

The Black Rhino was not wondering aimlessly – the island umbrellas were the final place decided on for an after dining nap.



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# Greater One-horned Indian Rhinos

I photographed my first Greater One-horned Indian rhino at Edinburgh Zoo in the U.K. I was amazed at the wonderful armour plates the folds of thick skin formed. After seeing the animal in the flesh I realized why there is such admiration for [Durer's rhinoceros](#).

Note the Dramatic Change in the Historical and Current Territory of the Greater One-horned rhino in Asia.



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**Greater One-horned Indian rhino trotting around his enclosure at Edinburgh Zoo**



**Back view of Greater One-horned Indian rhino**

Once I started on this rhino safari there was no stopping me. The Whipsnade Zoo, besides having lots of white rhinos, also had the Greater One-horned Indian rhinos. I discovered four of these Indian rhinos here, one wallowing in muddy water, another wandering in and out of its sheltered area and then also a mother and calf wandering around in the fields and pond areas. There were many rhino information signs – [click here](#) to see them.



All species of rhinos love wallowing in mud or muddy water.



**One of the Greater One- horned Indian rhinos at Whipsnade Zoo wandered in and out of its enclosure to eat and drink.**



**The Greater One-horned Indian rhino calf stayed close to its mother at Whipsnade Zoo - where mum went the calf went.**

Whipsnade Zoo had a large sculpture of the Greater One - horned Indian rhino soaking in a pool of cement.





**Mother and calf happily grazing together at the Dubbo Western Plains Zoo.**

### **The Journey to Dubbo Western Plains Zoo First Asian Rhino Calf**

- 2001**      **The first Greater One-horned Rhino arrives in Australia. Two year old Dora makes his debut at Taronga Zoo Sydney from Nagoya, Japan.**
- 2002**      **Construction begins on our Greater One-horned Rhino breeding facility.**
- 2003**      **Dora is transferred from Sydney and moves into the new breeding facility.**
- 2006**      **Amala, a female Greater One-horned Rhino is born in USA.**
- 2009**      **Amala is imported here from LA Zoo.**
- 2010 -2012**      **As the rhinos grow they can see each other through the fences.**
- 2012**      **Introductions between Dora and Amala begin.**
- 2014**      **A mating takes place during their 7<sup>th</sup> introduction in July 2014.**
- 2015**      **After 16 months a male calf, named Rajah, is born on 25<sup>th</sup> October.**



# Some information signs for the Greater One-horned Indian rhino at Edinburgh, Dubbo and Whipsnade Zoos.

## **Greater One-horned Indian Rhinoceros**

### ***Rhinoceros unicornis***

The Greater One-horned rhino is also known as the Indian rhino. These rhinos have just one horn and deeply folded skin, which looks like a suit of armour. They are now only found wild in northern India and Nepal. Thanks to protection and conservation in the world, the population of this species has increased from around just 200 a few decades ago to around 2,400 today.

### **Five Rhinos**

There are five different species of rhinoceros in the world, two African – white and black; and three Asian – Greater One-horned (Indian), Javan and Sumatran. Greater One-horned rhinos are the second largest, growing up to 2m tall and 3.5m long. They can weigh as much as 3 tonnes (more than a family car).

### **Unicorns**

The Greater One-horned rhino's scientific name, unicornis, means one horn, and this species may be the origin of the unicorn legend. The horn is used for pushing through the undergrowth and in searching for food.

### **Horn**

Rhinos have been hunted for their horns for hundreds of years. The horn was thought to have magical or medicinal properties, and has also been used for decorative dagger handles in the Middle East.

Rhino horn is in fact made of keratin, the same material as your hair and fingernails! It does not cure illnesses or have any other uses.

Today, trade in rhinoceros horn is banned under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). However, poachers do still kill rhinos and the horn fetches a high price on the illegal market.

## **Kaziranga, Assam, India – Rhino Success!**

Thanks to the hard work of the Forest Department of Assam, funded and supported by government and conservation organisations (including WWF, the International Rhino Foundation and some zoos), the population of rhinos in Kaziranga National Park in Assam has risen from 10-12 in 1905 to around 1,700 today!

The goal is now to increase this population to 3,000 and to expand the range of the rhinos in Assam by moving (translocating) some of the rhinos to newly established parks and protected areas.

Zoos across Europe, including Edinburgh Zoo, have raised funds and shared expertise to support the translocation of Indian rhinos in Assam and greater efforts to reduce poaching and the illegal horn trade.

### **In the Zoo**

The Greater One-horned rhinos at Edinburgh Zoo are part of an internationally coordinated conservation breeding programme for this species. There are approximately 150 of these rhinos in zoos around the world, and many, like ours, have been bred in captivity.

The Zoo rhinos help us to learn more about the needs of this species and to share this knowledge with those working with the wild rhinos. Zoo rhinos also help us to raise your awareness and knowledge of this endangered species, and to support the work being undertaken in places such as Assam to secure their survival in the wild.

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# Some information signs for the Greater One-horned Indian rhino at Edinburgh, Dubbo and Whipsnade Zoos.

## Greater One-horned Indian rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis*

These rhinos have sharp incisor teeth and can give a nasty bite.

### **Saving grasslands, saves more than rhinos**

In the same way that these rhinos used to range from Pakistan to Burma, their unique grassland habitat is now also only found in the few protected areas along this arc.

These highly fertile grassland areas have been cleared for agriculture and settlement by the growing human population. The grasslands inside the protected areas are under intense pressure both from the surrounding communities and from invasive weeds that force out the natural species that the rhinos depend on.

Rhinos need large areas to support viable populations. Many other plant and animal species also depend on these unique grasslands for their survival. Thus managing these grasslands for rhinos also helps conserve other species dependent on this special grassland habitat.

