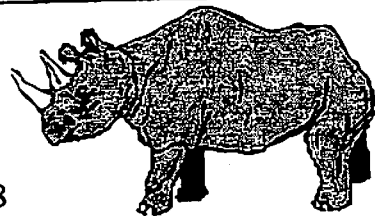


# REALLY, RHINOS!



Volume 12/4, 1998

## *Endangered Rhinos Survive War*

[WWF Focus, 20(5):3, September/October, 1998]

In spite of military outbursts and widespread fears for its survival, the world's most threatened subspecies of rhinoceros, the northern white rhino, survived last year's civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire).

A survey of rhinos and their habitat carried out by WWF in Garamba National Park has shown at least 24 animals to have survived or been born since fighting broke out in 1996, when WWF conservationists had to be evacuated from the area. Garamba, located in the northeast region of the country, is the only known place on Earth where the northern white rhino still exists in the wild.

"We were afraid of what we would find," said Kate Newman, director of WWF's East and Southern Africa programs. "Given the instability in the area and lack of adequate security, it has been impossible to ascertain the situation until just recently." Among the 24 rhinos observed in aerial surveys done in Garamba in May, there were at least three young rhinos born within the last year.

WWF began its involvement in the conservation of Garamba's white rhinos in 1984 when the estimated total population of rhinos in the area was thought to be as low as 13 individuals. "That there are at least 24 rhinos surviving in the region is for us a great source of encouragement and a testament to the dedicated work over the years of scientists and conservationists working on the ground," said Newman.

To learn more about this volatile area, visit the WWF website: [www.world-wildlife.org](http://www.world-wildlife.org)

## *Sand Rivers: Selous Game Reserve*

[SWARA, 20:6 & 21:1, pp.8-11]

In the heart of Southern Tanzania lies one of the largest areas of protected wilderness in the world. Created by the German government between 1905 and 1912 and known today as the Selous Games Reserve, it is named after the famous adventurer and hunter who died and was buried there in 1917. In the 1980s the vast Selous, an area of 43,626 square kilometers, witnessed possibly the worst slaughter of wildlife, particularly of elephants and rhinos, in Africa. Two events halted this massacre: a fall in the price of ivory and a huge and successful crack-down on poaching. Now, elephant numbers are rising and tourism is on the increase - with it, a greater public interest in conservation.

Rhinos, however, remain on the brink of extinction. The directors of a new lodge named Sand Rivers have initiated, along with the government, a rhino project to protect the black rhinos in their area, and a World Wide Fund for Nature technical adviser is currently surveying the whole of the Selous for rhinos. Hopefully, with this kind of support, the Selous rhinos, once one of the biggest populations in the world, will yet survive.

In 1981 there were about 2,000 black rhinos in the Selous Game Reserve, the largest population of any place in Africa. By the late 1980s, this figure dropped to less than 500. In 1989, Tanzania launched Operation Uhai - an anti-poaching campaign involving, for the first time ever, huge government resources to overcome the massive illegal hunting of rhinos. It was also the first time that Tanzania's armed forces were deployed in any part of the country to solve this immense problem. One

