

THE MAMMALS

A guide to the living species

by

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R. Order PERISSODACTYLA. Odd-toed Ungulates.

Suborder HIPPIOMORPHA.

Superfamily EQUOIDEA.

Family EQUIDAE. Horses.

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|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 ▶ <i>Equus przewalskii</i> . | Wild Horse. Cen. Asia. (EM) |
| 2 <i>Equus caballus</i> . | Horse. (Domestic) |
| 3 ▶ <i>Equus hemionus</i> . | Asiatic Wild Ass. Asia. (EM) |
| 4 <i>Equus asinus</i> . | African Wild Ass (and Domestic Donkey). E. Africa. (A) |
| 5 ▶ <i>Equus zebra</i> . | Mountain Zebra. S. Africa. (EMH) |
| 6 ▶ <i>Equus burchelli</i> . | Common Zebra. Africa. (EMH) |
| 7 ▶ <i>Equus grevyi</i> . | Grévy's Zebra. Cen. E. Africa. (A) |

Suborder CERATOMORPHA.

Superfamily TAPIROIDEA.

Family TAPIRIDAE. Tapirs.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 8 ▶ <i>Tapirus indicus</i> . | Malayan Tapir. Sumatra and Malaya. (EM) |
| 9 ▶ <i>Tapirus terrestris</i> . | South American Tapir. S. America. (C2) |
| 10 <i>Tapirus pinchaque</i> . | Mountain Tapir. S. America. (C2) |
| 11 <i>Tapirus bairdi</i> . | Central American Tapir. Cen. and S. America. (C2) |

Superfamily RHINOCEROTOIDEA.

Family RHINOCEROTIDAE. Rhinoceroses.

Subfamily RHINOCEROTINAE. One-horned Rhinos.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 12 ▶ <i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i> . | Great Indian Rhinoceros. S. Asia. (EM) |
| 13 <i>Rhinoceros sondaicus</i> . | Javan Rhinoceros. S. Asia, Sumatra, Java. (EM) |

Subfamily DICERORHININAE. Two-horned Rhinos.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 14 <i>Didermoceros sumatrensis</i> . | Sumatran Rhinoceros. S. Asia, Sumatra, Borneo. (EM) |
| 15 ▶ <i>Diceros simus</i> . | White Rhinoceros. Africa. (EM) |
| 16 ▶ <i>Diceros bicornis</i> . | Black Rhinoceros. Africa. (EM) |



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GREAT INDIAN RHINOCEROS

Family RHINOCEROTIDAE

Rhinoceros unicornis

(Nepal, Bengal and Assam)

There are five species of rhinoceros alive today, three in Asia and two in Africa. The largest of the Asiatic forms is the Great Indian Rhinoceros, which is confined to jungle and grassland areas of Nepal, Bengal and Assam. Like the African Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) it has a pointed, prehensile upper lip, but unlike the African forms, it has only one large horn. This is present in both sexes. The male may be 14 feet long, stand 6 feet high at the shoulder and weigh over 2 tons. The horn is rather short and blunt, but there is a pair of sharp-edged incisor tusks in the lower jaw. When attacking, this species slashes with these tusks, rather than charging with its horn.

The body of the Indian Rhinoceros is covered with a heavy, "studded" armour which is prominently folded in front of the shoulder, behind the shoulder, and in front of the thigh. The tail is set in a deep groove of this armour. Almost the only hair visible is a fringe on the end of the ears and the tip of the tail.

The Great Indian Rhinoceros is an inoffensive, retiring animal and usually solitary. It is strictly territorial, with tracks through the tall grasses, fixed dung-pile sites, and personal mud wallows. The food consists largely of grasses, shoots and reeds. A single offspring weighing over 100 lb. is born after a gestation period of about 18 months.

The other Asiatic rhinos are the Javan Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) which is smaller, horned usually only in the male, and practically extinct; and the Sumatran Rhinoceros (*Didermocerus sumatrensis*) which has two horns and a hairy coat.

WHITE RHINOCEROS

Diceros simus

(Central Africa and Zululand)

Amongst all the land mammals, the White Rhinoceros is second only to the elephant in size. An adult male measures 6 feet at the shoulder and may weigh more than 3 tons. Only slightly paler in colour than the Black Rhinoceros, the White species is believed to have acquired its name from the Afrikaans word *Wit*, meaning wide, which refers to the broad, square-lipped mouth that distinguishes it from the Black. Other diagnostic features are the prominent hump between the shoulders and the longer head.