### **Rhino horn on the streets of London**

Rhinos are being killed for their horns. The Traditional Chinese Medicine belief that rhino horn is a powerful ingredient has led to wide scale poaching and near extinction of all five rhino species. Rhino horns may change hands several times accumulating value before being used in Traditional Chinese Medicines or as worked objects such as traditional Yemeni dagger handles.

The bulk of this demand for rhino horn based medicines is in Asia but the growing demand for traditional Chinese medicines in the UK means products containing rhino horn are all too readily available here.

All international trade in rhino horn and products is in violation of CITES (the convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora). Remember it is illegal to buy and to sell any products containing endangered species.

When the buying stops, the killing stops.

### **Rhino yards provide;**

#### **Rhino Respite**

A place for our rhinos to rest and eat. The separate yards ensure each rhino has their own space, which is important as Greater One-horned Rhinos are solitary.

#### **Rhino Care**

The different yards allow keepers to work with, train and manage the rhinos and their individual needs.

#### **Rhino Matchmaking**

With lots of room to run around, the yards are great for rhino introductions and matings which can involve running, chasing and even fighting.

#### **A Nursery**

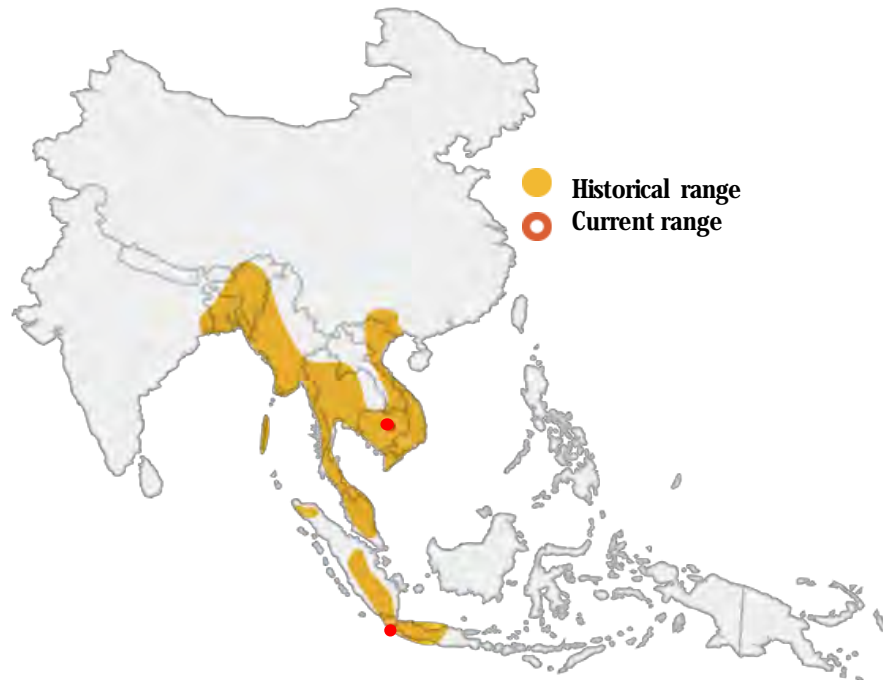
They provide a sanctuary for mothers to feed and raise their calves. The male rhino is held in a different field.

## Javan Rhinos

Javan rhinos are the most threatened species – they are only found in Ujung Kulon National Park in Java, Indonesia. There are none in captivity. The small size of the Javan rhino population means a low genetic diversity - making it hard for the species to remain viable. The National Park is highly vulnerable to tsunamis and a major eruption of the nearby Anak Krakatau volcano could easily wipe out all life in this area. Nearly 50% of the park has been overrun by Arenga palm, a native but invasive species that leaves the area barren of food for rhinos. In recent years four rhinos are thought to have died from disease, probably transmitted to wild cattle in the park and subsequently to the rhinos. WWF and its partners are developing a program to translocate rhinos from the National Park to establish a new population elsewhere in Indonesia, thus eliminating the threat of natural disasters and creating two rhino populations.

The Javan rhinoceros or Lesser One-horned rhinoceros belongs to the same genus as the Indian rhinoceros, and has similar mosaic, armour-like skin, but it is smaller. The neck folds are less massive than in the Greater One-horned Indian rhino, but two folds continue over the back of the neck, forming a characteristic “saddle” on the neck-shoulder. Only adult males have horns, females lack them altogether.

Note the Dramatic Change in the Historical and Current Territory of the Javan rhino in Asia.



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Photo from [© earthcompanions.org](http://earthcompanions.org) Javan-rhinoceros

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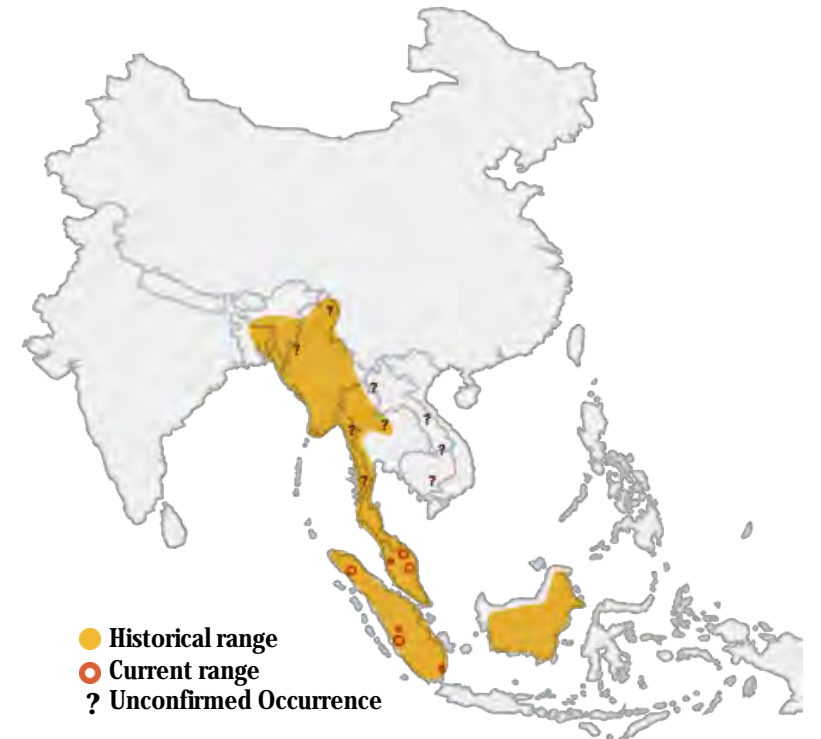
## Sumatran Rhinos

