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The Australian Rhino Project July Newsletter

1 message

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News

letter

Dear Supporter,

It's been a busy few months for the team at The Australian Rhino Project. In May, Sarah and I hosted the first endangered rhino safari to South Africa which was arranged by our partner, [The Classic Safari Company](#). This was no ordinary safari, it was very focused on the plight of the rhino – both black and white – in South Africa. The group of 12 people visited two terrific lodges – [Madikwe Safari Lodge](#) in the North West of the country and [Simbavati River Lodge](#) in the North East. The focus of the trip was to meet as many people as possible who are involved in the fight against the poaching scourge which is endangering the future of rhinos in the wild. We were very pleased to be able to see a number of rhinos in the wild and the general consensus of those on the trip was that they are incredible animals and the people were also astonished as to why they were being killed in such large numbers.



The Endangered Rhino Safari group at Madikwe Safari Lodge.

Having recently spent a few weeks in South Africa and meeting and seeing the anti-poaching units in action, one realises how serious the situation really is. Here is an example of a Game Ranger who was shot dead by a poacher shortly after we were in the area where the situation took place.

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/alleged-poachers-pin-hopes-on-new-laws-2043616>

During the trip we also visited the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre where we saw a number of young rhinos in their care. This wonderful organisation also cares for other endangered species such as cheetah. We visited two rhino orphanages during the trip and the obvious passion that the staff have for caring for and nurturing the rhino orphans was just extraordinary. We met with the head of security at one of the lodges and it was chilling to hear the lengths that the poachers will go to to get their hands on rhino horn. The anti-poaching teams take their lives into their hands whenever they go out on patrol. We were also privileged to meet Julian Rademeyer, the author of the bestselling book on rhino poaching, "Killing for Profit." He is one very brave

man. We strongly recommend reading "Killing for Profit" if you would like a more detailed understanding of the poaching issue.



A rhino orphan that was very interested in the new visitors.

Photo credit: Sarah Dennis

Perhaps the highlight of the trip was experiencing a rhino notching first hand. As one of our group said, "It is one of the most emotional events in my life." Many of our group expressed how amazed they were with the experience and several expressed that the experience was truly life-changing.

To be able to touch and hear the breathing of a sedated 2500 kg white rhino cow is almost indescribable. On the lighter side there were some amusing moments with the cow's calf who was determined to protect his mum. A similar safari is planned for March/April 2017. If you are interested in

receiving more information about the safari, [please click here](#).



The young calf being ear notched on the Endangered Rhino Safari.

Photo credit: Kirstin Scholtz

I was extremely proud to be invited to speak on The Australian Rhino Project at the 2016 TEDx event at the Sydney Opera House in late May. This was a wonderful opportunity to reach both a national and international audience and tell the story of The Australian Rhino Project. For me it was an extremely humbling experience and one that I will treasure for the rest of my life. You can view the talk [here](#)

At the end of June, we held the first fundraising event in Melbourne. The dinner took place at the Grand Hyatt in Melbourne and was attended by almost 250 people. The line-up of speakers was of international class. We were very pleased that Mick Molloy agreed to MC the event and Mick added his special brand of humour to a wonderful night's entertainment. Board member, Mark Stanbridge conducted a masterful interview with Jacques Brits. Until very recently, Jacques as the General Manager of the Timbavati Private Nature Reserve in South Africa. Jacques' personal experiences and keen observations of the crisis facing rhinos was very well received by the audience. Tim Jarvis, AM is an extraordinary storyteller. His description of the recreation of the Ernest Shackleton crossing of the Antarctica was awe inspiring while Kirstin Scholtz

re-lived some of the experiences that she has recently had with rhinos in South Africa. You could hear a pin drop during both of these presentations.

