

With the scheme envisaged, they would be better equipped to study the habits of individual species in a comparatively concentrated area and they could watch the effects of drought, disease, overstocking and loss of life by predators with benefit to the entire Park. From a tourist point of view, I venture to say that, by creating such a reserve within the Park, South Africa would be able to boast of the finest game sanctuary anywhere in the world.

Kensington

B. J. BRIDGE

### WHITE RHINO

6105

The Editor, "African Wild Life",

Sir,—In a recent edition of "African Wild Life" I noticed a report that white rhino are to be introduced into the Gorongosa National Park in Portuguese East Africa.

I would like to know, however, whether the authorities concerned with this transfer are sure that white rhino ever existed in the area now covered by the Gorongosa Park.

Although these animals were common in the Transvaal, Rhodesia and the southern part of P.E.A., I have found no record of white rhino having occurred in the Gorongosa area or anywhere north of the Save river in P.E.A. A study of the overall distribution of the white rhino seems to indicate that it never inhabited the more tropical and wetter savannah regions, better termed "bushforests", of Africa, but was only found in the more temperate savannah, better known as "bushveld". European hunters and travellers of the last century report it as common in the bushveld of Natal, Transvaal, Southern P.E.A. and Rhodesia, but in Zambia, Malawi and P.E.A. north of the Save, where the vegetation is more of the "bushforest" than "bushveld" type, it was completely unknown.

Two other species, the giraffe and tsessebe, although common in the bushveld regions are not found in the bushforests and therefore are also absent from Gorongosa. I only hope that nobody decides that they, too, should be introduced there. The introduction of alien species to this wonderful "Nature Park" can only tend to change it into a large Zoo.

Any further information about this most interesting matter will be highly appreciated.

Bloemfontein.

DR. M. J. HAVENGA

### TREE DASSIES

The Editor, "African Wild Life",

Sir,—When we are on holiday at Port St. John we frequently hear the nocturnal call of the "tree dassie". We cannot find out anything about this little creature. The only picture we have seen is in Leslie Brown's "Africa". This is the tree hyrax of Fernando Poo and we do not know if this is the same as ours. There is no real information on it in the book — only a small picture.

We have become interested in the little animals, have taped their eerie call and would like any information on them that you can give us.

Pietermaritzburg.

JOSEPHINE OLWER (Mrs.)

An authority whom we consulted writes:

"Tree dassies and their habits are relatively unknown. In South Africa we have *Dendrohyrax arboreus*, which occurs in the Natal Midlands and the Eastern Cape Province as far south as Addo. Individuals of this species occur singly and are of course mainly nocturnal. This is a different species from the one in Fernando Poo (*Dendrohyrax dorsalis*) or the Western tree dassie. *Dendrohyrax arboreus* is known as the Southern tree dassie, while yet a third species (*Dendrohyrax validus*) or the Eastern tree dassie, occurs in Tanzania. Information on the

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