

# Oryx

The International Journal of Conservation

The original paper was published in the *Journal of the Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of the Empire* (1903-1925 and 1926-1950) or in *Oryx*, the journal of Fauna and Flora International (from 1951).

The website of the journal is (from 2008):

<http://www.oryxthejournal.org/>

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The Society was founded in 1903 as the Society for the Preservation of the Wild Fauna of the Empire, and subsequently named the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society. Fauna & Flora International is conserving the planet's threatened species and ecosystems – with the people and communities who depend on them.

Oryx - The International Journal of Conservation, is now published quarterly by Cambridge University Press on behalf of Fauna & Flora International. It is a leading scientific journal of biodiversity conservation, conservation policy and sustainable use, with a particular interest in material that has the potential to improve conservation management and practice.

The website, <http://www.oryxthejournal.org/>, plays a vital role in the journal's capacity-building work. Amongst the site's many attributes is a compendium of sources of free software for researchers and details of how to access Oryx at reduced rates or for free in developing countries. The website also includes extracts from Oryx issues 10, 25 and 50 years ago, and a gallery of research photographs that provide a fascinating insight into the places, species and people described in the journal.

The [Rhino Resource Center](#) posted this PDF in June 2009. We are grateful for the permission.

# Black Rhinoceros in Zambia

*W. F. H. Ansell*

An assessment of the status of the black rhinoceros in Zambia, by W. F. H. Ansell, published in *Oryx*, December 1969, has been reprinted in *Black Lechwe*, journal of the Wildlife Conservation Society of Zambia, Volume XI No 2, with the following additional information.

## **Kafue National Park and adjacent areas**

Rhinoceros continue to be seen fairly frequently both in the north and south of the national park, and are probably increasing gradually in numbers. They are evidently fairly well established in the area between the Nkala and Musa rivers as well as in the northern sector.

In 1971 R. D. Rohwer, then of Zambia Safaris Ltd, reported three males, two females, and a calf in some dense thickets west of the Munte/Mufumbwe confluence in the Kasonso-Busanga GMA, square 1425-B-1\*; where he had frequently seen them or their fresh spoor. This is just north-west of the Kafue National Park. In 1969 I considered the species perhaps only sporadic from the Lushimba stream northwards, and it is not clear whether those reported by Rohwer represent a local extension of range in recent years, or whether a small population remained unnoticed there until 1971.

## **Luangwa Valley**

Surveys carried out by the UN/FAO Luangwa Valley project, which ended in March 1973, showed that the estimates given in my 1969 paper were very much on the low side. The report of this project has not yet been completed, but the rhinoceros population in the valley GMAs is currently estimated at about 12,000, with an absolute minimum of 4000.

## **North-Western Province**

A record overlooked in the 1969 paper is of a rhinoceros reported in September 1962 at Kasempa, between the Kaonde Hospital and the Nkenyauna stream. This is in square 1325-B-4, very close to the boma, and is the only definite record of a rhinoceros in the area, at least for very many years.

## **Middle Zambezi, above the Kafue confluence**

Rhinoceros spoor was reported by Wildlife Guard G. Nkoma in August 1972 east of the Kariba road, in the vicinity of the Mbendele stream, 1628-B-3. Evidently a few remain in the area, though in my 1969 paper I did not rate their chances of survival very highly.

In May 1969 Dr E. K. Balon, then with the Central Fisheries Research Institute, reported seeing a rhinoceros on Chete Island in Lake Kariba (1727-B-3). It is well known that elephant and impala survive on Chete, but this is the only report of rhinoceros there, and it may have been a single individual.

## **Lavushi Manda National Park**

In 1970 a carrier employed by the ranger at Chiundaponde reported that he thought there must be at least six rhinoceros in Lavushi Manda, judging by

\*  $\frac{1}{4}^{\circ} \times \frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  locus, corresponding to the 1:50,000 map sheet

the signs he saw when poaching there in 1969. A wildlife guard reported seeing one in 1971 just west of the north-western corner of the park. This was between the Lubweshi and Lupembashi streams, both tributaries of the Lumbatwa River. In July 1973 guards apprehended a poacher in the same place who had just killed a female rhinoceros. This was proof positive that the species survived in the area, though it came about in a most unfortunate manner. However, this cow had been accompanied by a bull, and a fair amount of spoor has also been found in the area.

There has been no recent definite record within the Lavushi Manda National Park itself since the somewhat circumstantial report by the carrier in 1970, but the outlook appears distinctly encouraging. I have myself always considered it possible that a few rhinoceros remain in the area.

### **Sumbu National Park**

In the 1969 paper I doubted that any rhinoceros remained in the Sumbu Game Reserve, as it then was; like Lavushi it became a national park in 1972. However, in June 1969 Dr E. K. Balon reported seeing two at the edge of thick bush near the lower Lufubu River (Liendwe Valley). Unfortunately the photograph he took was lost, but subsequently wildlife guards have reported finding signs of rhinoceros in the area, so it is hoped a small population may remain. These further reports indicate that the species is continuing to hold its own in Zambia generally, and that in the Luangwa Valley it has to be regarded as common.

### **Some Bird Books**

*A Guide to the Birds of Wales*, by David Saunders (Constable, £2.50), is a most useful addition to British topographical bird guides. For each of the old Welsh counties, which fortunately still survive for naturalists as Watsonian vice-counties, he gives a general topographical and ecological summary, information about avifaunas, bird reports, local societies and important bird-watching sites, and a checklist of the birds.

*Flight Identification of European Raptors* (Poyser, Berkhamsted, Herts, £4.80), by R. F. Porter, Ian Willis, Steen Christensen and Bent Pors Nielsen, is a reprint of eight invaluable articles in *British Birds* on a most difficult aspect of the bird-watcher's art, but one in which real progress has been made in the past ten years. Each species is represented by a series of excellent drawings and black-and-white photographs (colour is much less useful here than for most birds), and there is a useful new chapter on the birds' legal status.

After 34 years it is good to see *Watching Birds*, James Fisher's fuse that ignited the great modern bird-watching explosion, in a new edition brought thoroughly up to date by Jim Flegg, who as Director of the British Trust for Ornithology, occupies the corresponding position to Fisher in 1940. (Poyser, Berkhamsted, Herts, £2.80).

Another standard field guide in a revised edition is Dr Boonsong's admirable *Bird Guide of Thailand*, in which he is now assisted with the text by Edward W. Cronin, Jr; the illustrations are still all his own. Obtainable from the FPS office, £4.75, UK post paid.

*Birds of the West Indies*, by James Bond (Collins, £2.95), is now in its fourth edition, as befits a standard field guide.