

Transfer from the "SUPPLEMENT" to DARJEELING
and "NEIGHBOURHOOD" List

"C"

Here we are up against a difficulty: the identification of a particular specimen from a locality where two valid races, both migrants, may overlap or meet. On the evidence I have decided for deleting No. (1745) *Cerckneis naumanni pekinensis* and substituting No. (1745a) *Cerckneis naumanni naumanni* Fleischer.

See Ticehurst's entry (*J. Bombay N. H. Soc.* xxxvi, p. 509) in his article on the Lesser Kestrel: "Sikkim, One from Gammie in B. M. ? *naumanni* (F.B.I., Edn II, v., p.66)" and Stuart Baker's comment: "A bird from Sikkim (*Gammie*) in the British Museum is a very typical pale female and it seems hardly possible to retain it with the eastern race. . ." (*pekinensis*)

Whether this specimen came from the District of Darjeeling or from Sikkim is another ever-recurrent difficulty, my surmise is that in all likelihood it came from Darjeeling, where Gammie was for long (Mongpu) a resident.

The Great One-horned Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis* L)

From Notes by E. O. SHEBBEARE AND A. N. ROY. With photographs by H. E. Tyndale.

Originally there were three species of *Rhinoceros* in India, the Great One-horned Rhinoceros (*R. unicornis*); the Burmese, or smaller One-horned Rhinoceros (*R. sondaicus* Cuv.) and the Hairy, or Sumatran, Two-horned Rhinoceros (*R. sumatrensis* Cuv.) or - (*Javaneensis*). Of these, the first and the last are still to be found in India, the Great One-horned Rhinoceros in the Nepalese Terai, in the KAZIRANGA sanctuary of Assam, and in the JALDAPARA sanctuary of Bengal - The Sumatra, or Java



The Great one-horned Rhinoceros

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species, is found in the Chittagong forests — It is probable that *R. sondaicus* is extinct in India, but there may be a few specimens still alive in Burma and more probably in Sumatra.

The essential difference between *R. unicornis* and *R. sondaicus* is in the "folds" of the "armour plating". In the former, the fold immediately behind the neck does not show a continuous ridge to the other side of the animal whereas in *sondaicus* it does. There is little difference in height, the *sondaicus* species being a few inches smaller at the shoulder, the horn smaller and often extinct in the female.

In 1932, thanks to the representations of E. O. Shebbare, the Rhinoceros Preservation Act came into being and the Jaldapara Game Sanctuary, in the Duars, was declared a special Reserve for the preservation of the Rhinoceros.

This Sanctuary is about 39 square miles in extent, being bounded on the North by the Madarihath — Nilpara road, on the East by the Nilpara,—Chilapatta road and on the South and West by the forest boundaries.

Within this area, or in the forest adjacent to it, it was estimated that prior to 1930, there lived about eighty Rhinoceroses but, in 1930 and 1931, a number of Mechis (also known as Boros) came over from the Goalpara District of Assam to join the local Mechis and, between them, during those two years, they murdered about fifty Rhinoceroses. In 1933 T. V. Dent collected about 50 skulls).

The writer A. N. Roy was made Honorary Game Warden of this reserve in 1934 and scarcely ever saw a Rhinoceros until 1936. The population is now estimated at sixty and it is thought that very few are poached.

Very little is known about the breeding habits of the Rhinoceros and this Sanctuary offers a unique opportunity for observation.