Sumatran rhinos are the smallest of the living rhinos and are the only Asian rhino with two horns. They are covered with short bristly hair and are more closely related to the extinct woolly rhinos than any other rhino species alive today. Calves are born with a dense covering of hair that turns reddish brown in young adults and becomes sparse, bristly and almost black in older animals. Sumatran rhinos compete with the Javan rhino for the unenviable title of most threatened rhino species. While surviving in greater numbers than the Javan rhino, Sumatran rhinos are more threatened by poaching.



Sumatran rhino and calf - Photo from The Rhino Foundation

Note the Dramatic Change in the Historical and Current Territory of the Sumatran rhino in Asia.



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# **Rhino Images - Art and the Rhinoceros**

**Chapter 3 Rhinos in Cave Art and Rock Art**

## **Rhinos in Cave Art**

The earliest depiction of rhinos in art is in cave paintings, etchings and drawings. Many of these images are believed to be more than 30,000 years old. Most of this art has been found in caves in the South of France. It is the Woolly rhino that is found in the earliest cave paintings. Woolly rhinos became extinct about 10,000 years ago. Some archaeologists believe overhunting was the cause, but the more likely culprit was climate change, which caused the disappearance of the animals' food sources and habitat. The Woolly rhino's entire body was covered with a thick, shaggy coat consisting of two types of hair, a thin dense undercoat and a long rigid covering hair. The Woolly rhino (scientific name *Coelodonta antiquitatis*) was a herbivore just like today's rhinos. They had a broad front lip for grazing. The Woolly rhino weighed 2 to 3 tons, was about 2m tall and about 3.5m in length. It had two horns, the front horn was larger and measured up to 1m and had a flattened shape. Cave paintings suggest they may have had a band of darker fur around their midsections. They were solitary animals, similar to their more recent relatives. The Sumatran rhino is the closest living relative of the Woolly rhino family. It is hard to imagine these enormous Woolly rhinos roaming around France today.

**Remie Bakker**, a talented sculptor from the Netherlands, has created Woolly rhino replicas for some natural history museums – see the image and details on the next page.

Some of the best Woolly rhino paintings, etchings and drawings are to be found in the Rouffignac, Lascaux and Chauvet caves in the South of France. Ideas abound as to why Palaeolithic (Ice Age) people painted on cave walls. Some art historians suggest that the paintings could relate to past hunting success, or represent a mystical ritual to improve future hunting endeavours. Another popular theory is known as "Sympathetic magic". This idea is that cave painting was functional - created to bring good fortune to hunters. It is now felt that cave paintings were most likely linked to ceremonial activities. Many of the best-decorated caves were uninhabited and a significant number are located in the least accessible areas of the caves. This suggests that cave art was not created at that time for general viewing but that it was part of ceremonial/spiritual activities. Meanwhile, other prehistorians suggest that cave art enhances the trance-like state created by cave conditions. Deep and dark caves are devoid of any sound (except dripping water) or light. Thus a person experiences total silence, total blackness and often a complete loss of direction - ideal stimuli for communing with supernatural forces. Hence the most convincing explanation for cave paintings is that they were created as part of some ceremonial/spiritual ritual.

Without natural light, the etchings, drawings and paintings would have been created with the aid of burning timber torches and stone lamps filled with animal fat. The pigments used to paint the caves were derived from earth minerals and included red, yellow, black, brown, and violet. No brushes have been found, so probably the broad black outlines were applied using mats of moss or hair, or even with chunks of raw colour. The surfaces appear to have been covered by spraying pulverized colour pigments directly from the mouth or through a tube. Colour-stained, hollowed-out bones have been found in the caves. This technique would have been successful on cave surfaces. Artists were very good at capturing the vitality of the animals depicted. They did this by using broad, rhythmic outlines around areas of soft colouring. Animals are often shown in two perspectives, with heads in profile and horns or antlers as a front view. This use of both profile and frontal perspective is also a common feature in Mesopotamian art and Egyptian art.

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The following information was obtained from the website: <http://www.manimalworks.com/> . It describes the construction of the Woolly rhino shown below. **Remie Bakker** created a replica of a Woolly rhino. **Paleontologist Dick Mol** supervised the replica construction. The objective was to depict the now extinct animal, being careful to avoid any creative assumptions. The modern African rhinos in their natural habitat were studied. Remie constructed a steel frame filled with polyurethane foam to form the rhino body. This foam shape was covered with a “skin” of polyester resin, with the under fur and outer fur glued on. The fur is composed of buffalo, yak, sheep wool and synthetic hair. The head was moulded from the skull of a Woolly rhino cow with broad lips visible. This type of mouth indicates that the animal was a grazer. The hooves and legs were moulded in clay and show the characteristic three-toed foot of members of the rhinoceros family. The toe nails are rounded, worn down by walking on the hard, dry ground. The colour of the fur is grey with a faint brown tint identical to the colour of hair from Woolly rhinos preserved in the permafrost of Siberia.



