



Now Rhino is on the way out in Kenya

3996

by Ellis Monks

THE BLACK RHINO is now seriously menaced in Kenya. This has been evident to conservationists for some time; recently mentioned in tourist's letters in the local Press—and now confirmed officially in the Customs & Excise Report for 1976.

This shows that 3,339 kgms of rhino horn was exported from Kenya. And from statistics from recovered horns, which puts the average weight of a rhino horn at 2.1 kgms; this means the export represents some 1,600 horns.

The back horn is often discarded, at least by poachers, and so an export of 1,600 horns would represent approximately 1,200 rhinos.

Reviewing the exports over the last eight years we find that the official figures read:—

Year	EXPORT		
	Weight	horns	rhinos (approx.)
1969	2,497 lbs	540	390
1970	1,093 kgms	520	380
1971	1,472 kgms	700	525
1972	8,370 kgms	4,000	3,000
1973	3,182 kgms	1,510	1,140
1974	838 kgms	400	300
1975	838 kgms	400	300
1975	4,783 kgms	2,230	1,650
1976	3,339 kgms	1,600	1,200

Much has been said of the hunters' contribution to the destruction of game in Kenya—and so it is important to look at the off-take from professional hunting which must be added to the export estimates. Unfortunately figures are incomplete, but at no time did the hunters take the full number of rhino for which licences were issued—and paid for . . .

Year	HUNTED	
	Licences issued	Rhinos shot
1969	29	17
1970		25
1971	41	
1972	34	9
1973	60	23

PRICE

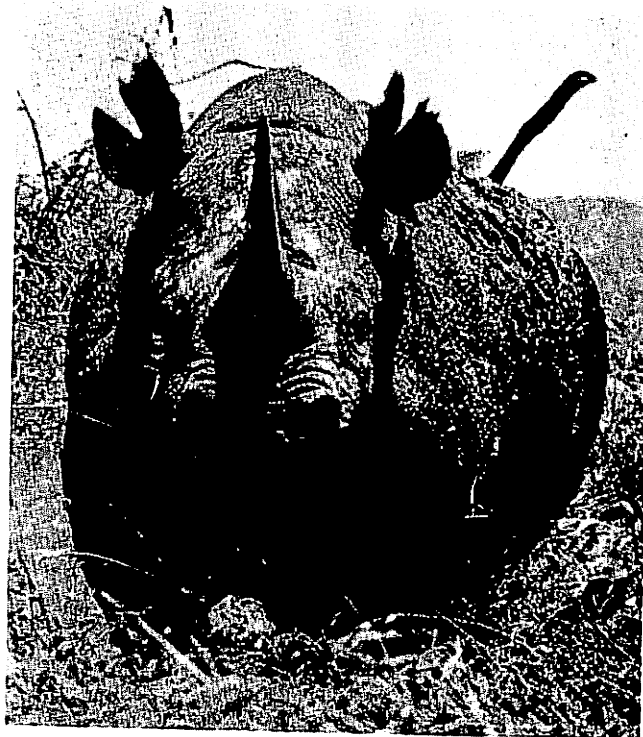
In 1975 the price of rhino horn was KShs. 233/-per kgm., but in 1976 this had risen to KShs. 900/-.

WHAT'S LEFT

Estimates of rhino population in Kenya are based on the work of Dr. John Goddard in 1968 when a figure for the Tsavo ecosystem of 6,000 was proposed and a total for Kenya of approx. 11,000. In 1976 a similar survey of Tsavo revealed approx. 2,500 with an extrapolation of approx. 4,500 for the whole of Kenya. These figures accord with other estimates.

It would seem, therefore, that drought and illegal killing is steadily exterminating a species which has existed for 70 million years in its varying forms

Going out of existence in Kenya, not as an evolutionary failure, but mostly because of man's ignorance and cupidity.



CHARGING RHINO—dramatic shot by Arthur Radcliffe Dugmore—circa 1909. The picture is taken from a new book "Early Wildlife Photographers" by C. A. W. Guggisberg (Pub: David & Charles) which will be reviewed in the next issue of "Africana."