We were delighted with the dinner which not only increased awareness of the issue but also raised some well needed funds. We were honoured to have Professor John Shields representing the Sydney University Business School; Elaine Benstead, CEO of Zoos South Australia; Sarah Hoyland, Principal of The Classic Safari Company; and Tim Clyde-Smith, Chief Executive of South African Airways ANZ as our guests. Bestselling author, Tony Park, was a very welcome guest at our dinner. Tony is one of our best supporters and major contributor to our auction. Paul Gardner, AM did a wonderful job as auctioneer for some terrific live auction items. We thank everybody for their support in making the dinner a success. Some images from the event can be found [here](#) as well as some feedback from Mick Molloy on his morning programme the day after the dinner -

<http://omnyapp.com/shows/hot-breakfast/7-03-am-the-hot-breakfast-mick-on-the-australian-r>



Mick Molloy with Ray Dearlove at the Melbourne Gala Dinner

Photo credit: Phil Hines

The goal of The Australian Rhino Project remains establishing a breeding herd of rhinos in Australia that will act as insurance against the possible extinction of

rhinos in the wild. While to some this may seem to have been a long journey to date, the reality is that the task that we have set ourselves to bring 80 rhinos to Australia over a four year period is a complex one. While we see this as a critical initiative and with 3 rhinos being killed every day in Africa, time is obviously of the essence, there are many conditions that need to be satisfied in both Australia and South Africa.

South Africa is doing its absolute best to protect the rhinos from the international crime syndicates and Australia will not compromise on the stringent bio-security and quarantine requirements. We have a very strong team working with us to ensure that we comply with the laws, rules and regulations of both countries. As always, we are reluctant to set any form of date on the arrival of the rhinos in Australia, but I want to assure you that we work day and night to make this dream become a reality. We want to thank each of you personally for your support to date. It was never going to be easy but the on-going assault on rhinos drives us to continue and to make this project a success. There is a strong body of opinion that says that once the rhinos are gone, the poachers will turn their attention to elephants and lions – in some countries in Africa, this has already started.

We are excited to announce the launch of our merchandise store. We have had many, many requests to develop a range of select rhino related items and are pleased to advise that the range is now available. We would like to draw particular attention to our custom designed bracelets and the only rhino horn hat available in the world. [Please visit the store and explore the range.](#) Until midnight August 15, we are offering free freight in Australia on any orders over \$50. Please use the promotional code: **RHINO** in the coupon section of your order when checking out to claim your free freight. For orders outside Australia, please email sarah@theaustralianrhinoproject.org for a shipping quotation.



A pair of white rhinos enjoying the bush.

Photo credit: Linda Caroline Lee from the Endangered Rhino Safari May 2016

At the risk of being repetitive, we are often asked why we believe that Australia is a safe place for rhinos. We honestly believe that Australia is one of the safest places in the world for rhinos at this time.

As an island, Australia has natural borders and the quarantine and biosecurity laws are as stringent as anywhere in the world; the relative lack of poverty in Australia compared to some African countries; the fact that there is very little corruption of note in Australia and perhaps the key thing is that there is no community or people pressure squeezing wildlife areas in Australia as there is in Africa and parts of Asia. All the studies suggest that rhinos do not pose any risk to the Australian fauna and flora as have rabbits, camels and cane toads. Finally, I think that the negative reaction of Australians to just one poaching incident here would be immense.

Please see below for details of our upcoming events. We really appreciate your support with our events and hope you can attend those in your area.

One last word, as we have just had the 2015/2016 end of financial year in Australia, we have been overwhelmed by the number of people who have

donated to The Australian Rhino Project in the past month. Thank you very much, every dollar makes a difference.

Ray Dearlove

July 2016



Are you looking at me? Rhinos in the wild on the Endangered Rhino Safari.
Photo credit: Sarah Dennis



Up and Coming Events

24th July 2016 - The End of the Wild Film Event - Sydney

Join the Young Rhinos for an exclusive screening of "The End of the Wild with

Yao Ming". This Emmy nominated film tracks Yao's journey through Kenya and South Africa understanding the rhino and elephant poaching. An interesting insight into the crisis facing the world's wildlife. Tickets are \$25 incorporating a donation to the Australian Rhino Project. Tickets can be purchased at <http://www.trybooking.com/212003>



14th August 2016 - City2Surf - Sydney

The Australian Rhino Project has only a few places left for **Gold Runners** who wish to join our team for the 2016 City 2 Surf from Hyde Park to the iconic Bondi Beach. Take up the challenge on the 14th August to represent the Australian Rhino Project. Enjoy the music, energy and fun from live DJ's, bands, cheerleaders and dancers in the world's largest fun run while you help raise money to save the rhino. This is a unique opportunity - to find out more or register your interest, [click here](#).

