

BLACK RHINO SSP UPDATE

(continued from page 6)

The Species Coordinator discussed the trip he made with Tom Foose to Zimbabwe in July to attend a meeting about the potential acquisition of the Southern subspecies of black rhino to be managed in North America (see Zimbabwean Connection on Page 1). The establishment of a Southern African Black Rhino Survival Trust was proposed which shall comprise AAZPA SSP participants for the subspecies, AZDANZ, SAVE, Lord MacAlpine of the Pearl Coast Zoological Garden and other interested participants.

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EDITORS

Robert W. Reece

Karen B. Wachs

Comments and inquiries from Newsletter recipients are encouraged and should be directed to Robert W. Reece, Kings Island Wild Animal Habitat, Kings Island, Ohio 45034.

JAVAN RHINO STATUS REPORT

By Warren Thomas

An international symposium was convened in June, 1989, during which an assessment was made of the remaining population of Javan rhino in Ujong Kulon reserve. This population has been static at 50-60 animals over the last 10 years. It was agreed that 12-14 animals should be extracted from this population and set up in a captive breeding population, allowing the present population in Ujong Kulon to increase. It is hoped that this operation can get underway after the successful termination of the Sumatran rhino operation.

RHINOCEROS ENDOCRINOLOGY MEETING HELD AT CINCINNATI ZOO

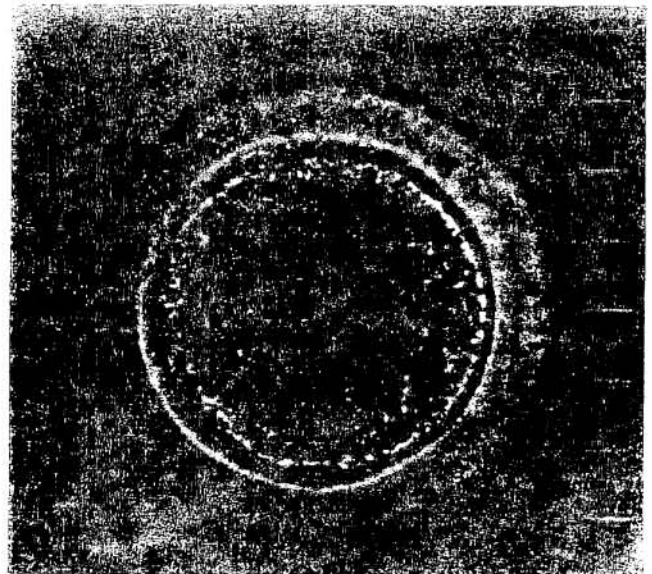
By Robert W. Godfrey

On Friday, December 8, 1989, researchers from the United States and Great Britain met at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden to discuss the development of a rhinoceros endocrine research plan. Dr. J. Keith Hodges of the London Zoo began the meeting by presenting a seminar on one of his more recent projects which involved identifying a hormone metabolite in white rhinoceros urine and the development of an enzyme immunoassay to measure the metabolite. With the assay, Dr. Hodges was able to detect changes in the urinary hormone metabolite concentration throughout the estrous cycle. Since the assay does not use isotopes as a label, it may have broader acceptance in zoo labs. Dr. Hodges plans to quantitate other hormone metabolites in rhino urine using similar assays to obtain a more complete picture of the endocrinology of the estrous cycle.

Also in attendance at the meeting was Dr. Nancy Czekala-Gruber of the San Diego Zoo Center for Reproduction of Endangered Species. Dr. Czekala-Gruber has been developing an enzyme immunoassay to measure hormone metabolites in saliva to monitor pregnancy in rhinos, and reported some of her results at the meeting.

A group discussion was held to establish a set of guidelines for conducting future endocrine research. Proposed methods of characterizing the estrous cycle hormonally were discussed. The group organized a set of criteria regarding the animals required for research, sample types and frequency of collection and the hormones that would be measured in the samples. There were several zoo veterinarians present who provided input from the managerial standpoint.

A summary of the endocrine research plan will be compiled and distributed to the SSP species coordinators so that institutions can be identified for participation in the program. The minutes of the endocrine meeting were distributed to all persons who attended. Anyone else wishing to obtain a copy should contact the Rhino Research Coordinator.



An oocyte recovered from an ovarian follicle of a white rhinoceros. Prior to her euthanization, the animal had been treated with exogenous hormones in an attempt at superovulation. A total of five oocytes were recovered from the animal, but attempts at in vitro fertilization were unsuccessful. (Photo by J.C. Andrews)