

The Crash

Newsletter for rhino professionals

April 2015

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Hello to All!

As summer nears we all look forward to meeting again for the 9th Rhino Keeper Workshop this June in Chester England. I know I have my plane tickets bought, rooms reserved and car ready for my arrival. (I bought new luggage too!) I'm excited to meet many new people and hear some of the fantastic topics all about rhinos. For those who cannot attend we hope to have a synopsis in the July Crash sharing the abstracts. We will also publish the proceedings and have them available to all members shortly thereafter. For more details on the Workshop see Sara's article near the end of this edition of the Crash.

In the meantime many of us are preparing our Cinco de Rhino celebrations to help raise money for the International Rhino Foundation. In San Diego we will again be meeting at Hacienda de Vega to have a fun afternoon all while helping the IRF and in-situ rhino conservation. This year we are earmarking the money raised to help Indian Rhino Vision (IRV) 2020. When you're done celebrating be sure to send your pictures to Jonnie and Ray so they can post them on Facebook and on the website. Our goal is \$10,000 so have lots of fun!

For this month's training article Jade Tuttle shares the challenges of feeding our rhinos and how the food we feed can affect their ability to breed. She shares the challenges of switching from these highly estro-genetic foods to those better nutritionally for our charges. As many of us know plant phyto-estrogens may have the ability to bind with rhino estrogen receptor genes and block a rhino's ability to get pregnant. Like the North Carolina Zoo, at the end of 2014 the Safari Park started limiting the amount of phyto-estrogens we allow the southern white rhinos to eat, and just recently found out 2 of our rhinos are pregnant. One rhino Kiazi, has been at the Park since 2006 and this will be her first pregnancy after 9 years of breeding! Read Jade's article to learn more about how the North Carolina Zoo has modified their rhino diets to help their rhinos slim up and with any luck Jade may have a baby in her future too.

Fundraising is always on our minds here at the IRKA, and to make it easier on you we have added the step by step process for using Amazon Smile and iGive. Lara Metrione has written an article about how truly easy it is for YOU to help fund future Rhino Keeper Workshops and other programs the IRKA sponsors. Check it out and help your organization by using these sites. They work by giving a percentage of your purchase so it's free!

As president it is one of my many responsibilities is to help secure a location for our next Rhino Keeper Workshop. It takes about 2 years of planning so we need a location for 2017! Remember, RKWs only happen because you step up and agree to host. We have also instituted a formal application process just like is used by the AZA and other accredited organizations. It's simple and helps us determine the best spot for our next meeting. If your zoo is interested in hosting please contact me. I have had several zoo representatives contact me, but we have not formally accepted any applications yet.

I look forward to seeing you in Chester and hope all of your rhinos are doing well!

Cinco De Rhino Reminder!!!

May 5th marks the 7th annual Cinco de Rhino celebration, benefitting our good friends at the International Rhino Foundation! There are several celebrations happening around the country for this special day, check in with our website to see if there is one in your area, or please contact us with your celebration details so we can help you promote it. The International Rhino Foundation has lots of resources to help you plan a Cinco de Rhino event. Some additional ideas are to: host a happy hour celebration at a local Mexican restaurant, create an educational event at your local zoo, or host a party to celebrate all things rhino!

Resources: http://www.rhinos.org/donate/cinco-de-rhino

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Which Reward? Jade Tuttle, North Carolina Zoo

Phytoestrogens are plant-derived xenoestrogens (see estrogen) not generated within the endocrine system but consumed by eating phytoestrogenic plants. Also called "dietary estrogens", they are a diverse group of naturally occurring nonsteroidal plant compounds that, because of their structural similarity with estradiol (17- β -estradiol), have the ability to cause estrogenic or/and antiestrogenic effects,[1] by sitting in and blocking receptor sites against estrogen (Wikipedia)

In 2007, a few years after introducing four younger females to a new yard with our 1.2 white rhinos, keepers noticed breeding behaviors had stopped. There was no more chin resting, mounting or breeding. We believed at least one of the females was pregnant but had no way to be certain. As the eager keepers we are, we began diligently conditioning our rhinos for blood collection to try and monitor hormones. We brought them off the 40 acre yard three or four times a week, each animal spending significant time being desensitized to our restraint device and the blood collection process. A pile of loose alfalfa, often mixed with timothy hay to extend the bounty, was presented to each animal as we worked to memorize and perfect the location of the radial veins. And the animals just kept getting fatter....they must be bred!

No. Not one of our females was pregnant. In fact, our bull rhino was no longer viable. Those big round tummies were just too many calories. However, as the commercials say, 'that stubborn belly fat is difficult to lose'.