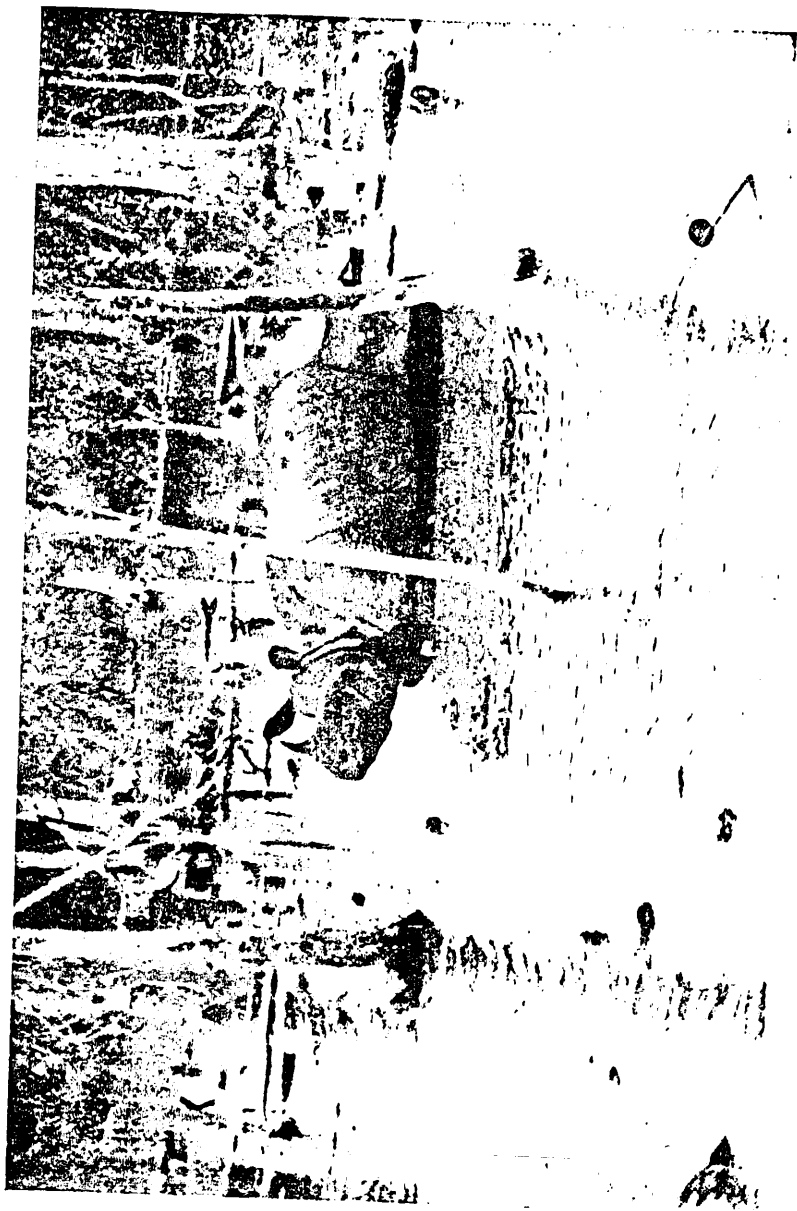
A large bull stands about 5 feet 6 inches at the shoulder, with a girth of about 11 feet behind it and is about ten feet long. The horn is about eight to sixteen inches long, a record for Assam is twenty four inches. The cow is a somewhat smaller animal and her horn is smaller. (This is doubtful. *Editor*), Both sexes are hairless and have heavy folds of skin on the shoulders, flanks, and knees which, at a distance, give them that well known "armour plated" appearance. They are apparently monogamous and pair off for life but this needs further investigation. The gestation period is thought to be about eighteen months and cows give birth to one calf every three years. Calves are generally born in the spring and are weaned after 18 months.

Like the Elephant, the Rhinoceros dislikes intense heat and is worried by flies and leeches. He lies up in thick forest during the heat of the day, generally in pools under deep shade or in muddy wallows.