Replica of a Woolly rhino created by Remie Bakker 2016.

**Finishing Touches:** The head has two horns - a long flattened nasal horn and a shorter horn behind. Horns were modelled from clay using real Woolly rhino horns retrieved from the permafrost of Siberia. The clay horn models were then replicated using polyester resin and placed on the head of the Woolly rhino replica. Much shorter fur (like the fur on a mummified head of a Woolly rhino found in Siberia) was fixed to the head. The result was a replica of a Woolly rhino cow and calf. Of course the calf only has nodules showing where the long horns will eventually be situated.

Remie Bakker is quoted as saying, “To get a better idea for the hair coat of this animal I used cave paintings as an example. I feel that the people that made these paintings were seeing these animals in their daily life and used these images in the caves. This is as true a image as we can get from these animals. If you analyse the drawings of the rhino’s you can divide the drawings , roughly, into two types. The first has hair hanging from the belly and head and no markings on the body. The second has no hair hanging down and distinct lighter and darker areas on the head and body. The darker places are; the mid body, the sideburns, ears, feet and shoulders. My conclusion is that the Woolly rhino had a summer coat that was marked by lighter and darker areas. The winter coat was longer and more uniform in colour.”

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**The Rouffignac cave**, also known as Miremont cave, is located in the Dordogne region of France. The cave was mentioned in 1575 by François de Belleforest in his *Cosmographie Universelle* - he cites “paintings and animal traces”. But it was not until 1956 that Louis-René Nougier and Romain Robert, two prehistorians from the Pyrenees, confirmed the cave art as genuine. In 1959 the owners of the cave officially opened it for tourism.

The Rouffignac cave is an extensive prehistoric cave system, with 8 kilometres of underground passageways. A limited number of visitors enter the cave on a small electric mine train and are taken underground to see the drawings and etchings. The cave features more than 240 images - they are all in monochrome and are either etched into the rock or drawn in black (manganese dioxide) on the rock. There are 11 Woolly rhinos. This is one of the few places that feature real prehistoric art available for public view. In contrast the real Lascaux and Chauvet Cave images are not open to the public instead there are facsimile caves with facsimile images.



Woolly rhinos drawn on the walls of the Rouffignac cave – Photo courtesy of grotte de Rouffignac.

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**The Lascaux cave** complex was discovered in September 1940. Having been hidden for thousands of years, the Lascaux caves were in perfect condition but were opened to an enthusiastic public in 1948 without any thought to preservation. The combined effects of artificial lighting and 100,000 visitors per year soon caused great damage. Much valuable archaeological information was lost, the bright colours of the paintings faded, and destructive layers of algae, bacteria and opaque calcite crystals were formed on the cave walls. Finally, in 1963, the caves were permanently closed to the public and restoration efforts began. In 1983, a replica cave known as Lascaux II was opened for public view. Located on the same hill as the original, the replica cave took 10 years to complete. The paintings were reproduced with painstaking attention to detail by a local artist - Monique Peytral. Thus today the public can only visit a well-executed replica cave called Lascaux II complete with replica images.

Research places most of the paintings in the Lascaux complex at around 15,000 B.C.E., although the subject matter and style of certain figures suggests that they may be somewhat more recent, perhaps only 10,000 B.C.E. Thus, although containing some of the most famous Palaeolithic artworks in the world, Lascaux does not contain the oldest; the Chauvet Cave discovered in 1994 in the Ardèche region of southern France contains paintings dating back as far as 32,000 B.C.E.

This image, from the shaft of the Lascaux cave complex, shows that either the same artist used different techniques for the two panels, or the panels are separated by time and creator. In the centre of this composition is a human figure which has probably been killed by the bison on the right. The human figure and the bison seem to be unrelated to the image of the Woolly rhino, which is done in a more realistic style, with thicker outlines.



Woolly rhino drawn on the wall of the Lascaux cave

Photo: <http://www.lascaux.culture.fr/>

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**The Chauvet cave** was rediscovered and explored on December 18, 1994 by a trio of amateur speleologists: Eliette Brunel Deschamps, Christian Hillaire, and Jean-Marie Chauvet, after whom it was named. In the cave they found numerous paintings and other human evidence as well as fossilized remains, prints, and markings from a variety of animals, some of which are now extinct. The Chauvet cave paintings are believed to date from as far back as 30,000 years ago making them among the oldest discovered cave art. Their content and style indicate that the images were produced for artistic purposes. The experience with the Lascaux cave system taught the experts that the caves must be kept closed to the public in order to protect the paintings. A facsimile of Chauvet cave was opened to the public during 2015. It is the largest cave replica ever built, much bigger than the Lascaux facsimile. The art is reproduced full-size in a cave replica close to the actual cave. Visitors' senses are stimulated by real cave sensations of silence, darkness, temperature, humidity and acoustics. The Chauvet cave is a model for the conservation and management of decorated caves. Below are rhino images depicted in the Chauvet cave paintings.



This large female rhinoceros image is just over a metre in length. It is drawn in a dynamic pose as if it were leaping out of the cavity.



Two fighting Woolly rhinos depicted at Chauvet.



In the Chauvet Cave is the great panel of Rhinoceroses. Note that the rhinos shown here appear to have a band of darker fur around their midsections.

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## Rhinos in Rock Art

The importance of dating has been at the forefront of much research. There is no consensus of opinion about the precise dating of the phases of rock art in Africa. Some archaeologists suggest that the earliest images date back 12,000 years, while others suggest that the rock art emerged only about 6,000 years ago. So, for the time being, the age of African rock art remains indeterminate. There are no viable scientific tests that can be applied to the carvings to suggest their age or to distinguish them from the geologic age of the rock in which they appear.

