

CONGENITAL UNILATERAL AOTUS IN A BLACK RHINOCEROS *DICEROS BICORNIS BICORNIS* (Linn., 1758)*

The unilaterally earless adult black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis bicornis* bull, as depicted, was caught in the Hluhluwe Nature Reserve and translocated to the Addo Elephant National Park during September 1977. Two other adult black rhino bulls with normal external ears made up the full consignment. They were introduced into Addo as breeding males in order to fill a vacancy which was left by the recent demise of the only adult bull in the Addo rhino population. Before this introduction the population consisted of 10 animals that were products of an introduction of seven black rhinos, in 1961 and 1962, from Kenya. These animals and their offspring all had normal pinnae.

Uni- or bilateral aotus in the black rhino has been recorded from at least seven discrete populations in eastern and southern Africa, inter alia the Hluhluwe Game Reserve¹. It has also been suggested by Goddard¹ that a sex linked genetic character might be responsible for this congenital deformity. It will therefore be interesting to see what effect the introduction of this aotic male will have on a "normal" population with their full quota of ears.

REFERENCE

1. GODDARD J. 1969. A note on the absence of pinnae in the black rhinoceros. *East African Wildlife Journal* 7: 178.

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