The herd has been through a lot of changes since 2009 and each one seems to require us to teach them something new. I can't say enough of the team of keepers who tackle anything put before them, from rectal ultrasounds and artificial inseminations to voluntary dental checks and several different researchers requesting various data. Through all of our new training we have been conscientious of what we are using as a reward. There was concern for their weights, their teeth and phytoestrogens, and as the team moved from desensitization/acclimation to more defined behaviors we found a need to improve the timing of the reward. With the understanding that every institution and every individual animal are going to be different, here is a brief summary of what we have worked through.

Tactile rewards are great for secondary re-enforcers and are used as much as possible during any chute work, but not highly motivating for our herd. A good udder rub can keep a rhino motionless, generally with one leg kicked up, for several minutes during an ultrasound but usually isn't enough by itself to call them off the yard. I have heard from several other keepers that use belly scratches for hoof work and other husbandry needs. The benefit, if it works for your animals, is obvious because there is nothing consumed.

Using part of their diet is also a great way to keep from adding extra food. Our herd is on a 'green diet' and only receives 1 scoop= 3lbs. of grain a day which is generally used to shift them back up the 50 ft. hill chute onto exhibit. Our geriatric rhinos have more grain in their diet, and we do use it for chute work such as blood collection or topical treatments. However, the animals learn pretty quickly they can grab a big mouthful and leave the restraint area for several minutes, still happily chewing away on their grain, and come back for another bite. Or they can drag the grain forwards or backwards, generally just out of reach of where we need them. We use timothy pellets in a similar way with our younger, 'dieting', rhinos but the same problems with stationing and the duration of reward arise. The benefit is our

animals value the timothy pellets almost as much as their Wild Herbivore diet while nutritionally it is comparable to a good flake of hay, which they don't value very much. (Especially in the summer when the grass is good and green). The pellets are most useful when asked to stay in place in a restraint for longer periods of time, such as a mud bath or public meet and greet, and there are only one or two keepers needed.

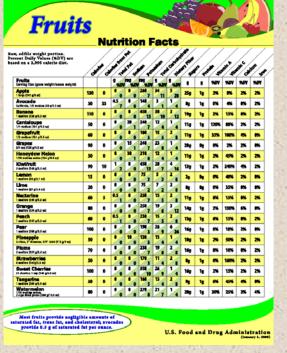
Timothy cubes, on the other hand, have become our go-to reward. At about the size of a piece of sidewalk chalk they are nutritionally similar to the timothy pellets but big enough to feed one at a time and still keep the animals' interest. We place a couple on the ground for chute work, toss a small handful into a stall for shifting, and hand feed one at a time for recall or target work outside. For behaviors requiring increments in training it is easier for keepers to optimize their timing with the cubes and they are more manageable in a training pouch or apron as well.

While participating in a diet study we were asked to remove all phytoestrogens, so products with alfalfa or soy were off the table. Now that the study is over, we do use alfalfa on occasion and it remains our most motivating reward but we are conscious of the use. As a legume it is different from most dry hays and is a higher source of not just phytoestrogens but protein (excess nail growth/weight gain) and iron (iron storage disorders) as well. That is why it is kept to a minimum as a big 'jackpot' reward in training new behaviors or treating dire medical needs.





This is relevant to the grazing White rhinos, and the North Carolina Zoo's herd in particular. I have been told many tales of white rhinos who like peanuts, apple sauce, bread and other produce. Ours will not have any of it, and will spit out a whole wad of alfalfa if you try to sneak half a saltine in with it. The black and GOH rhinos often have produce in their diet, which can easily be held back for training, and past experience has said a lot for the motivation of a little branch of sweetgum or fresh grass. Animals housed individually and/or often in a barn usually value the tactile attention of a keeper much more than our social free-grazing whites as well. With the understanding that all things are in moderation, just as in our own personal diets, an awareness of what we are using as a training reward can effect more than just the training session.





IRKA Fundraising, Lara Metrione

Thank you so much to all those who supported the IRKA calendar! This has been another successful year, and we will be able to contribute \$12,087.45 to IRF in support of Javan rhino conservation.

It is not time to relax on our laurels just yet, though.

It is a very important goal for our organization to be able to provide support for keepers seeking professional development opportunities. We have been very fortunate this year to provide 20 travel scholarships to the Workshop in Chester, England! To ensure that we are able to provide financial awards for future conferences and for the Keeper Development Program, we must start fundraising for IRKA again now.