Rhinos probably had a wider range in the northern part of the African continent in prehistoric times than today. The abundant rock art rhino depictions found across the Sahara Desert are often too schematic to decide whether they depict black or white rhinos. Photos are from the following website: <http://africanrockart.org/>. This website is run by TARA which is an international, Nairobi-based organisation committed to recording the rich rock art heritage of the African continent, to making this information widely accessible and, to the extent possible, safeguarding those sites most threatened by humans and nature. New rock art is being found all the time and for more rhino images and to find out the latest news about rock art in Africa it is recommended that you visit the website of TARA.



Atlas Mountains, Morocco. Tazina-style rhinoceros facing right. Photographed in Tata area, Morocco by David Coulson.



Block-pecked white rhinoceros facing left. This style of art was found in Southern Morocco on the Sahara side of the Atlas Mountains. Photographed in Morocco by David Coulson.



Image showing an outlined upright rhinoceros facing left, curved tail. Photographed in Morocco by David Coulson.

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**Rhino etching on a flat rock in the former Southern Transvaal.  
Photographed in Southern Transvaal by David Coulson.**

South Africa has a large amount of rock art, both paintings and engravings which are scattered over a vast area. The area most famous for its art is the Ukhahlamba-Drakensberg National Park and World Heritage Site in KwaZulu Natal. The mountains here are full of documented sites and some of the paintings are more than 3,000 years old.



**Two red and white shaded rhinoceros above dark red baby rhino. Note how horns positioned against crack in rock face. Photographed in Botswana by David Coulson.**



**Two large outline rhinoceros with in-filled bodies facing left. Small red animals facing left and right. Photographed in Morocco by David Coulson.**

# **Rhino Images - Art and the Rhinoceros**

## **Chapter 4 Rhinos in the Art of Ancient Civilizations**

[Early Chinese Art](#)

[Roman Empire Art](#)

[Indus Valley Civilization Art \(Afghanistan, Pakistan and India\)](#)

[Southern Africa \(Mapungubwe Art\)](#)

## Early Chinese Art

Chinese bronze rhino sculptures and lead glazed earthenware sculptures have been found dating back to the Shang dynasty. These sculptures indicate detailed observation of the rhino. Following are images of seven rhinos, comprising two vessels from the **Shang dynasty**, probably late 1100 – 1050 B.C.E., one vessel from the **Western Han dynasty** (206 B.C.E. – 220 C.E.), one rhino-shaped bronze belt hook believed to be from the **Eastern Zhou dynasty** (1100 – 256 B.C.E.) and one rhino with a scale pattern from the **Eastern Han dynasty** (200 – 300 B.C.E.). Finally there are two pottery rhinos, both from the **Han dynasty** (206 B.C.E. - 220 C.E.).



**Photo 1** is of a late Shang bronze with a bail handle terminating at both ends in a realistic two-horned rhino head. This bronze is part of the Beijing Palace Museum collection.



**Photo 2** is of a wine ritual bronze vessel cast in the shape of a two-horned rhinoceros showing a fine attention to anatomical detail including the three toes on each foot. It was unearthed in Shandong in 1843, and is thought to date from the reign of the last king of Shang. It is part of the collection of the Museum of Chinese History.

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**Photo 3** is of a bronze rhino with silver and gold inlay and shows a saddle on its back. It was unearthed at Xingping, Shaanxi Province, in 1963.



**Photo 4** is of a rhino-shaped bronze belt hook inlaid with gold and silver and was found in a late Eastern Zhou dynasty tomb in the south-western province of Sichuan. It was unearthed in 1954 and is now part of the Collections of the National Museum of China.

**Professor Gary Lee Todd** (Professor of History, Sias International University, Xinzheng, Henan, China) authorises the use of the pictures by him published on the website <http://www.garyleetodd.com>

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**Photo 6** is of a Tomb Pottery figure of a rhinoceros dating from the **Han dynasty**.



**Photo 7** is of a lead glazed earthenware rhinoceros figure from the **Eastern Han dynasty**. In this dynasty grave goods included replicas of domestic and wild animals made from pottery but in reduced size, such as this rhino.

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## **Early Chinese Art**

Unfortunately for the rhino, the Chinese not only represented it in sculpture but actually used parts of the animal for other purposes. This meant killing the rhino. There are now no free roaming rhinos in China, although all three Asian rhinos once lived in China. Originally rhinos could be found all over China, even in the most northern province - Mongolia. Over time their range was reduced, and by the time of the **Han dynasty** (206 B.C.E. – 220 C.E.) the rhino was no longer present in northern China. Two possible reasons have been given for this disappearance. One is climate change – it became much colder in northeast Asia and this caused the disappearance of the animals' food sources and habitat. The second reason for this disappearance was a high demand for rhino hide for armour and rhino horn for glue and for medicinal purposes. The last outpost of the native Chinese rhino was Sichuan, where rhinos were reported to be living up to the late 17th century.

Thus the Chinese hunted the rhino both for its hide and its horn. The aptly named Warring States period brought about a huge demand for armour made of rhino hide. By the time of the Han dynasty, this large, thick-skinned, herbivorous mammal had already become a rare sighting in the north. The rhino was captured and killed mainly for its tough, thick skin. When dried, rhino hide became extremely hard and provided excellent protection against bronze weapons. Rhino hide was considered to be the ideal material for making the helmets, body armour and shields commonly worn by soldiers throughout the Bronze Age period. As well as being used for armour and shields, rhino hides and horns were melted down for glue used in making Chinese compound bows. Even as late as 1830, native Siberians were still using fossil rhino horns as raw material to increase the elasticity of their bows.