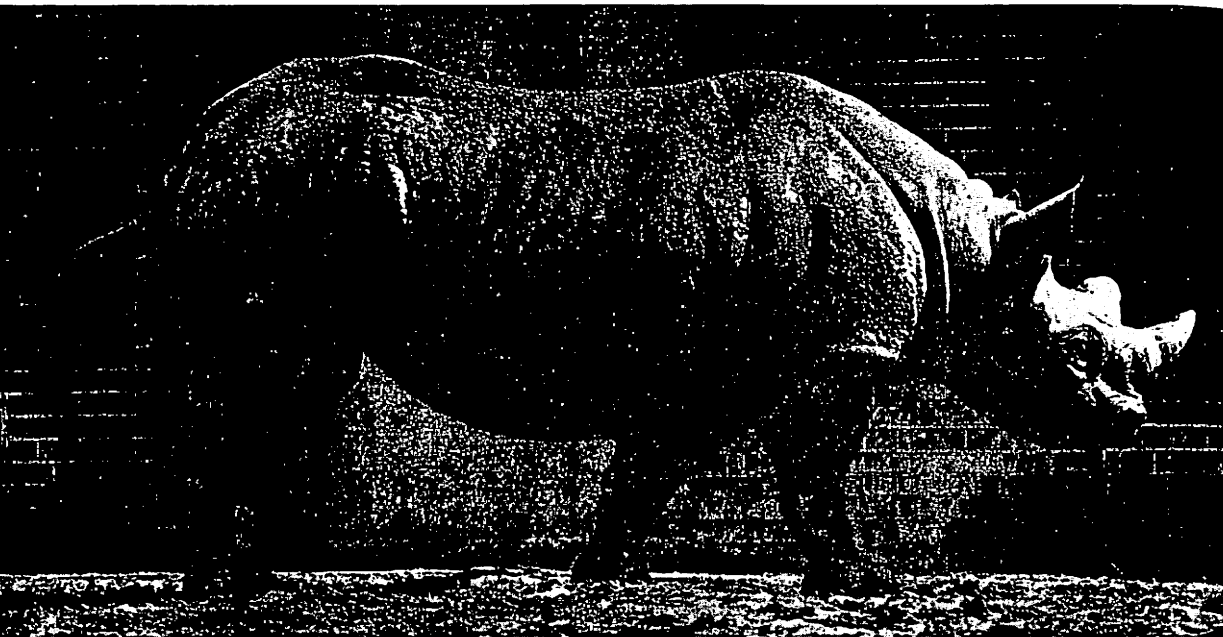
The White Rhinoceros is confined today to two distinct and separate areas. In the more northerly of the two they are found in Uganda, the Congo, and the Sudan. Two thousand miles farther south, they occur in Zululand, where a recent count gave their number as approximately 600. In both areas they live in thorny savannah, but subsist almost entirely on grasses, using the trees only for cover. Water is essential both for daily drinking and for bathing.

A single offspring is born after a gestation period of 18 months, is only fully weaned at 12 months, and remains with the female for several years.

Rhinoceroses have weak vision, but the senses of smell and hearing are acute. The poor eyesight is compensated for by the presence of small birds, the Red-billed Oxpeckers (*Buphagus erythrorhynchus*), that travel on the Rhinoceros's back and sound an alarm in times of danger. Over most of the present distribution of the Rhinoceros there are few predators large enough to cause it any concern, but lions and crocodiles undoubtedly account for a number of wayward young.

The White Rhinoceros used to be considered as a separate genus (*Ceratotherium simum*) but this view is no longer held.





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Family RHINOCEROTIDAE

BLACK RHINOCEROS

Diceros bicornis

(Central and Southern Africa)

The Black Rhinoceros is the more common of the two African species. Unlike the White, or Square-lipped Rhinoceros, this species has an upper lip that is long and pointed, forming a prehensile organ—an adaptation to its life as a browser. It feeds usually on the leaves and shoots of shrubs and bushes.

Both sexes are horned, as with all species except the Javan Rhinoceros. The front horn averages about 18 inches long, and the rear 7 inches. They are composed of a solid mass of closely packed vertical fibres, with a slight hollow at the base resting upon a corresponding prominence on the bones of the skull.

The single offspring is born during the rainy season after a 16 to 18 months' gestation period, and is adult at 5 years. Its life expectancy in the wild has been estimated at about 25 years.

During the heat of the day the Black Rhinoceros lies up in the shade. It is partly diurnal, browsing during the late evening and early morning in its territory of about 10 square miles. At sunset it visits the near-by water-holes. Droppings are deposited in scooped-out hollows beside the territorial paths, and scattered with the forefeet.

The Black Rhinoceros is, like the White, becoming extremely scarce in the bushy country of its choice, and is now found mainly in game reserves. Its former range extended from the Cape, north to Egypt.

This species has a reputation for being "bad-tempered", but this has been wildly exaggerated. Usually it flees with its tail erect and avoids trouble, but if it is childishly baited by "Land-rover cowboys" it may well turn and charge.