

of the meat. They exercise great care during the whole operation not to be sensed by the unharmed elephants at any stage of the operation, otherwise they would be sensed as responsible for the death.

However it remains to be for me the most fascinating of all animals and is feared and respected by all its subordinates, including Man.

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BLACK AND WHITE RHINOS IN THE UMFOLOSI
GAME RESERVE

by D.H. Dales

Umfolosi Game Reserve in Zululand abounds in both the black and white rhino, but its main claim to fame is the white rhino, and this is because a few years ago Umfolosi was their last haven. Fortunately the white rhino's numbers have since increased and they have been distributed among other game reserves.

As opposed to common belief, one is not black and the other white. How the white rhino got its name, nobody knows, though it has been suggested that this is a derivation from the old Cape Dutch word "witte", meaning huge. The white and black rhinos are also known respectively as the "square-lip" and "round-lip" rhinos. Another important distinguishing mark is the prominent hump on the back of the white rhino which the black rhino does not have. The black rhino, a browser, can lift its head up. This the white rhino, a grazer, is unable to do. The black rhino is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a ton lighter than the white - which weighs about $3\frac{3}{4}$ tons - and their gestation period is about 18 months as opposed to that of the white rhino, which is about 25 months.

The white rhino bull is very territorial in his habitat. He claims an area of bush for himself and then makes heaps of dung, known as middens, to mark the boundary. The black rhino on the other hand, prefers to roam. According to fossils the white rhino has remained practically unevolved for the last six million years. The black rhino, though, has evolved tremendously because it has adapted itself much more freely to a changing environment and this tends to explain why they are much more numerous and widespread than the white rhino.

The white rhino under normal conditions is very docile and will lumber away at the clapping of one's hands. The exception to this is when they get confused as they then charge in the direction they are facing. Virtually nothing stops them. A white rhino cow with a calf can also be dangerous. The black rhino however is extremely unpredictable and has a really black temper. Both types of rhino have very poor eyesight but a keen sense of smell.

To spread the rhino population to the other reserves to prevent overcrowding, the rangers shoot darts that inject a sleeping drug into them. They are then moved while unconscious to the bomas, stout wooden enclosures, where they are kept for three months until they are docile enough to be transported to the other game reserves. Surprisingly enough the black rhino settles down quicker than the white rhino.



The Redwing

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