We realize that between fundraising for your Zoo, fundraising for Bowling for Rhinos, and fundraising for IRF through the calendar and Cinco de Rhino, many of you are literally raising money in support of rhinos year-round. Please, please keep up the excellent work! For those of you who are not already heavily involved in one or more of these activities, won't you please consider organizing a World Rhino Day event on or around September 22 to raise money for IRKA? IRKA is a grass-roots organization, and the participation of our members in activities, including fundraising, is essential to our success. At the end of this call to action is a list of some ideas for World Rhino Day activities. It definitely is not too early to start planning! For those of you who have organized World Rhino Day activities in support of IRKA over the last couple of years, we cannot thank you enough for your efforts and hope you will continue to help us. Please let Lara Metrione know if you plan to host a World Rhino Day event in 2015 (lara.metrione@sezarc.com).

Fundraising continued..

Another way for IRKA to raise money with very little effort on the part of our members is to participate in Amazon Smile and iGive. Jonnie Capiro has set up IRKA accounts with both of these websites so that each time you make a purchase through that website, participating companies (NOT you) make a donation to IRKA equivalent to a certain percentage of the purchase price. This is effortless for you to do and costs you absolutely nothing. You shop on Amazon Smile exactly the same way that you shop on Amazon—just go to smile.amazon.com instead of amazon.com, shop as usual, and then a portion of your purchase of participating items is donated to IRKA. iGive is a button that you install on your computer so that whenever you shop online (including over 1500 stores, like Expedia, FedEx, Michael's, etc.), an icon will pop-up asking you to shop via iGive and a portion of your purchase will be donated to the IRKA, again at no cost to you! If you need instructions on how to make purchases using Amazon Smile or iGive so that IRKA is the beneficiary, we have a step-by-step guide that you can download from the website and follow. Please, please take advantage of this opportunity to support YOUR organization. It literally requires no effort or expense on your part.

Once again, thank you so much for all the fundraising and contributing that you already do for IRKA. With all of us working to support our organization, IRKA will grow to be an even better organization than it already is!

The following is a list of World Rhino Day fundraising ideas that are easy to implement:

- ◆ "Advertise" the custom-made belt buckles from Barbie's Basement Jewellery BBJ will then donate 30% of the sales to IRKA!
- ♦ "Advertise" the IRKA Associate Membership it's only \$15!
- Round-up for Rhinos at the grocery (or any) store or local restaurant :

Customers can round-up the cost of their purchase to the nearest whole dollar with the extra money going to IRKA. Some restaurants will give a percentage of their meal sales to IRKA on a special day (usually a weeknight).

♦ Rhinos on the Rocks/Winos for Rhinos: For every drink on the rocks or glass of wine, your local pub donates \$1 (or X%) to IRKA.

These ideas would need your Zoo's approval but should be quite do-able otherwise:

- ♦ Rhino-rrific donation box near the rhino exhibit, at the Zoo entrance, or in the gift shop
- Round-up for Rhinos at the entrance or gift shop

Zoo-goers can round-up the cost of their purchase to the nearest whole dollar with the extra money going to IRKA.

♦ Ask your zoo café to sponsor a special lunch

Patrons can choose to purchase a [burger] that costs \$2 more, with that money going to IRKA.

• "Close Encounters"--\$50 to touch, feed, scrub-brush, and get a photo with the rhino

This could be its own limited-opportunity tour or as a \$10 add-on to pre-existing behind-the-scenes tours for the day.

♦ Silent auction table near the rhino exhibit

Items might include rhino-made paintings, behind-the-scenes tours, endangered feces, etc.

This one might require a bit more planning but is a super-cool idea nonetheless:

♦ Reading for Rhinos used book sale held at a local school or community center

*PLEASE NOTE: As a 501 (c) 3, transparency in our finances is essential. It is important during your fundraising efforts that you are clear that the money is going to a non-profit organization that promotes professional collaboration and development, and practices to advance rhinoceros management and conservation worldwide. This means money could be used for any of those purposes, not necessarily for in situ conservation efforts alone.

Amazon Smile Campaign: An Easy way to make a difference!

If you already have an Amazon account, sign in on the Amazon Smile home page. https://smile.amazon.com

You shop. Amazon gives.

• Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.

• AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

• Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com.

Constorus Learn more about AmazonSmile
Net interested? Shop Amazon.com

Represent a crantable organization? Viot org.amazon.com

If you don't already have an Amazon account, continue to this page and create an account.



On the next page, type "International Rhino Keeper Association"



Hit the "select" button



Every time you want to shop at Amazon, remember to shop at https://smile.amazon.com

Please share with family and friends!!!