Poachers wreck Meru's white rhino herd

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SOMALI poachers have virtually destroyed Kenya's only public white rhino herd in Meru National Park.

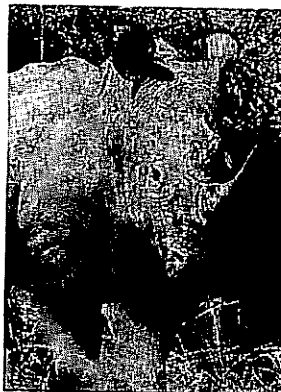
They drove the docile, hand-reared animals across the park boundary and shot the herd's two breeding bulls and a pregnant female. That leaves five cows—and no future unless a politically difficult and expensive translocation is arranged with Umfalozi National Park in South Africa. It was reported that the poachers would have received

Shs. 1,800/- for each horn in Nairobi. The Meru Park authorities are believed to know who organised the massacre, but no arrests have been announced to date.

The Meru herd was introduced from South Africa in 1964 at enormous cost and effort. There were not really enough of them for breeding up in strength, and repopulating the Park, but Warden Peter Jenkins did his utmost to nurture and protect them so that the herd would at least be self-sustaining.

They were a great attraction for Meru, a unique asset which gave the Park at least a small competitive edge on the more easily accessible Samburu Reserve.

The motive of the poachers is now in question: commercial or political provocation. There has been systematic destruction of wildlife in Northern Kenya by Somali gangs which is seriously undermining Kenya's tourism revenue. It should be dealt with not by the anti-poaching unit alone, but with all the force that Kenya can bring to bear.



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Endangered Species stamps

FOR the first time in Kenya's philatelic history a set of stamps has been issued bearing the logo of a private organisation.

The Endangered Species set, issued on September 16, 1977, carried the Panda logo of the World Wildlife Fund on each of its five stamps. The 50 cts stamp portrays the Pancake Tortoise (*Malacochersus tornieri*), a rare species found around Lake Victoria and in the vicinity of Lindi at the Coast. The Nile Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) appears on the Sh. 1/- stamp and on the Shs. 2/- is the Hunters Hartebeest (*Damaliscus hunteri*) found only in a small coastal area between the Tana River and the Juba River. A group of Hunters hartebeest was captured and translocated to Tsavo National Park in an effort to help save the species.

On the Shs. 3/- issue is shown the Red Colobus Monkey (*Colobus badius*) which is confined to a small strip of the Tana River now a National Reserve. The population is not thought to be more than 150.

On the Shs. 5/- issue is shown the Dugong (*dugong dugong*). This rare "sea cow" is the mermaid of mythology and closely related to the manatee which is also endangered. In Kenya it occurs in a restricted area near Lamu where it is hoped to establish a new marine reserve.

SUPPORT WWF—KENYA

IT IS now proposed to invite "Annual Supporters" to WWF Kenya. A donation of 60/- will bring "Africana" quarterly; Panda Newsletters as published; a Panda car sticker and the knowledge that you are supporting a voluntary organisation, with your donation going entirely to the conservation projects here in Kenya.

Annual Supporter Donations of K.Shs. 60/- (\$8) should be sent to World Wildlife Fund, Kenya, Box 40075, Nairobi, Kenya.

Hunters—the formal farewell to arms

by Ada Wincza

ERNEST HEMINGWAY died before the "Green Hills of Africa" were depleted of his beloved Greater Kudu. His disciple and follower, Robert Ruark, was one of the last to blow the "Horn of the Hunter" in the wilderness which was then still an animal's paradise. Soon after the death of those two giants of the pen and rifle, the situation of the East African game started to deteriorate. The great animals of the bush and plains died in large numbers due to uncontrolled poaching and the people responsible for this deplorable fact did little to contribute "Something of Value in place of the game."

