see you. If the rhino does charge it will often run straight past you and keep on going. Normally a rhino will run away when it smells a person.

Rhinos are curious animals and are known to approach sounds or objects that are unusual.

White rhinos live in grasslands and savannah where there is lots of grass to eat.

Both rhinos need to drink daily in hot weather. In cooler weather they will drink every 2-3 days.

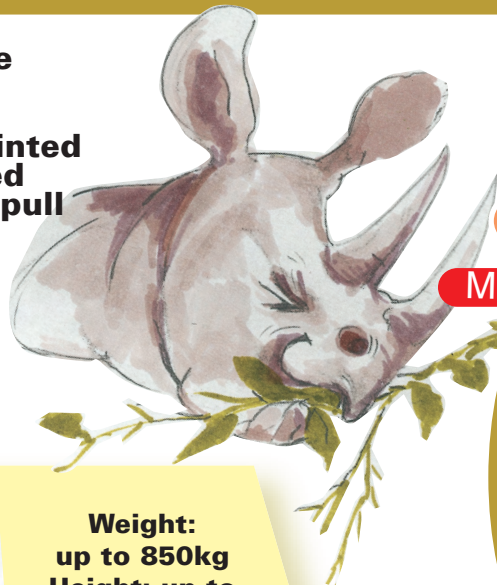
Black rhinos like to live in wooded areas where they can find lots of different trees to eat.



Black Rhinoceros

Black rhinos are browsers.

They have a pointed lip which is used like a finger to pull branches into their mouths.



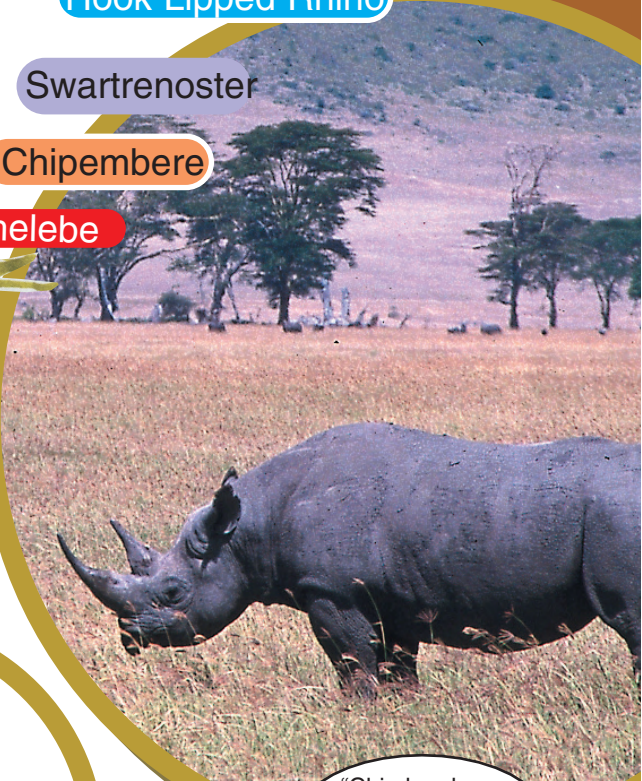
Weight:
up to 850kg
Height: up to
1.6 m

Hook Lipped Rhino

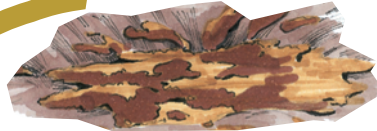
Swartrenoster

Chipembere

Mhelebe



Rhinos make piles of dung. These piles are called MIDDENS.



Male rhinos make more middens around the edges of where they live to tell other rhinos this is their area.

Black and white rhinos are actually grey in colour. Both species like to wallow in mud.



To find this much food black rhinos spend most of their time eating alone. Where there is lots of food, black rhinos need about 260ha. If there is little food they need up to 13,300ha to find enough to eat.



A black rhino eats up to 23 kg of leaves and branches daily.

"Chip has been here. I can tell by his smell."

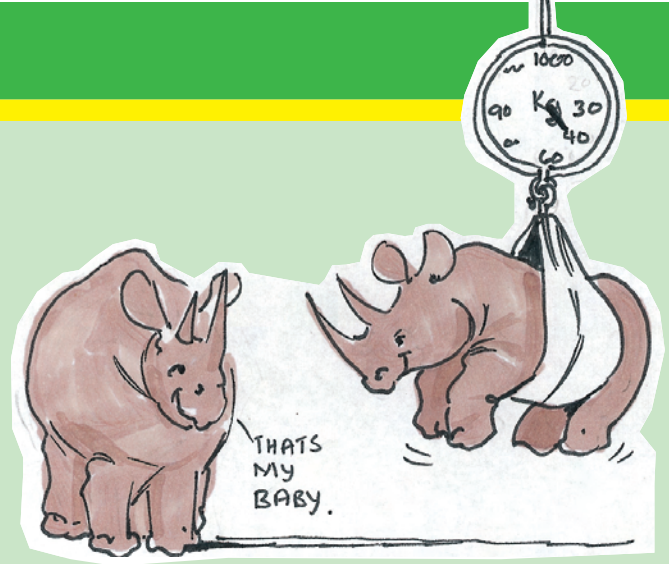


What is a black rhino called where you live?