The iGive.com program

- 1. Visit iGive.com and set up account
- 2. Type in "International Rhino Keeper Association" for IRKA



This is the main iGive page that shows options for stores that participate and the donation %age for each purchase.

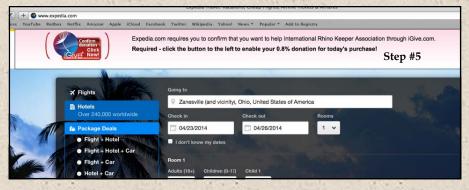


Follow the instructions on this page to download the instructions on this page to download iGive button.



But, the easier method, is once the iGive button is installed, anytime you search a potential shopping site, you will see the iGive icon with a \$.





Select the expedia (or whatever shopping site you choose) that has the icon. This is what will pop up. Click the "confirm donation click now" button and continue shopping like usual.

The iGive program is especially easy. Once the button is installed, you will be prompted any time you visit a participating site, so no extra work is required!

Thank you everyone!!

Pre-RKW Trips

Port Lympne Wild Animal Park, Thursday, June 11th, 2015

Contact Person: Adrian Harland, Animal Director: adrianh@aspinallfoundation.org

www.aspinallfoundation.org/port-lympne

Pre-RKW Trip Includes:

Free Park Admission.

Operating Hours: 10am-3pm

Lunch is on your own.

Behind the Scenes Tours: Hoof stock and rhinos. Time: 11am & 2pm.

Accommodations on site (reservations & expense are on your own). http://www.aspinallfoundation.org/short-breaks

Travel Recommendations: Car

Hotel Recommendations: Contact Sara.Wunder@BuschGardens.com

West Midland Safari & Leisure Park, Friday, June 12th, 2015

Contact Person: Noel Carey, Head Keeper of Ungulates: noel.carey@wmsp.co.uk

www.wmsp.co.uk

Pre-RKW Trip Includes:

Free Park Admission.

Operating Hours: 10am-4pm One Meal Voucher for Lunch.

Behind the Scenes Tours: 10:15am or 12pm or 2pm or 4pm (14 passenger mini bus).

Driving delegates around the animal reserves & a stop at the Asian Rhino House. Delegates can view the rest of WMSP at their leisure.

Travel Recommendations: Car

Hotel Recommendations: Contact Sara.Wunder@BuschGardens.com

Post RKW Trips

Knowsley Safari Park, Friday, June 19th, 2015

Contact Person: Jonathan Moss, Rhino Keeper: J.Moss@knowsley.com

www.knowsleysafariexperience.co.uk

Post-RKW Trip Includes:

Free Park Admission.

Operating Hours: 10am-5pm

Lunch at a discounted rate.

Behind the Scenes Tours: You may arrive as early as 9am to explore the walk around area. Please meet at the picnic area at Knowsley Safari Park for the Tours beginning at 10am.

Travel Recommendations: Car

Hotel Recommendations: Contact Sara.Wunder@BuschGardens.com

Flamingo Land, Saturday, June 20th, 2015.

Contact Person: Thijs van den Houten, Zoo Keeper: thijsvandenhouten@flamingoland.co.uk

www.flamingoland.co.uk

Post-RKW Trip Includes:

Free Park Admission.

Operating Hours: 10am-5pm

Catered Lunch: TBD

Behind the Scenes Tours: There will be behind the scenes tours of the rhino facilities & giraffes. Time: TBD

Travel Recommendations: Car

Hotel Recommendations: Contact Sara.Wunder@BuschGardens.com



"Rhino Buddies"

Sponsor an IRKA Professional Membership for an International Rhino Keeper!

For \$25 a year, you can sponsor a Rhino Keeper from around the World whom may not have the means to

pay for their own IRKA Membership. If you sponsor a Rhino Keeper, you will be connected to the Rhino Keeper you are sponsoring via email so you can keep in touch, share ideas, learn about other countries and cultures, and in particular, learn about each other's rhinos!

If you are interested in Sponsoring a Rhino Keeper, please email Jennifer Conaghan at jconaghan@zoo.nsw.gov.au with your name, email address, institution, and species of rhino you care for.

*Note: Please be aware that English may not be your sponsored Rhino Keeper's first language! If you do speak a language other than

English, please let us know. Otherwise, please be understanding of the language barriers and remember- you are both share a passion for RHINOS!