Rhino horn was believed to have special properties. One was that it would react by fizzing if it came into contact with certain poisons, and so cups made out of rhino horn were valued as a protection against poisoning. These cups are beautifully carved and are artworks in themselves. Tragically, the rhino must be killed to obtain its horn to carve the cup. It is thought that rhino horn cups developed during the Warring States period. The earliest surviving examples of rhino horn cups are held at the Shōsōin treasure house in Nara, Japan and these date to the **Tang dynasty** (618 – 907 C.E.). The typical carved horn cups are made from the tapering part of the conical horn. Cups made out of rhino horn were very popular during the **Ming** (1368–1644 C.E.) and **Qing** (1644–1912 C.E.) **dynasties**, when they were used as libation cups for ritual purposes. Many examples of Ming and Qing rhino horn cups can be seen in museum collections.

Qing Emperor Qianlong (1736-1795 C.E.) did not just write poetry in praise of the existing rhino horn cups made from the times before him, but unfortunately also ordered his workshop to make new ones in his own name, hence killing more rhinos. Qianlong had his cups engraved with script that read "Great Qing, Qianlong".

In addition to cups, rhinoceros horn was also used to make other objects, such as snuff bottles, hair pins, belt hooks, and dress toggles. Due to high demand for rhinoceros horn medicine, rhinoceros horn carvings were ground down for medicine. Whilst the popularity of libation cups has aided their survival, it appears far fewer of these other objects such as snuff bottles have survived. On the next page are photos of five carved rhino horn cups.

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Libation cups carved from rhinoceros horn dating from ca 1600 to 1800's.



Libation cup in the British museum collection.  
Photo by Lorraine Fildes.

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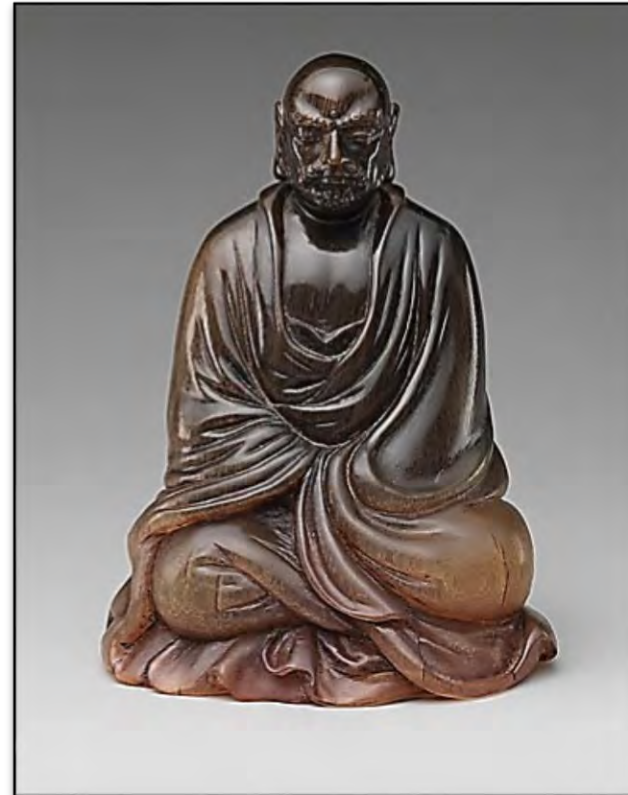




Ming Dynasty Chinese rhinoceros horn carving.

Text about the carving from Victoria and Albert Museum, London:

This graceful figure has been finely carved from rhinoceros' horn and represents the 'compassionate' **Bodhisattva Guanyin**, also known as **Avalokiteshvara**. According to Buddhist teachings, a bodhisattva is a deity on the path to reaching Enlightenment. By this period (late Ming) Guanyin took on the aspect of an elegant lady in flowing robes. Here she is pouring from a bottle the sweet waters of salvation. Sea creatures swarm in the waves foaming over her bare feet.



Chinese rhinoceros horn carving.

Text about the carving from the Metropolitan Museum of Art New York.

The bald head, meditative posture, and monastic clothing identify this figure as **Bodhidharma**, the foreign monk credited with founding the Chan (or Zen) tradition of East Asian Buddhism.

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## Roman Empire Art - late 3rd and early 4th century C.E.

The **Villa Romana del Casale** site was excavated in the 1950s. It is a Roman Villa dating from the late 3rd and early 4th century C.E. with over 50 rooms full of frescos and coloured mosaic floors - in total an area of 3,500 m<sup>2</sup>. These mosaics – probably the work of North African craftsmen - have survived because the villa was buried in a mud slide in the 12th century. The villa was believed to be owned by tetrarch **Marcus Aurelius Maximianus** who ruled the Roman Empire in about 300 C.E. That so much space was devoted to pictures of capturing animals shows how important this activity was to the Romans. In particular, the floor of the longest hall is known as the *Corridor of the Great Hunt*. It is one continuous scene in which groups of men are tracking down and capturing ferocious animals in India and north Africa before transporting them by boat to Rome, to supply the popular venationes or wild beast spectacles. It is believed that thousands of animals were killed in these spectacles.

Here are a few statistics put forward in *Rome and the Romans*, by Showerman. *It is recorded that in 249 C.E. the Romans celebrated the one thousandth anniversary of the founding of Rome by giving games in which the following were killed: one thousand pairs of gladiators, thirty-two elephants, ten tigers, sixty lions, thirty leopards, ten hyenas, ten giraffes, twenty wild asses, forty wild horses, ten zebras, six hippos, and one rhino.* Surprisingly only one rhino was listed. However, it was reported that the Romans imported both the African and the Indian rhino. It is said that even the most ignorant members of the Roman crowd could readily distinguish between the two beasts, so there must have been plenty of rhinos imported.

