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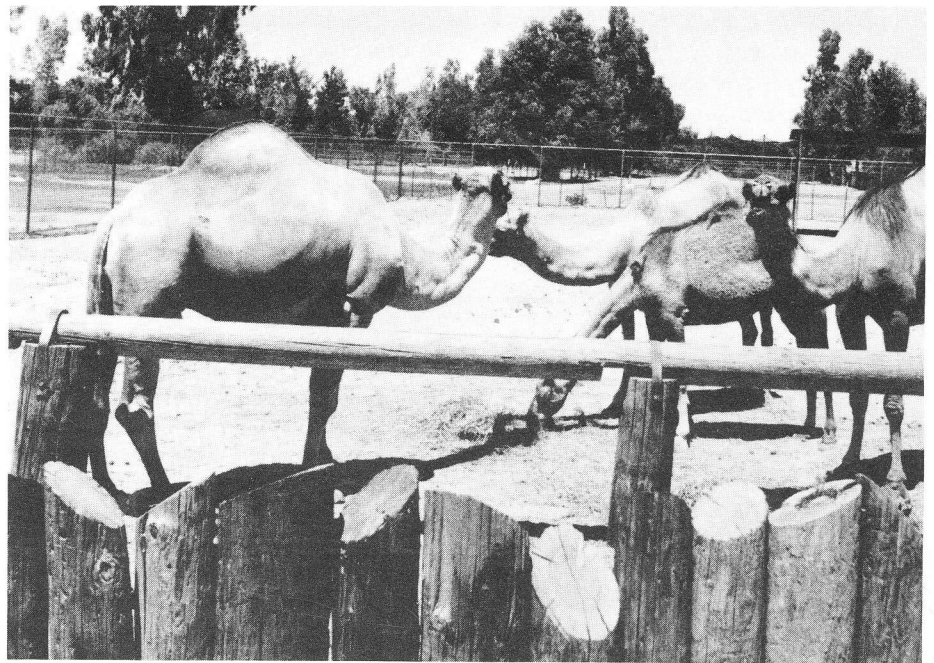
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We encourage all ISZ members to submit articles, along with photos or artwork if possible, and a brief author biography, to:

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Albuquerque, NM 87105**

**DEADLINE
for articles/ads is:
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This guard barrier keeps the camels out of visitors' reach. Note the reinforcing steel strap straddling the horizontal beam.

Recycling Used Utility Poles Into Zoo Exhibits

by Michael J. Demlong and L.M. "Mickey" Ollson

Finding better ways to exhibit animals in artificial settings is an ever-present challenge confronting zoo personnel. Specifically, one challenge is to recreate — as closely as possible — the habitat an organism's ancestors historically occupied (or currently occupy) . . . hopefully encouraging behaviors typically exhibited by that species' wild counterparts.

Then too, as zooculturists, we must not only be concerned with our charges' physical well-being, but also with public viewing/interaction, caregiver serviceability, monetary expense, and environmental impact when we design any

zoo exhibit.

At Wildlife World Zoo (WWZ), having long considered the aforementioned factors of exhibit construction, we have begun experimenting with cut utility poles as a possible superior replacement for the chainlink fence currently enclosing our terrestrial mammals. Thus far, the experiment has been successful, as we are using cut poles to enclose oryx, llama, camel, zebra, wallaby, muntjac deer, rhino, emu, sitatunga, waterbuck, tapir, and African crested porcupines.

In addition to incorporating cut poles into fences, we are also exper-

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Black Rhinos

Can We Save Them?

by Bill Johnston

Long the number one target of big game hunters in Africa, the black rhino (*Diceros bicornis*), is now protected in all countries where it still exists. Despite this protection, each year sees its numbers decline.

In 1960, an estimated 65,000 black rhinos lived in 19 countries in Africa. By 1980, the count was down to 15,000. In 1990, the estimate showed only 3,500 black rhinos in 10 countries.

The demand for its horn and habitat destruction — plus human population growth — are threats to the survival of the species.

The history of the black rhino in captivity dates back to the days of ancient Rome. They were recorded in Rome in 29 B.C., and during the reign of Titus, 79-81 A.D. At a festival of Dionysius in Alexandria, Egypt, they were part of a procession celebrating the ruling family of Ptolemy II (283-246 B.C.).

They disappeared from captivity for a great number of years. Then, in 1835, a male black rhino was part of a shipment of 67 animals arriving on the ship *Susan*, at Hingham, Massachusetts, on May 19, 1835. They were imported by the Boston Zoo Association, and put on exhibition as the "Entire New Menagerie" in Boston from June 1 until July 13.

These animals were then distributed among several menageries of the Zoological Institute, an organization of menagerie operators. The male black rhino went to the June, Titus and Angevine Menagerie. The exact date of his demise has so far eluded us.



Photo courtesy of Bill Johnston

On February 12, 1868, some Arab hunters captured a young black rhino in Upper Nubia, Sudan. This animal was sold to Herr Casanova, an animal collector, who in turn shipped him to Carl Hagenbeck in Germany. Almost immediately, it was purchased by the London Zoo, arriving at Regents Park on September 11, 1868. This was the first black rhino to be exhibited in a zoo in Europe. He died at the zoo on December 4, 1891.

In 1878, the W.W. Cole Circus in the United States received a female

black rhino from Hamburg, Germany. She traveled with this circus to Australia, returning to the United States at San Francisco in the spring of 1881. At the end of the 1886 season, the W.W. Cole Circus was sold at auction in New Orleans.

The New York Park Commission bought this rhino for \$200, and it arrived at the Central Park Zoo in New York City on December 14, 1886. She was the first black rhino to be exhibited in an American zoo. She lived until 1906.

