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A Research Update on Elephants and Rhinos

Proceedings of the
International Elephant
and Rhino Research Symposium,
Vienna, June 7-11, 2001

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Preface

The International Elephant and Rhino Research Symposium was held from June 7 to 11, 2001 in Vienna and was organised by the Tiergarten Schoenbrunn in cooperation with the IEF (International Elephant Foundation) and the IRF (International Rhino Foundation). This marks the first time that the International Elephant Research Symposium was held outside the USA and the first time it also had been combined with the Rhino Symposium.

The aim was to bring together scientists, researchers and elephant and rhino managers from the States, Europe, Africa and Asia for a scientific meeting in Europe. The list of authors and topics shows that this objective has been met.

About 220 specialists from all over the world met in Vienna for contributions or discussions about newest results of recent research. The papers had been followed by comprehensive workshops to develop working hypothesis and programs that will help improve the chances of survival of elephants and rhinos. During the last day a special, practical workshop was held at Salzburg Zoo, Hellbrunn.

Famous keynote speakers like Iain Douglas Hamilton and Cynthia Moss, referred about their long-time research programs in Kenias Amboseli, Massai Mara and Samburu.

An unbelievable high number of qualitative oral presentations and posters had been announced and been accepted for presentation. It furthermore underlines that work is currently proceeding on a wide range of scientific topics.

The spectrum extends from field conservation over nutrition, reproduction, health and behaviour.

What has become abundantly clear is that both elephants and rhinos are highly endangered species that can only survive in specific protection areas. Their survival under human care is also less than certain, even though great strides have been made in improving their reproductive success.

At least there was the presentation of 34 Elephant papers, 20 Rhino papers (54), 28 Elephant posters and 15 Rhino posters (43).

The proceedings are designed to serve as a reference volume and a working basis. Both the lectures and the posters are organised into chapters devoted either to elephant or rhino topics, whereby the papers themselves are arranged alphabetically according to the author.

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