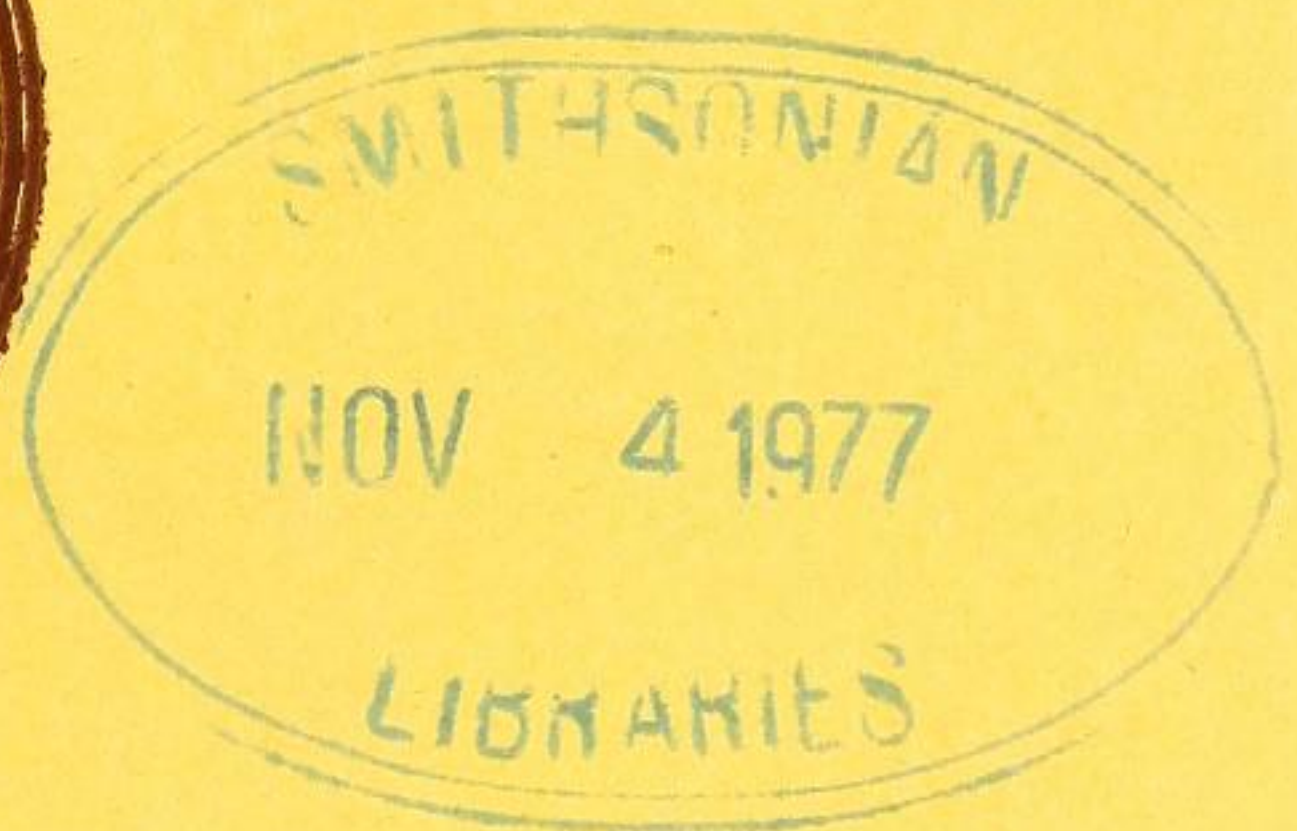


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#### 4. THE INDIAN RHINO (*RHINOCEROS UNICORNIS*) IN CAPTIVITY

Endangered in the wild, this imposing mammal is modestly represented in zoological gardens. At the end of 1975 the International *Rhinoceros unicornis* Studbook kept by the Basle Zoo registered 32 males and 26 females, a total of 58 animals. This figure exceeds 10% of the wild population living mainly in Kaziranga and Nepal which is estimated at some 450 animals. The relatively high number in zoos may be attributed largely to the fact that the Indian Rhino adapts well and breeds successfully under captive conditions. Of the 58 animals mentioned above, 27 were actually zoo-born (46.6%). Births have even been recorded in the second zoo generation.

The first captive-bred Indian Rhino to survive was born in Basle in 1956, 20 years ago. Basle Zoo thereupon became established as a breeding centre for this threatened species. Up to the time of writing (February 1976) there have been altogether 14 calves. As it is hardly possible for one zoo to keep more than a certain number of Indian Rhinos at a time most of them have been sent to other places,

ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN,  
BASEL,  
SWITZERLAND,  
February 18, 1976.

but always either in pairs or so as to enhance the breeding potential. Since 1960 Indian Rhinos have been born every year in captivity, 1971 being a record year with 7 births. Today the captive stock points to having become self-supporting. There is justification for the hope that the zoo progeny may, in time, be released into well guarded reserves or national parks.

Reproductive behaviour in the Indian Rhino has meanwhile been carefully studied. The mean gestation period is 478 days. On an average calves weigh about 70 kg at birth and grow rapidly, gaining 2-3 kg daily. During the first year of life they increase their birth weight tenfold. Females attain sexual maturity at about 4 years of age, males when 7 years old.

Indian Rhinos, particularly the females, become very tame. Our cow, Joymothi, can be easily handled and even allows herself to be milked. It is indeed surprising that this mammal has for so long been spared from domestication.

E. M. LANG

#### 5. TAKIN (*BUDORCAS TAXICOLOR*) IN CAPTIVITY

When the Bronx Zoo acquired a female Takin from the Putato district, Kachin State the Editors recorded a note in Volume 56 No. 1:128 of this *Journal*.

In a letter dated June 8, 1976, Mr. J. G. Doherrig, Curator of Mammals, Bronx Zoo, intimated me that "She died on September 4, 1975 when she was approximately 17 years

old. In autopsying this takin it was found that she had quite an extensive cancer of the uterus that had spread into lymph nodes in other parts of her body."

In 1966, the Bronx Zoo paid \$ 16,000 for a young male takin approximately eight to nine months old to an animal dealer from New York. The animal dealer received the young