

COMMUNICATION

**RECENT RECORDS OF THE SUMATERAN RHINO,
Dicerorhinus sumatrensis, IN WAY KAMBAS
NATIONAL PARK, SUMATERA**

Joanne Reilly¹, Guy Hills Spedding², Apriawan³, Verri Iwan Setiawan⁴,
Marizal Ahmad⁵, Haerudin Rukajah Sadjudin⁶ and Widodo Sukohadi Ramono⁷.

1. Conservation Research Group, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester M1 5GD, UK
2. Foxham, Chippenham, Wiltshire SM5 4NQ, UK
3. Sub Balai KSDA, Taman Nasional Way Kambas, Way Jepara, Lampung Tengah, Sumatera
4. Jl. Elang No.1, Hadimulyo, Metro 34113, Lampung, Sumatera
5. Universitas Lampung, Jl. Prof. Dr. Soemantri, Brojonegoro 1, Bandar Lampung, Sumatera
6. Yayasan Mitra Rhino, Gedung PHPA Kehutanan, Jl. Ir. H. Juanda 15, Bogor 16122, Indonesia
7. Gedung PHPA Kehutanan, Jl. Ir. H. Juanda 15, Bogor 16122, Indonesia

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The Sumateran rhinoceros, *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, formerly widespread throughout South East Asia is one of the most endangered of all rhino species. It is estimated that there are 200 to 250 individuals surviving in scattered populations in Sumatera and a world population of approximately 400 individuals (Siswomartono *et al.*, 1996).

In 1961 the last rhino shot in Way Kambas National Park was believed to be a Javan rhino, *Rhinoceros sondaicus* (Wind *et al.*, 1979), and supported by the findings of Borner (1979, in van Strien, 1985), this led to the belief that rhinos were locally extinct. However observations of rhino dung in the 1980's (Ramono, pers. obs.) and an individual rhino in 1991 suggested that rhinos were active in the park and a cast of the latter was confirmed as belonging to a Sumateran rhino (van Strien, pers. comm.).

These signs of Sumateran rhino activity confirm the rediscovery of this species in Way Kambas National Park and were further supported by the findings of the Way Kambas 1993 expedition and the Way Kambas Project. These findings from 1993 to 1995 record a considerable amount of rhino signs indicative of rhino activity such as prints, twisted saplings, faeces, urine and scrape marks all of which were most common in secondary forest (Reilly *et al.*, 1997). These findings were supported by the sighting in 1993 of an adult sized Sumateran rhino along the main track from Plangijo to Way Kanan (Apriawan, pers. obs.).

The location and age classes of the prints (Table 1) suggests the presence of at least two adults, one juvenile and one individual of undetermined age from Wako to Kalibatin with the probability of more rhinos in the band of secondary forest to the north of Wako.

Table 1. Sumateran Rhino Prints Recorded in Way Kambas National Park

No.	Number of prints measured	Date	Location	Age class
1	1C	1991	E Way Kanan	A
2	3C	Sept. 93	Kalibatin	J/SA/A
3	4C, 2T	Oct. 93	NW and C Wako	A
4	1C, 4T	Nov. 93	E Kalibiru	J/SA/A
5	1T	Aug. 94	SE Wako	J
6	1T	Aug. 94	SE Wako	J/A
7	1T	Aug. 94	C Wako	J
8	1T	Aug. 94	C Wako	A
9	4T	Aug. 94	NE Wako	A

Measurements were taken in the field (T) or from a cast (C). Age classes - Adult (A), Subadult (SA) and Juvenile(J). The age class was calculated from a mean for all print parameters where applicable. Print 9 was cast by the PHPA in 1991. NW, Northwest; C, Central; E, East; SE, Southeast; NE, Northeast.

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