To write the epitaph for the now defunct East African Professional Hunters' Association, one needs the talent of the two above mentioned authors, but they are no more. . . . With great humility, therefore, I will endeavour instead to write what is perhaps an emblematic epitaph—a pair of elephant tusks which for so many years adorned the premises of the Association. These were the mute witnesses of the history of this noble organization; and they were also the symbol of the glory

which has passed away forever.

The tusks were presented in 1946 to the East African Professional Hunters' Association, by Mrs. Lorna Anderson, the widow of Major "Andy" Anderson M.C., known also by his African name of *Bwana Mguu* ("Mr. Leg"). He probably got this name because he had one stiff leg, the result of having been mauled by a wounded lion in 1908. But, despite his lameness, he often travelled two hundred miles on foot to secure a large tusker—no comfortable drive in a Land Rover for this nimrod of yesteryear.

Contrary to common belief, the tusks presented to the Association were not the last to be obtained by Major Anderson before his death in 1946. Nevertheless, the story of Anderson's last elephant fascinated me always, and many years ago I wrote a small poem in honour of this noble hunter who lived and died according to the motto of the Association of which he was a founder member: "*Nec timor nec terneritas*"—"Neither fear nor foolhardiness". I quote a few lines from this poem:

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WHAT A PLEASANT experience, and what a fine volume.

Just for a change a book has appeared on the market which has been produced because its authors have something to say—and say it well. And that's refreshing.

Most of the rash of "environmental/wildlife/tribes" products which currently clutter the bookshelves are mealy-mouthed "coffee-tables"; safari spectacles filled with rather mediocre (but very large) animal pictures and some overly-contrived "people" shots—all strung together with precious few words; banalities and semantics, which have been trotted out a thousand times before and usually far more articulately. One if thus left wondering if either the publishers are hard up for material or if the field is so lucrative that anything goes.

"The Pyramids of Life", by contrast, is a first-class work. It is a detailed and competent study of the natural order extant in Africa.

Well-documented and totally

A SUPERB STUDY OF THE NATURAL ORDER

John McDougall reviews "Pyramids of life" (Collins)

by John Reader and Harvey Croze: Price: KShs. 168/-

original it defines the nuts and bolts of ecological law as applied through the natural hierarchies found in the wild; mammals, reptiles, birds and fishes, down to single-celled protozoans and the rich and diverse flora of the continent—the balance between plants and plant-eaters, predators and prey.

The book explains the fragile inter-dependance of all these—and further it shows that however bizarre the triumph, re-creation and final tragedy, there is no accident in the pattern. In the natural state, the complexities of that order are predetermined for it is a continuous and circular process.

"Pyramids", sub-titled "*An Investigation of Nature's Fearful Symmetry*", is also possessed of excellent photographs and happily combines these components in a complementary

marriage.

The pictures by Time/Life photographer John Reader and which are all reproduced in monochrome, are vivid, beautiful and totally self-explanatory, many revealing a skilled application of unusual techniques. Although heavily detailed the text is not laboured but lucidly embroiders its day-to-day observation and scientific investigation in an easy flow of descriptive colour.

Dr. Harvey Croze is an ecologist and was the original "Elephant man". He studied these earthly giants and ecosystems at Serengeti Research Institute and is thus well qualified to assemble such a monograph. His intimate study puts the natural order into palatable perspective; explains the dynamics of life, how it emerges from decay, struggles to perpetuate its kind—only to perish with its

triumph; how energy for that struggle is converted from the ultimate source, the sun, and how the pyramids of life are only infrastructural blocks for other pyramids to build upon.

The three sections of the book: Grasslands; Lakes and Rivers; and Forests furnish a document which not only offers the reader a fascinating insight into revelations of former-day mysteries but also provides an entertainment in reading becoming unusual with this type of publication.

The "put-together" of the volume is worthy of particular note. Its layout is a pleasing blend of aesthetic pictorial appreciation and editorial skill and is also the work of John Reader.

Any specific criticism? Yes. At Shs. 168.00 in Nairobi, the price is crippling.