



Crisis for the northern White Rhino

Dr Kes Hillman, member of the IUCN Species Survival Commission's African Elephant and Rhino Specialist Group, reports on the status of the northern White Rhino:

Africa has two races of White Rhino, the northern subspecies (*Ceratotherium simum cottoni*) and the southern subspecies (*Ceratotherium simum simum*). Northern White Rhinos, distinguished by the shape of their skull, were discovered for the western world in 1900. At that time the only previously known White Rhinos belonged to the southern race, south of the Zambezi, over 2,500 kilometres away, and these had been reduced to relict populations once said to number only 10 individuals. Now the situation is reversed. There are over 3,000 southern White Rhinos redistributed throughout their former range and we are faced with a question for the northern white rhinos: 'Can we achieve a similar conservation success, or do we allow the whole subspecies to become extinct?'

At the start of this century, the northern White Rhino probably occurred west of the Nile from the north-western corner of Uganda and north-eastern corner of Zaire, north through Sudan to just above Shambe and west roughly between 5 and 9° N to the present Central African Republic and southern edge of Chad. Throughout this range it had a very patchy distribution, probably determined negatively by the presence of people and

positively by the burned riverine grasslands associated with areas of savanna woodland and available water.

Areas that were given theoretical conservation status included: Ajai Sanctuary and the forest reserves of Mt. Kei and Otze in Uganda; Parc National de la Garamba in Zaire; Nimule and Southern National Parks and Shambe and Numatina Game Reserves in Sudan; Reserve de Zemonga and Parc National de Goz Sassoulka in C.A.R. and Chad.

The placid White Rhino, grazing in open grasslands and blissfully unaware of what is happening downwind, is easy

prey for man. The conservation forces of these countries have often had inadequate resources to protect their vast areas and wars have taken their toll. White Rhinos are now extinct in seven, probably eight of the above 'sanctuaries'. Parc National de la Garamba has generally offered the best protection; it was well protected after its establishment in 1928 and the reported 100 rhinos that existed then had increased to an estimated 1,000 to 3,000 before Simba guerilla forces occupied the park in 1963. In 1972, Curry-Lindahl estimated that 900 to 1,000 had been killed during the disturbances. With



WWF/E. Schultze

A northern White Rhino.

If you were not interested in Wildlife...



... you would not be reading this magazine!
 Don't settle for less than an authentic traditional safari and discover the old world of style, quality and personal attention

Observe the game at your own pace, see the real unspoiled Africa. Enjoy the privacy and luxury of your very own safari camp, with professional wildlife guides, stalking game with your camera and walks are possible.

We also do horse and trekking safaris. Your hosts: Alexey and Sally Braguine,

Adventure Associates (Kenya)
 Private Bag, Nyeri, Kenya
 Telephone: Nyeri 2541



We represent Africa's most prestigious safari outfitters

AFRICAN ADVENTURES (USA) LTD.
 47 Sidney Place
 Brooklyn Heights, N.Y. 11201
 Tel: (212)855-1205



SAFARI CONSULTANTS
 83B Gloucester Place
 London W1H 3PG, England
 Tel: (01) 486-4774

CALL US FOR A PERSONAL CONSULTATION

FROM WWF & IUCN



regained control of the park, numbers increased again and 490 were estimated to be present by an FAO aerial survey in 1976.

The civil war in Sudan also eliminated many rhinos there. The famous rhinos of Nimule were wiped out and most of those near Juba and in Yei district and Numatina have been destroyed. In Uganda, all those in West Nile Province were killed during Amin's time and the subsequent liberation war, and only the odd one or two remain of those translocated to Murchison Falls National Park in the 1960s. In 1969/70 Corfield and Hamilton were unable to confirm the existence of White Rhinos in eastern C.A.R. though they have since been found in the west. They have almost certainly been lost from Chad.

As a result of the 1970/80 survey of the status of rhinos in Africa, the northern White Rhino was identified as the most endangered of the African rhinos and projects were developed for its conservation in the then relatively high density areas of Shambe Game Reserve in Sudan and Parc National de la Garamba in Zaire. Funds were not immediately available, however, and a new wave of poaching took hold of both countries around 1979/81 as the commercial value of the horn became more widely realised and arms more easily available. An emergency mission went to Kinshasa and Garamba in October/November 1982, consisting of Ian Hughes, Kes Hillman and Paul Dutton, as well as Pat Rogers of FAO and Mankoto ma Mbaelele. Directeur Scientifique et Technique of the Institut Zairois pour la Conservation de la Nature (IZCN). We ascertained that rhinos still exist in Garamba, although in low numbers, and we proposed immediate aid for anti-poaching as well as long term assistance.

Starting in January 1983, a more detailed survey is being carried out by Kes Hillman, in conjunction, for the aerial work in Garamba, with Markus Borner of Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and with members of IZCN and the Wildlife Department, Southern Sudan. Funding for the ground work is from World Wildlife Fund. The aerial work is carried out with the support of FZS and the Global Ecological Monitoring System (GEMS) of UNEP.

The overall objective is to find out how many of the northern White Rhinos are left and what can be done for their conservation. In Zaire this has involved carrying out aerial and ground censuses and making detailed conservation recommendations. In Sudan the priorities are to assess the situation in the areas most recently known to have had reasonable populations of White Rhinos (Shambe

Reserve and Southern National Park) and to follow up leads on other possible populations.

The results so far are depressing for Sudan and dangerously low, but optimistic, for Garamba.

The results of the survey have emphasised how important it is to develop the breeding and management of the northern White Rhinos already in captivity. It was believed that there were only 14 in captivity but recent information indicates that there are more. The possibility of consolidating these animals into two groups is being considered and the International Union of Directors of

Zoological Gardens and American Association of Zoo Parks and Aquariums have agreed to oversee a programme. The largest group at present are the eight in Czechoslovakia which are breeding, but slowly. Artificial insemination is being developed and it is possible that semen could be collected from immobilised wild rhinos in Garamba.

An investment of money and effort is needed now for a coordinated programme of conservation in the wild and development of captive breeding in northern White Rhinos and their habitats are to continue to exist.



The best tastes from Tamarind

The Best Tastes of the Sea Tamarind, Nairobi and Mombasa

The seafood in Kenya is plentiful and varied and the Tamarind restaurants are justifiably referred to as 'Africa's finest' for seafood. Enjoy dining under the stars overlooking the old Mombasa harbour or in the quiet elegance of Tamarind Nairobi. They're a must for every visitor to Kenya.

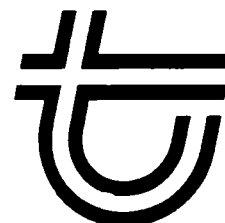
Tamarind, Mombasa tel: 471747
Tamarind, Nairobi tel: 338959



The Best Tastes of the Country Carnivore, Nairobi

The Carnivore is undoubtedly the best meat restaurant in Kenya. Every type of meat roasted over charcoal and carved at your table. Exciting side-dishes and sauces complement this low, fixed-price feast. Like the Tamarinds the service and decor are outstanding.

Carnivore, Nairobi tel: 501775/501709/501779



Tamarind Limited

PO Box 74493 Nairobi Kenya Telephone 332526