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Black Rhinos

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On June 26, 1935, a pair of black rhinos arrived at the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago — a male, "Pharo," and a female, "Mary." They were acquired from Christoph Schulz in Southwest Africa for the sum of \$9,000.

They were 55 days in their crates — 41 at sea — before arriving at the zoo. Pharo was 19 months old, and weighed 500 pounds. Mary was two years old, and weighed 600 pounds. Pharo died at the zoo on August 16, 1967, and his mate Mary died on June 26, 1981. Mary's span was a longevity record for this species.

Mary also was the mother of the first black rhino born in captivity. Her first, a male born October 7, 1941, was sold to the Pittsburgh Zoo, where he died of pneumonia on May 11, 1943.

Her second, another male, "Bobby," was born on September 21, 1944. He was sold to the Ringling Bros. and Barnum-Bailey Circus in June of 1945. Bobby made several seasons with the circus before also succumbing to pneumonia at Baltimore, Maryland on May 31, 1953.

Three female black rhinos have achieved notoriety in the show world. Mary, who was acquired by the MGM movie studios in 1932, spent the summer of 1933 at the John T. Benson Wild Animal Farm at Nashua, New Hampshire. The winter of 1933-34, Mary was trained and used in the film "Tarzan and His Mate." She was a gentle animal, and was taught by George Emerson to sit, lay down and be ridden. From April to October of 1934, she was sent on a nationwide tour in advance of the film, under the care of the noted animal trainer, Volney Phifer.

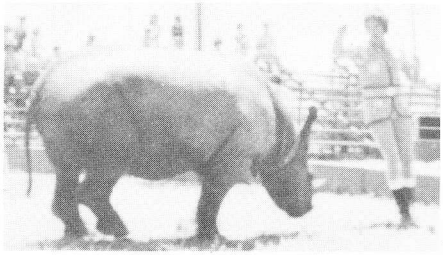
Mary was then sold to the Ringling Bros. and Barnum-Bailey Circus, arriving at their quarters on October 17, 1934. She began the 1935 season with the circus, but suddenly died mysteriously at Springfield, Massachusetts on July 5, 1935.

In 1952, Tony Diano, a contractor from Canton, Ohio, returned from Africa with several exotic wild animals, including a female black rhino, "Molly." She had appeared in the film "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," made in Africa. Molly toured

with the Diano Bros. Circus, The World of Mirth Shows, and then the Cristiani Bros. Circus. She died in 1960.

The well-known animal trainer Hugo Schmitt and his son, Roman, succeeded in training a female black rhino, "Kenya," to perform in the circus ring with a female Asian elephant. Roman appeared with this act in numerous circuses before taking over the Asian elephant breeding herd at Circus World in Florida. Kenya grew rapidly in size, and subsequently, Roman sold her to the Dallas Zoo.

Presently, there are around 130 black rhinos in captivity. There has been a slight increase in the captive population in recent years, and this is, of course, good news. Not such good news is the condition in the wild state. The wild population continues to decline.



Roman Schmitt and "Kenya."

Photo courtesy of Bill Johnston.

War is being waged against the poachers who continue to destroy the black rhinos at an alarming rate. Zimbabwe is the only country in Africa where the black rhino population has shown an increase in the last ten years. This is the result of a handful of dedicated individuals.

From the vice president of Zimbabwe, Simon Muzenda: "We are a sovereign state. We will not sit back and watch gangs of bandits plunder our wildlife heritage. These poachers are identical to economic sabotage. It would be foolish to have mercy on these people."

The poachers are armed with automatic weapons, and do not hesitate to use them against the rangers. Glenn Tatham, chief game warden, now active in this war says: "We are winning time. Time to move as many rhinos as possible out of the valley to safer areas, and to work at getting better regional and international cooperation that might stop the horn trade."

Since June of 1984, 43 poachers have been killed, and more than 40 weapons — along with 5,000 rounds

of ammunition — seized from poachers. However, during this time, an estimated 450 black rhinos have been killed.

From the *London Daily Telegraph*, dated December 21, 1988, this item: "Mr. Glenn Tatham, Zimbabwe's chief game warden and internationally known conservationist, yesterday appeared in court, with two other men, on a murder charge. The charge follows an incident on November 11, when a suspected poacher was killed during an operation mounted by the National Parks and the police."

Another item from the *London Daily Telegraph*, dated January 5, 1989: "More than 50 black rhinos, along with four bull elephants, are reported to have been slaughtered by poachers, since Zimbabwe's chief game warden Glenn Tatham, and Steve Edwards, senior game warden, and Charles Haley, police officer, were freed on bail last month, but virtually had to abandon their anti-poaching activities because their bail conditions forced them to report daily to the police at Harare. National Park sources said poachers appeared to have doubled their efforts, since Mr. Tatham and the other two men spearheading the anti-poaching drive, were remanded last month."

The above is just one example of the difficulties confronting wildlife officials, and conservationists, in their struggle to save the black rhino.

The fight continues in Zimbabwe, the last stronghold of the black rhino. Recently, the governments of Zambia and Mozambique joined together in a concerted effort to stop these poaching gangs.

Can the black rhino be saved? The answer to that question is three-fold:

1. Continued pressure by the African governments to stop the poaching gangs.

2. Around-the-clock police surveillance in all parks and reserves where the black rhinos live.

3. International cooperation which can provide the necessary monetary assistance so essential to this operation. This is the most important of all. ☐

Bill Johnston has had more than 40 years experience keeping and training wild animals of all kinds, with circuses, zoos and safari parks.