In what ways are these two types of rhinos the same? In what ways are they different?

Rhino Reproduction

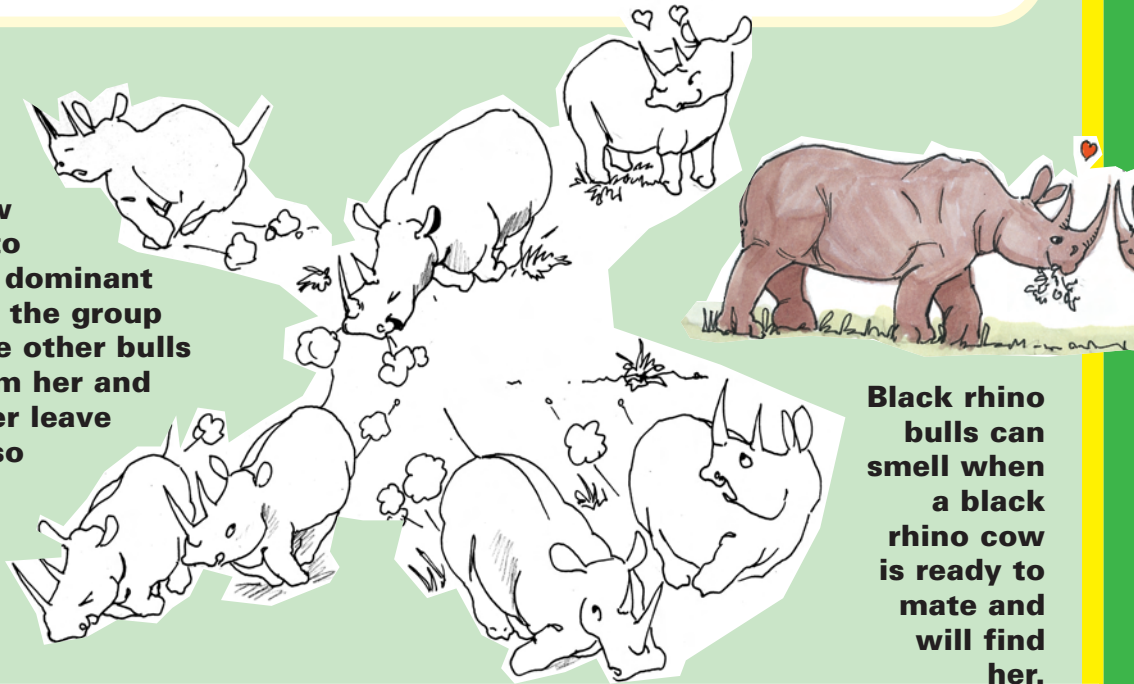
Both black and white rhinos are slow breeders. Unlike other wild animals that have one or more young every year rhinos can only have one calf every 2.5 – 3.5 years. Rhinos can breed at any time of year.



A rhino calf weighs about 40kg at birth

	Black rhino	White rhino	Warthog
Young per birth	1	1	3 (between 1-8)
Age at first calving	6-7 years	6-7 years	1.5 years
Gestation period	15 months	16 months	5.5 months
Young drinks milk for	Up to 2 years	About 1 year	5 months
Position of young when walking	Behind mother	In front of mother	Behind mother
Calf separates from mother	2-4 years	2-3 years	1 year

When a white rhino cow is ready to mate the dominant bull from the group will chase other bulls away from her and not let her leave his area so that he can mate with her.



Black rhino bulls can smell when a black rhino cow is ready to mate and will find her.

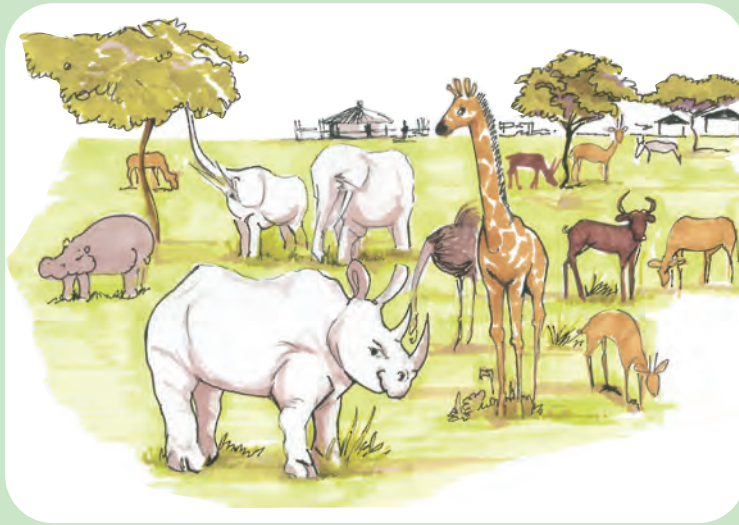
The growing African population expanded their lands to grow more crops. The Europeans also wanted land for crops and cattle. Cutting down trees for fields reduced the amount of area for rhinos to live in. Rhinos were seen as competition to cattle and were shot. In a two year period 1,000 rhinos were shot to clear land for agriculture in a small area in Kenya.