If you are already registered for the City2Surf and would like to join our fundraising team, please [click here](#).

22nd September 2016 – World Rhino Day

We are developing plans to celebrate World Rhino Day on September 22 and we will notify you about these in due course.

We will also be celebrating the movement of the rhinos into quarantine in South Africa once this date is firm. This milestone has our complete focus at this time.

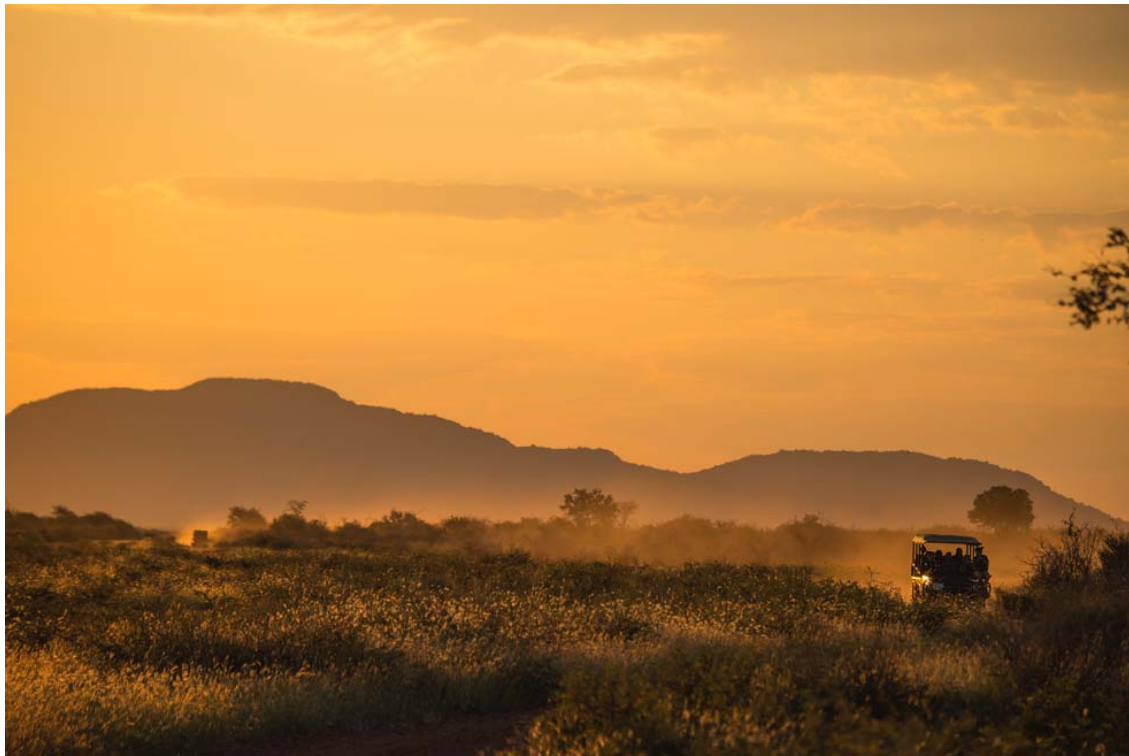
24th September 2016 - Global March for Elephants and Rhinos

This year the third annual Global March for Elephants and Rhinos will take place in over 100 cities worldwide on 24 September, to coincide with the opening day of the **CITES CoP17** conference in Johannesburg. To find out more about marches in your area, visit this website

<http://www.march4elephantsandrhinos.org/>

13th November 2016 - 3 Bay Challenge

Created by one of our Young Rhinos, Vincent Stander, the 3 Bay Challenge is a perfect weekend challenge for professionals, biathlon enthusiasts and those competing for the first time. The course consists of three running legs and three swimming legs. Total distance is 6km run and 750m swim. Registration includes a drink and bite to eat at the world famous Watson's Bay Hotel afterwards. All proceeds raised go towards our project. Registrations are now open, so for more details visit: <http://www.3baychallenge.com.au>



Magical Madikwe sunset on the Endangered Rhino Safari

Photo credit: Kirstin Scholtz



Taronga Conservation Society Australia



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