Correspondence Updates:

The IRKA send our congratulations and celebrate with the following institutions:

- Dvur Kralove Zoo, Czeck Republic birth Female black rhino
- Disney Animal Kingdom birth male white rhino

The IRKA sends our condolences to the following institutions:

• The Chester Zoo: loss of female newborn calf



2015 New and Renewing Members to IRKA

Cydney Peterson Lindsey Kirkman Denver Zoo Jonathan Moss Knowsley Safari Park, UK Laura McGlothlin Columbus Zoo Susan Hoss Columbus Zoo Harry Peachey Kelli J Brown Adam Felts Columbus Zoo Tess Stevens Mindi Scott Columbus Zoo Garry White Aaron Kazmierczak Columbus Zoo Germany Alissa Gottfreid Matt Davis Racine Zoo Columbus Zoo Pascale Benoit Matt Frohlich Columbus Zoo Taronga Western Plains Zoo the Wilds Nick Hanlon Taronga Western Plains Zoo Dave Clawson Fossil Rim Wildlife Ctr. Katie Boyer Taronga Western Plains Zoo Adam Eyers Fossil Rim Wildlife Ctr Jennifer Conaghan Taronga Western Plains Zoo Justin Smith Peter Hnath Ian Anderson Taronga Western Plains Zoo Simone Low Taronga Western Plains Zoo Nicola Pio Melillo Linda Matthews Taronga Western Plains Zoo Susie Ellis International Rhino Foundation Melanie Friedman Taronga Western Plains Zoo Erica Tilbury Nerida Taylor Taronga Western Plains Zoo Michelle Clawson The Wilds Jake Williams Tina Fess Seneca Park Zoo Taronga Western Plains Zoo Sasha Brook Taronga Western Plains Zoo Marisa Elizalde Lincoln Park Zoo Diana Villafuerte Lincoln Park Zoo Kathleen Suthard Pittsburgh Zoo Stacey Williams Matthew Lamoreaux White Oak Paige McNickle Phoenix Zoo Vickie Steele White Oak Erik Storjohann Tulsa Zoo Judy Stephens Detroit Zoo Mike Connolly Tulsa Zoo & Living Museum Melissa Farr Utah's Hogle Zoo Susan Brace UK Lisa Fitzgerald Dallas Zoo Kenneth Mackey Bas Martens Arief Rubianto Amber Berndt Indianapolis Zoo Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary Dorothy Forman Oklahoma City Zoo Jelle Boef Netherlands Lindsey Kocincki Los Angeles Zoo Christine Bobko Denver Zoo Daniel Dembiec Jacksonville Zoo

Supporting Institutions New or Renewing:

Cameron Park Zoo

African Lion Safari

The Horns and Heroes Project

Zoological Society of SD

Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

Maryland Zoo

The Wilds

Tulsa Zoo

Earth Promise (DBA Fossil Rim)

Lowry Park Zoo White Oak

Jacksonville Zoo Tanganyika Wildlife Park

Henry Vilas Zoo

Sally Nofs, DVM

Heather Stults

Kelly Cowley

Carolyn Schultz

Patrick Fountain

Cynthia Wagner

Hayley Gibbons

Alan Pringle

Joseph Nappi

Celia Falzone

Elizabeth Jagenow

Ashleigh Winkelmann

Potter Park Zoo

Bronx Zoo

Ellen Trout Zoo

Taronga Zoo

Taronga Western Plains Zoo



Institutional Supporters

The Supporting Institutional Membership is for any conservation organization, or zoological institution which supports rhino conservation in accordance with the objectives and purpose of the IRKA. These memberships are available for \$100, \$500 and \$2000. Why should your zoo be interested in joining on this level? If your institution contributes on the \$500 level then all rhino keepers membership fees at your zoo are waived! It is important that as the IRKA grows that we continue to garner the support from all facilities that are responsible for the protection and management of all species of rhinoceros. We would like to extend our appreciation for this substantial support to the following institutions, and hopefully we can add your zoo to this growing list! If you have questions about institutional memberships or any other questions please contact us at

internationalrhinokeeperassoc@gmail.com.

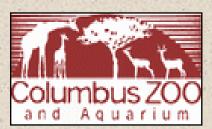
Partners





2015 Sponsors at \$2,000 and Above







2015 IRKA Conservation Calendar Sponsors









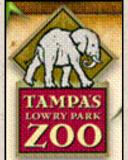


2015 Sponsors at the \$500 – \$1,999 level





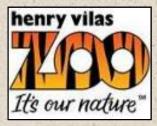






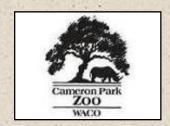












2015 Sponsors at \$100 level