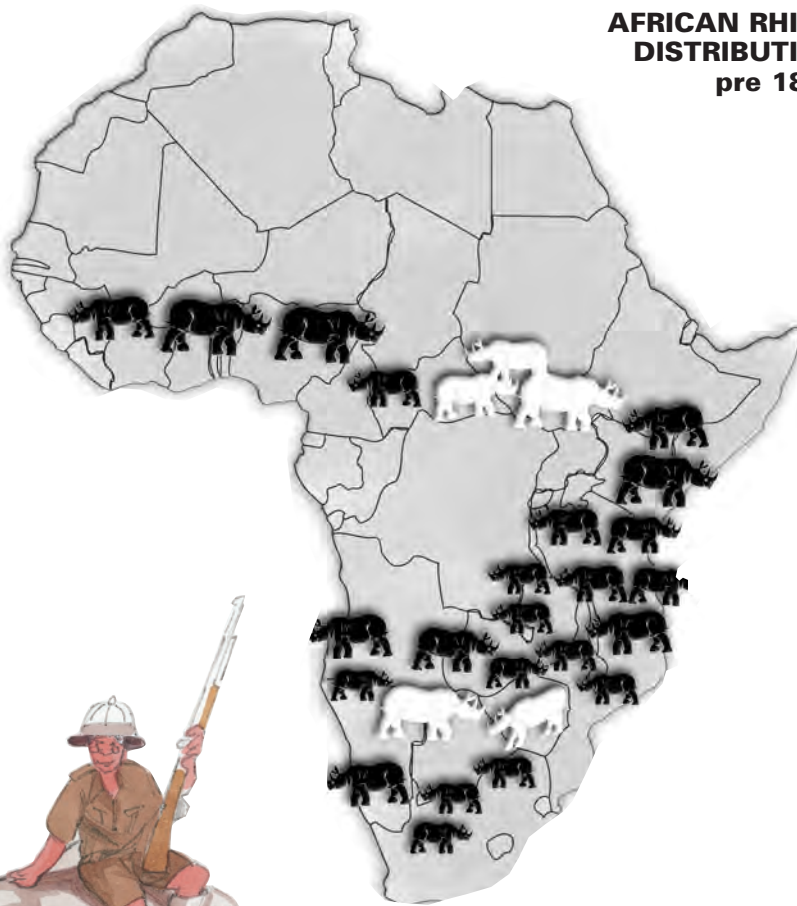
Rhino Populations

In the early 1800s the population of rhinos in Africa was thought to be more than a million. A population refers to the total number of individuals of a certain species in a given area.

In those days there were very few people and lots of wild animals. People hunted rhinos for meat. The skin was used to make shields and good luck charms. The horn was traded.



AFRICAN RHINO DISTRIBUTION pre 1800



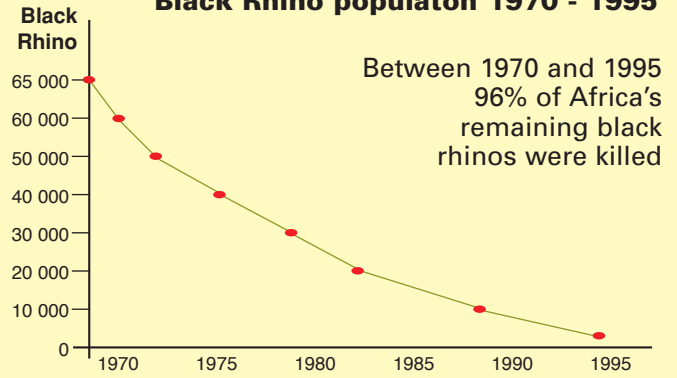
Modern medicines helped reduce the number of people who died from disease and injury. This helped the human population in Africa to increase. More people meant that more animals were killed for food. The Europeans who came to Africa also killed rhinos. They used rifles and were able to kill more quickly.

By 1900 the Southern white rhino population had been reduced to less than 200 animals.

By 1970 there were only 65,000 black rhinos left.



Black Rhino populaton 1970 - 1995



In the Middle East rhino horn is carved to make handles for traditional daggers called jambiyas. These daggers are worn by men as a sign of wealth and social status. In the 1970 some of these Middle East countries became very wealthy through selling oil. Many men bought jambiyas to show their new wealth. One rhino horn trader claims to have imported 36,700kg of African rhino horn – over 12,750 rhinos would have been killed to supply that much horn.

Now the rhinos were being killed just for their horns



In Asia rhino horn is used in traditional medicines in the belief that it helps treat fevers. With so few of their own rhinos left Asia started to import more and more African rhino horn.

Rhino Poaching

8

At the same time many African countries were politically and economically unstable which made it easy for poachers and traders to operate freely.



The poacher only gets a little money from the people they sell the horn to.



These "middle men" sell the horn again for much more money.

