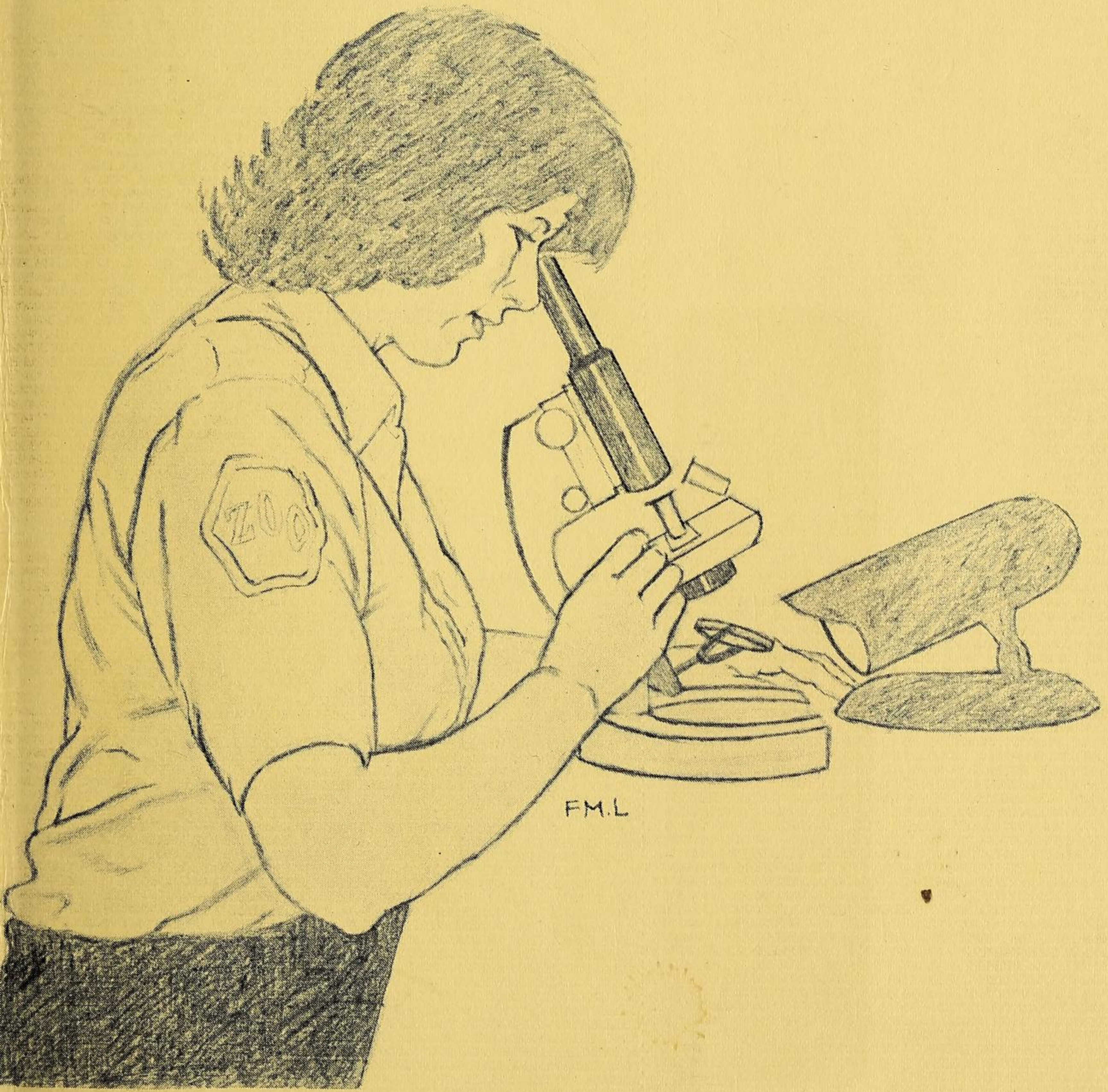


Animal Keepers' Forum



Dedicated to Professional Animal Care

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Edited by Ron Kaufman, Topeka Zoological Park
Associate Editor: Mike Coker, Topeka Zoological Park
Administrative Secretary: Cecelia Sauer, Topeka Zoological Park
Illustrations by Fiel Luna, Topeka Zoological Park

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DEADLINE FOR EACH EDITION OF AKF IS THE 20th OF THE PRECEDING MONTH...

RARE RHINO BORN AT WILD ANIMAL PARK

A rare Indian one-horned rhinoceros, one of only 1100 in existence in the world, was born Sunday, March 19, at the San Diego Wild Animal Park. The female calf arrived between 5:30 and 10 p.m. in a maternity boma (a protected corral) in the Park's Asian Waterhole section.

Gainda (the Hindu name for rhinoceros) is the third of her species born at the Wild Animal Park since 1975 and the second surviving Indian rhino calf born in North America. Previously, two male Indian rhinos were born at the Park, but both died within a few days of birth.

Parents of the new rhino are Lasai, a 16-year-old male, and Jaypuri, a 15-year-old female. Since both Lasai and Jaypuri were born in captivity (he in Basel, Switzerland Zoo and she in a zoo in Assam), Gainda's birth is one of the few second-generation births of Indian rhinos in captivity.

Keepers who found Gainda shortly after her birth could not approach the young animal because of the protective behavior of her mother, Jaypuri.

However, Park Veterinarian Dr. James Oosterhuis reports that the young rhino is nursing well, appears healthy, and every attempt will be made to allow her to be raised by her mother.

General Curator Dr. James Dolan said, "We took special precautions with Jaypuri's third pregnancy to assure that her offspring would survive.

"Every day for the past month a keeper has kept close watch on Jaypuri, even to the extent of checking her several times during the night.

"We also lured Jaypuri into the maternity boma well in advance of the expected birth date to protect her and the baby from inclement weather and possible stress from other animals."

Gestation for Indian rhinos is 16 months. At birth, young Indian rhinos weigh approximately 130 pounds (60 kilograms), but when they reach maturity they weigh several tons. The species is noted for its heavy folds of skin with rivet-like tubercles, giving the rhino an armor-plated appearance.

Only 14 Indian rhinos exist in zoos in the United States. The remaining population occurs mostly in two preserves in India. Poaching and destruction of habitat have contributed to the animals' severe decline in the wild, although Indian rhinos once were numerous throughout northern India and Nepal.

BIRTH NUMBER ONE OH ONE

The National Zoo has recorded 101 births of the rare golden lion tamarin at NZP and CRC. Triplets born on February 24 at Front Royal pushed us over the hundred mark. Fortunately, two of the triplets survived and are doing well. Previous to that, triplets were born on February 18 in the Small Mammal House. While we're on the subject of these glittery primates, a pair was sent on loan February 22 to the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago.....from TIGER TALK