

CONSERVATION



THE BLACK RHINO
(*Diceros bicornis*)

RANGE: Mainly East Africa, small areas of Central Africa, South West Africa and South Africa.

HABITAT: Plains, open woodland, thorn scrub, mountain forest, bush.

FOOD: Browses on a variety of leaves.

SIZE: Length up to 3½ metres.
Weight up to 1,300 kilogrammes.

YOUNG: 1 calf.

GESTATION: 480 days (16 months)

LONGEVITY: Up to 40 years.

NOTES: The black rhino is notorious for its poor eyesight but good hearing and sense of smell. The female looks after her calf for about 2 years and then leaves it when she becomes pregnant again.
The horn is made of closely-packed tubular fibres of keratin.

The Tsavo Rhino Sanctuary, Kenya

The Tsavo Rhino Sanctuary is the result of people responding to a crisis situation.

In 1970 the number of black rhino in Kenya was estimated to be 20,000. Today there are perhaps as few as 300.

Conservationists needed to act fast but instead of removing the last rhino from the wild and sending them to the unnatural environment of zoos, it was decided to try and create a network of specially protected Sanctuaries where the rhino could be given extra security—without removing them from their natural habitat.

Established in 1985/86, the Tsavo Rhino Sanctuary was the first special reserve to start operating inside an existing National Park; the world famous Tsavo National Park.

Originally 4 square kilometres (about 1,000 acres) the Sanctuary is in the process of expansion. Six rhino are already safely within the boundary fence and it is hoped that numbers will be increased to about 30.

Zoo Check describes the Tsavo Rhino Sanctuary as an example of 'natural conservation', protecting an endangered species at the same time as conserving

its wild habitat. It is the sort of scheme that points the way for wildlife conservation in the future and one which deserves our enthusiastic support.

POACHING—THE FACTS

Rhino are poached for their horn.

There are two main markets, the most important of which is North Yemen where it is the custom for men to wear daggers with rhino-horn handles. Prices for these daggers range from \$500 to \$12,000 and the demand is increasing.

From 1969 to 1977 a total of 22.5 tons of rhino horn was legally imported into North Yemen. This would have accounted for nearly 8,000 rhino.

The other market for the horn is the Far East where people believe it has medicinal properties. The powdered horn is said to be a cure for snake-bites, typhoid, headache, carbuncles, boils, fever, vomiting, "devil possession", hallucinations and lack of sexual drive.

Despite pressure from conservation organisations and some governments, the demand for rhino horn still persists. Until the demand is removed, the rhino will face constant threat from poachers intent on getting rich quick for a few pounds of densely-packed keratin fibres.

Golden Lion Tamarin

The Studbook database lists 468 living golden lion tamarins in 69 institutions at the end of 1986. Although this does not reflect the returns from the 1986 Studbook updates, this is a 7% increase over the 1985 population and marks the 4th year with a growth rate around 10%. Considering the carrying capacity available and appropriate for this species, this is a marked improvement over the 25% growth experienced during the early 1980s. However, there are still not enough facilities to keep up with the growing population; and control of the population growth rate still remains the most critical management consideration. Any institution wishing to receive golden lion tamarins is invited to contact

the Studbook Keeper for further information (Jon Ballou 202/673-4815 USA).

During 1986, the Management Committee considered several requests from institutions interested in exhibiting golden lion tamarins. Approved were: Zoo Atlanta, Baltimore Zoo, El Paso Zoo, Greenville Zoo, Pittsburgh Zoo, Emmen Zoo (Holland), Wildacre (England), Taipei Zoo, Zoo la Palmyre (France), the Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo and Potawatomi Zoo.

In response to the continuing growth of the population, an experimental contraceptive implant programme was initiated in late 1984. To date, 20 female golden lion tamarins have been implanted with melengestrol acetate implants supplied by Ulysses Seal. Nine