Wild animals at the Colosseum were a symbol of power and the Romans expected spectacular ringside events. Events using exotic and wild animals provided Romans with novelty and also demonstrated Roman power. These animals originated in all parts of the Roman Empire thus representing its extent. A massive selection of wild animals, (lions, tigers, leopards, wild boar, bulls, bears, hippopotami and rhinoceroses, just to name a few), were slaughtered at the Roman Colosseum.



This image of a rhinoceros is from the mosaic *Corridor of the Great Hunt*. Photo by Dick Ossema.

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This photo shows more images from the mosaic *Corridor of the Great Hunt*. This image is from the website: <http://www.buone-vacanze.com/15-10-2015/citta-capitali/3167/visita-alla-villa-del-casale-di-piazza-armerina/>

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The rhinoceros, from its performance in the ringside events of the Colosseum, was considered to have extraordinary power and strength. Domitian, the Roman emperor from CE 81 to 96 honoured the rhinoceros by having its image engraved on some Roman coins. Perhaps the emperor was indicating that Roman money had the power and strength of the rhinoceros. Images of the rhinoceros from the 1<sup>st</sup> Century C.E. were also depicted on rings and terracotta lamps. Did the ring wearers consider themselves as powerful as the rhinoceros? The terracotta lamp image (next page) certainly respects the strength of the rhino - it shows one tossing a large cat, most likely a lion.



Copper alloy coin – denomination quadrans.  
Description – (obverse) rhinoceros facing left; (reverse) latin  
Inscription.

Authority - Domitian (Roman emperor from C.E. 81 to 96).  
Coin dated: C.E. 84-85, minted in Rome, Italy.



Copper alloy coin – denomination quadrans.  
Description - (obverse) rhinoceros facing left; (reverse) latin  
inscription.

Authority - Domitian (Roman emperor from C.E. 81 to 96)  
Coin dated - C.E. 84-85, minted in Rome, Italy.

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**Terracotta oil lamp dated 1<sup>st</sup> half of 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E.**  
**Culture: Roman, Cypriot**  
**State: Roman Empire**  
**Authority Ruler: Julio-Claudian**  
**Dimensions: Overall: 2.9 x 10.2 cm.**

**Information from the Metropolitan Museum:** On the discus a rhinoceros is shown tossing with its horn a large cat, probably a lion, while a small animal, possibly meant to be a baby rhino, hides in a tree behind. The base is inscribed FAVSTI ([of the lampmaker] Faustus); he seems to have worked in Italy, Egypt, and Petra (Jordan), as well as Cyprus.



**Sard gem ring engraved with a rhinoceros dated 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> century C.E.**  
**Culture: Roman Imperial**  
**Dimensions Length: 1.2 cm. Height: 1 cm.**

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## Indus Valley Civilization Art

The Indus Valley **Bronze Age Civilization** (3300–1300 B.C.E.) extended from northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India. Along with ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia it was one of three early civilisations of the Old World, and of the three the most widespread.

Indus Civilization is the earliest known urban culture of the Indian subcontinent. The civilization was first identified in 1921 at **Harappa** in the Punjab region and then in 1922 at Mohenjo-daro, near the Indus River. Both sites are in present-day Pakistan. The ruins of **Mohenjo-daro** were designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980.

The Indus civilization is known to have consisted of two large cities, Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, and more than 100 smaller villages. The people of the Indus Valley Civilization had developed a writing system which was used for several hundred years. However, we are still unable to read their script. This explains why we know so little about the Indus Valley Civilization. Examples of their script have been found on pottery, amulets, carved stamp seals, and even on weights and copper tablets.

Artefacts found at the sites include stone sculptures which are small and usually represent humans or perhaps their gods. Many small terra-cotta figures of animals and humans have been found. The rhinoceros is one of the animals depicted in terra-cotta. But the best-known Indus artefacts are a number of small seals, generally made of steatite (a form of talc), which depict a variety of animals, including the rhino. Having a seal with a rhinoceros depicted on it would indicate that the owner believed his seal to be powerful like the rhinoceros.

By 1800 B.C.E., the Indus Valley Civilization saw the beginning of its decline. The reason for this decline is not clear, but it is thought that the drying up of the Saraswati River, a process which had begun around 1900 B.C.E., was the main cause.



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This left hand image shows an Indus stamp-seal carved from grey steatite. On the face of the seal a rhinoceros is depicted and above the rhinoceros is a short inscription in Indus script.

Date: 2500 to 2000 B.C.E.  
Excavated at Mohenjo-daro  
Dimensions: Width: 3.3 cm  
Height: 3.3 cm Depth: 1.3 cm



A stone seal from the Indus Valley Civilization (c. 3000–1500 B.C.E.) depicting a Rhino.



This left hand image shows two terra-cotta rhinoceros figures. Both figures clearly show the rhinoceroses' distinctive "horned" snout. Although the rhinoceros is no longer found in many areas of the Indus region, rhinoceros' bones have been found at Harappa.



Description: Clay figure of a rhinoceros produced by the Indus culture. Object preserved in the Mahenjo-Daro Museum.

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## Kingdom of Mapungubwe (Southern Africa)

The Kingdom of Mapungubwe (900 – 1,300 C.E.) was a pre-colonial state in southern Africa and is on the northern border of South Africa, joining Zimbabwe and Botswana. Mapungubwe, an Iron Age site, was discovered in 1932 but hidden from public attention until the 1990s. It was declared a World Heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in July 2003.

The University of Pretoria excavated the site following its discovery and despite the obvious significance of the artefacts found at the Mapungubwe site they were ignored. The colonial/apartheid governments' political regimes at the time maintained that primitive Africans could not have produced such artefacts. Mapungubwe is testimony to the existence of an African civilization that flourished before colonisation. Between 1200 and 1300 C.E., Mapungubwe was home to an advanced culture of people. They traded with China and India, had a well established agricultural area, and grew to a population of around 5,000.