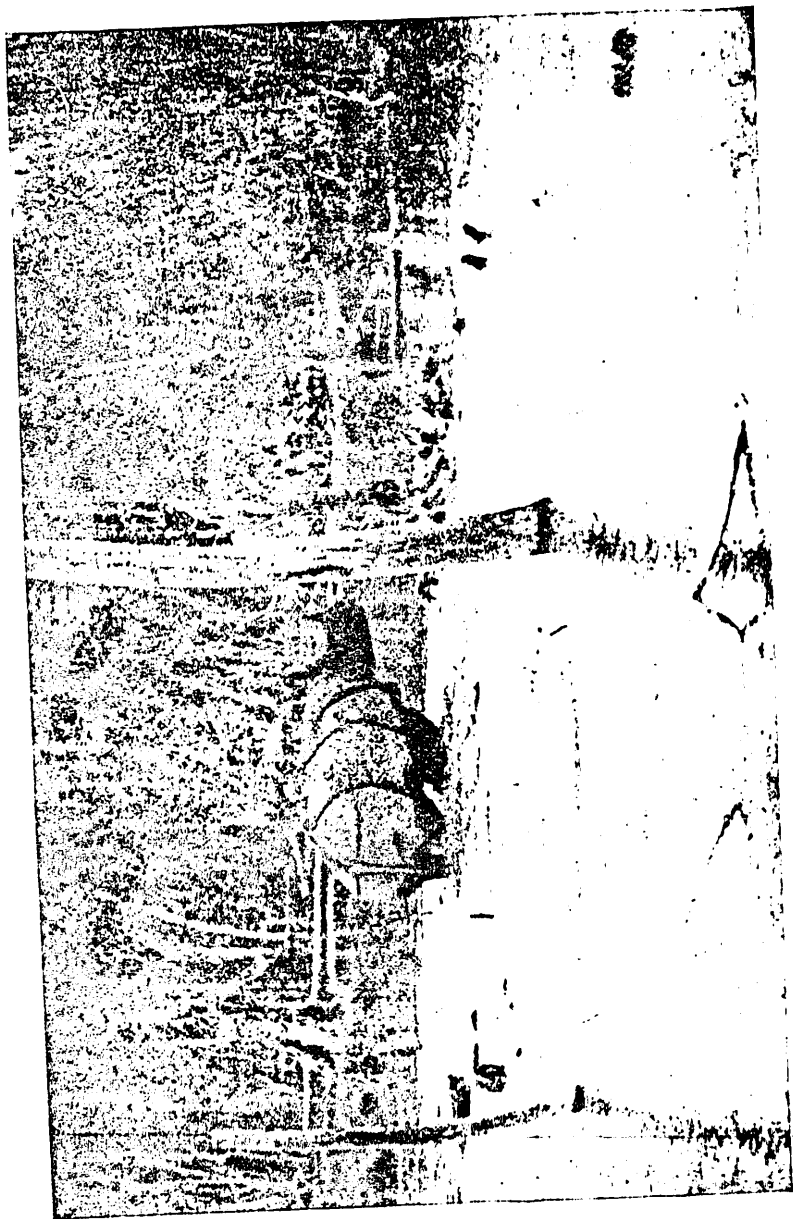
Its food consists mainly of tall grass, water hyacinth, and other aquatic plants and their roots. It is also very fond of maize and rice and can do a considerable amount of damage to these crops just before they ripen.

The horn is apparently never used for rooting and it is difficult to estimate its purpose for Shebbeare says that the only man he has ever known to be attacked by a Rhino showed marks clearly made by the incisors of the lower jaw on his posterior.

The Rhinoceros has no natural enemy in the jungle with the exception of Tiger. A Rhinoceros calf has been seen which had been badly mauled by a Tiger. The Rhinoceros having very poor vision, but good hearing, is apt to be nervous of any strange sound and will generally clear off on hearing the human voice. He is not afraid of Elephants but does not like them to approach nearer than about 25 yds. He is much faster than an Elephant over short distances and moves noticeably faster than an Elephant in shallow water. The Rhinoceros gallops like a horse and is



The Great one Tower of the ...



The Front entrance Rhinoceros

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not restricted to the fast walk of an Elephant as his hind legs are "hock" jointed and not similar to those of that animal.

All Rhinoceroses have the peculiar habit of depositing their dung in the same place daily for many days and of walking backwards to this spot for the last few yards. This habit is well known to poachers.

The Rhinoceros' chief enemy is man and, in this, he is more unfortunate than any other animal, for the main reasons that his great demand is based on absurd superstitions. The horn of the male, which is composed of compressed hair, is valued greatly both as an aphrodisiac and as an antidote for various poisons, including opium. Its market value is about 25 Rs. per ounce, and a good horn weighs over 60 ounces. Rhinoceros blood can be sold at Rs. 2 a bottle and urine at the same price. The dried skin and meat are worth about 1 Re. per pound.

It is easy, therefore, to understand the tremendous value of a dead Rhinoceros to anyone who is clever enough to kill one and market the entire carcass. Little wonder that the Game Warden must be about his job day and night to prevent poaching.

The Rhinoceros is held in great sanctity by all Hindus living in Northern India but, unfortunately, such religious awe is insufficient to afford protection.
