

THE MAMMALS OF
RHODESIA, ZAMBIA
AND MALAWI

A Handbook by
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COLLINS
ST JAMES'S PLACE, LONDON
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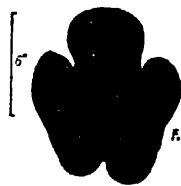
Family RHINOCEROTIDAE: Rhinoceros

SQUARE-LIPPED RHINOCEROS *Ceratotherium simum*

Plate 5 no. 6

Alternative Name White Rhinoceros.

Description General colour grey black, head very long and massive, upper lip straight with no trace of a proboscis. Nostril an elongated slit, parallel to the mouth, ears longer, tubular and more pointed than the Black Rhino and larger. Hairless except for a fringe along the edge of the ears and bristles on either side of the extremity of the tail. Two horns, composed of fused epidermal cells, arising from the skin on the snout, the front longer than the rear. The front horn averaging, in Natal, about 24" and more slender than in the Black Rhino, normally curved gently backwards, the upper part in the front usually slightly flattened through contact with the ground. Aberrant front horns known, these straight and pointing forwards at an angle. The posterior horn as a rule straight, conical and laterally flattened and nearly square at the base, averaging about 9". Horns of cows more slender than those of the bulls and usually longer. Measurements: overall up to 9'0", tail 2'0". Height at shoulder about 5'6" for males, 5'0" for females; tubular ears 11", females slightly smaller than males. Weight: adult males about 4000 lb., females 3000 lb.



Distribution Formerly widely distributed in Rhodesia and recorded by Selous from Matabeleland and east to near Hartley from 1872-80, the last specimen was shot near Mazoe in 1895 by A. Eyre, and it is now in the South African Museum, Cape Town. Reintroduced in 1962 from Natal to the Matopos National Park and the Kyle Dam Reserve, Fort Victoria, Rhodesia. Never recorded from Zambia or Malawi, but in the former may have occurred in south-western Barotseland.

Habitat Grassland or open tree and bush savanna.

Habits Solitary or in pairs or small family parties. Feeding in the late afternoon and early morning, they normally take to the shade of thick bush during the heat of the day, where they sleep standing up or lying down with their feet doubled up under them, or on their sides. Dependent on water, drinking at night and very fond of wallowing in mud. Less active than the Black Rhino and heavier in its movements. Eyesight poor but sense of smell and hearing acute, mild tempered, sluggish, timid and inquisitive. When on the move the head is carried low, the front horn nearly scraping on the ground, the young preceding the mother who follows closely behind, as opposed to the Black Rhino whose young follows the mother. Males fight savagely during the rutting season. Tends to deposit its excrement in the same place, large piles eventually accumulating. Can gallop faster than a man running.

Diet Almost exclusively perennial grasses.

Breeding In Natal about July, August, one at a birth. Gestation period about 18 months.

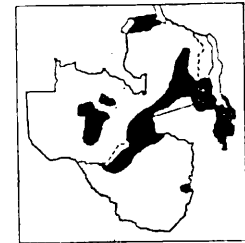
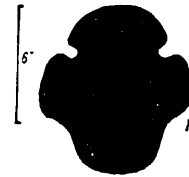
General Occurs in Sudan, Uganda, and adjacent areas, this population normally considered racially different from those in southern Africa. Easily distinguished from the Black Rhinoceros in the possession of a massive hump at the junction of the neck and shoulders, the tail in this species, when on the move, looped over the back and not held erect as in the case of the Black Rhino.

BLACK RHINOCEROS *Diceros bicornis*

Plate 5 no. 7

Description General colour slaty grey, practically hairless except on the margins of the ears and on either side of the extremity of

the tail. Upper lip with a distinct triangular, prehensile, median prolongation like a rudimentary trunk, nostrils oval, eye very small, ears funnel shaped with rounded tips. Legs solid and massive, each with three broad nail-like hooves. Two horns, composed of fused epidermal cells, arising from the skin on the snout, the front longer than the rear, up to 30" and 19" respectively, average however much less. Measurements: overall about 8'0", tail 2'0". Height at shoulder about 5'0", ears 9". Weight: males up to 2500 lb., females 2000 lb.



Distribution Localised, formerly much more widespread as it has been shot out in many parts of the territory by hunters and for the horns which are in demand in the Orient. Still occurs in the Southern and Central Provinces of Malawi, in Zambia in the Kafue National Park and adjacent areas, Luangwa and Luano Valleys, the Zambezi Valley east of Lake Kariba, northern Mporokoso district and west of Abercorn. In Rhodesia, now confined to the middle Zambezi Valley on the south bank of the Kariba Lake and the whole of the valley eastwards to the Portuguese border and parts of the Chipinga and Darwin areas. Vagrants wander far from these areas on occasion. Recently reintroduced from the Kariba Lake area to the Wankie National Park.

Habitat Woodland and thickets, especially areas of dense thorn-bush in broken country, wandering to feed.

Habits Usually solitary, in pairs or a female with a calf. Pre-

dominantly diurnal, but will water and move at night. Dependent on a plentiful water supply. Grunts, snorts and squeals loudly. Its poor eyesight is more than offset by its keen sense of smell and hearing. It is abundantly curious, singularly nervous and highly irascible, and, in paroxysms of fury, will tear up the ground or any handy object such as a bush or ant heap when wounded or seriously annoyed. Very fond of mud wallows. When moving, the young follows the mother as opposed to the White Rhino where the young precedes the mother.

Diet Almost exclusively a browser, but in some areas grazing seasonally.

Breeding A single young at a birth, apparently no fixed season. Gestation period about 16 to 18 months.

General At one time occurring widely in southern Africa, the species has gradually been shot out except in parts of Natal and Zululand, the Eastern Transvaal and Portuguese East Africa, northern South West Africa, Angola and northern Bechuanaland. It occurs northwards to East Africa and westwards to Lake Chad. Recorded by Baines, 1867-70 journey, as occurring on the highveld of Rhodesia as far east as about Hartley, and by Selous, 1878-80, as being quite numerous between the Limpopo and Zambezi, the trade in their horns, which commenced about 1880, leading to their quick extinction in large areas.