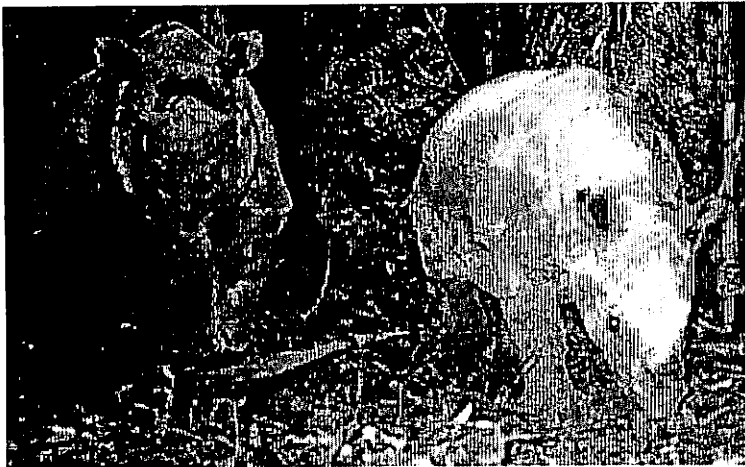


Camera traps snap rare rhino calves

17:01 10 October 01



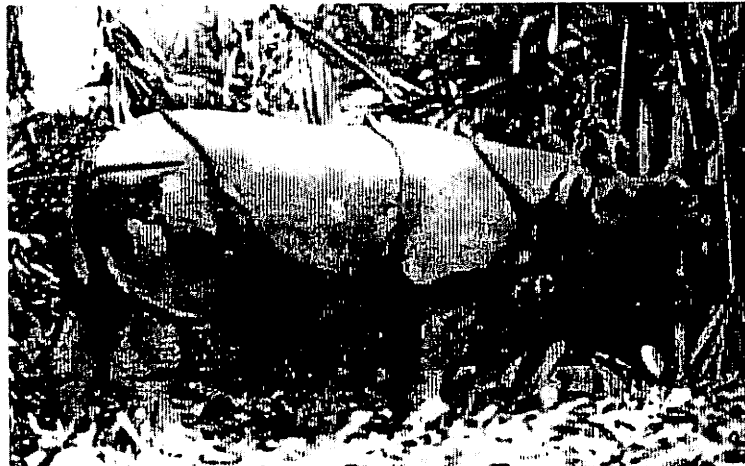
Calf and mother captured by a camera trap (Photo: WWF)

Camera traps have revealed the birth of four Javan rhinoceroses over the last two years in Ujung Kulon National Park in Java, Indonesia. The new arrivals bring hope of population growth for the highly endangered species.

The traps, which are triggered as the rhinos pass by, captured images of two of the rare calves. DNA and footprint evidence have confirmed the existence of two more calves.

Ten camera traps were set up in the park by conservationists in January 2000 and the new calves were snapped between August 2000 and January 2001.

"The births are a significant step and indicate that the rhinoceros are breeding with potential for further population gains after years of zero growth," said Nazir Foad, Deputy Director for Species Conservation at the WWF in Indonesia.



Only 50 Javan Rhino are left in Indonesia (Photo: WWF)

Ujung Kulon was established in 1958 to protect the rhinos' habitat from local agricultural development. In the 1930s the rhino population had dipped to just 25 animals.

Ujung Kulan now contains around 50 Javan rhino, the only significant population in the world. A handful more animals were discovered in 1999 in Cat Tien National Park in Vietnam.

The goal of conservationists is to increase the park's population to 80 and then relocate some of the Rhino to other parts of Indonesia.