

EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE RHINO

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That may be a bit presumptuous, but no one can deny that Andatu, the first Sumatran rhino born in captivity in Indonesia, was a media favorite from the instant he plunked down onto the tropical forest floor in Way Kambas National Park earlier this year. Andatu entered the world shortly after midnight on June 23, 2012, his mother, Ratu, having endured a pregnancy of almost 16 months and her caretakers having pulled out all the stops to ensure a successful delivery. Ratu's



veterinarians had placed her on a hormone replacement regimen to decrease the chances of miscarriage (she suffered two previously); the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary staff had constructed a special boma for mother and calf, complete with closed circuit video cameras to provide round-the-clock surveillance; and the International Rhino Foundation had flown in rhino specialists from Australia and the United States to be present before, during and after the birth. Nothing about this very special event was left to chance.

Andatu's birth weight was estimated at 60 pounds, which placed him squarely at the bottom of the ladder among the four Sumatran rhinos that have been born in captivity this century. The other three hail from the Cincinnati Zoo. Andatu's father, Andalas (September

13, 2001), weighed 73 pounds, his aunt Suci (July 31, 2004), weighed 75, and his uncle Harapan (April 30, 2007), weighed a whopping 86 pounds. Had they been a litter, Andatu would have been the runt.



Rhinos grow very quickly, however, and he is no exception. At six months of age, the little guy now lugs around about 500 pounds of perissodactyl. By the time he's a year old, he'll probably tip the scales at close to half a ton. In essence, Andatu will increase in weight from a wet sack of corn to a classic Harley Davidson motorcycle (with driver) in just 365 days. That will require some serious "bulking up" – putting on at least two and maybe three pounds per day - which he's very capable of doing.



Andatu stands nearly shoulder to shoulder with his mother.



Only a few weeks before Andatu was born, the president of Indonesia officially announced the International Year of the Rhino, using the impending birth to call attention to the world's two rarest rhino species – the Sumatran rhino and the Javan rhino – both of which are native to Indonesia. Subsequently, Andatu's arrival made national and international headlines, he was filmed as part of the new wildlife documentary, Attenborough's Ark, his photo has been chosen for the cover of International Rhino Keepers Association's 2013 calendar, and he's been friended on Facebook by more than 1,200 people around the world. His horn may not grow to the largest of the world's rhinos, but if he had an ego it surely might.

As we follow Andatu's progress in the months and years ahead, we'll be looking forward to the day when he's fully mature and can make his own contribution to the

Sumatran rhino gene pool. In the interim, his father and mother may produce additional calves, and there's perhaps a 50/50 chance that Andalas will eventually mate with one of the other two adult females in residence at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary – Rosa and Bina. All of these potential pairings increase the likelihood that conservation efforts on behalf of this critically endangered species will be successful.



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Or check out the International Rhino Foundation website for the latest updates and pictures of Andatu by going to :

<http://www.rhinos.org>