Mapungubwe is probably the earliest known site in southern Africa where evidence of a class-based society existed. Twenty three graves were excavated at the site and the bodies in three of these graves were buried in the upright seated position associated with royalty, with a variety of gold and copper items, exotic glass beads, and other prestigious objects. These artefacts provide evidence both of the early smelting of gold in southern Africa and the extensive wealth and social differentiation of the people of Mapungubwe.



Photo by Tim Hauf (University of Pretoria)

Mapungubwe's demise was brought about by climatic change. When rainfall decreased after 1,300 C.E., the land could no longer sustain a high population using traditional farming methods, and the inhabitants were obliged to disperse.

South Africa's government ignored the significance of the golden rhinoceros figure that provided undeniable proof of a sophisticated society existing before white people arrived. But since the end of apartheid in 1994, the golden rhinoceros, just 15 cm long, has become a defining symbol of precolonial civilization in southern Africa.

The little gold rhinoceros is made of gold foil and tacked with minute pins around a wooden core. It was taken from a burial site on Mapungubwe hill, South Africa.

[Click here](#) to read about Sue Dickenson who designed postage stamps representing the early history of South Africa. The golden rhinoceros is on one of these stamps.

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# **Rhino Images - Art and the Rhinoceros**

**Chapter 5 Rhinos in European Art – 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Century**

Dramatic changes were taking place in Europe from 1500. There was a renaissance in art, European imperialism in Asia, Africa and America, plus religious conflicts resulting in wars among European states. All these changes have to be considered when looking at the arrival of the first rhinoceroses in Europe since the end of the Roman Empire in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century C.E. We now look at the effect that the eight Greater One-horned Indian rhinoceroses that arrived in Europe from 1515 until 1799 had on the depiction of the animal in the art world.

### **Arrival of the First Rhinoceros to Europe – 1515**

In 1514 Afonso de Albuquerque, governor of Portuguese India, tried to negotiate to obtain the right to open a fort at Diu (Goa, India) – he failed but was given a rhinoceros as a conciliatory gift. Albuquerque subsequently sent this rhino to the King of Portugal, Manuel I. The rhino arrived in 1515 and was unloaded in Portugal, near the site where the Belém Tower was under construction. This tower was later decorated with gargoyles shaped as rhinoceros heads under its corbels. The rhino was housed in King Manuel's menagerie at the Ribeira Palace in Lisbon until 1516. The King was delighted with the attention and excitement his new pet rhino caused in Europe.

Portugal was not part of the Holy Roman Empire and the King wanted the support of the Pope during heated border disputes with Spain and decided his exotic rhino would make an impressive gift to give the Pope. He shipped it off to Rome as a gift to Pope Louis X. Unfortunately the ship carrying the rhino sank in a storm off the Italian coast. The rhino had been chained to the deck and hence even although Indian rhinos are very good swimmers it had no chance of surviving and died along with the crew.

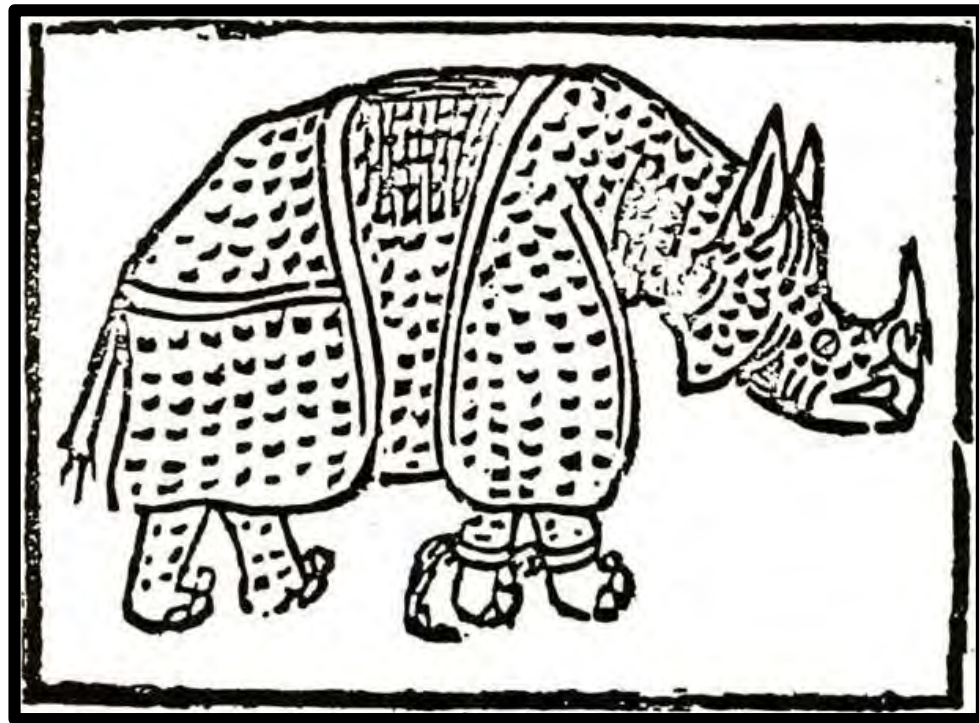
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The rhino gargoyles can still be seen on the Belém Tower, but unfortunately are very badly weathered.

Large numbers of people, including scholars and naturalists, viewed the rhinoceros whilst it was in Portugal. Letters and sketches depicting the exotic animal were sent to correspondents throughout Europe. Many images were made of the rhino. The earliest known image was used to illustrate a poem by Giovanni Giacomo Penni, published in Rome on July 1515. Albrecht Durer produced the most famous depiction of the rhino at this time. Albrecht Durer never saw the actual rhino but was given a sketch and a written description of the Indian rhino from which he produced his most famous drawing and woodcut. *Durer's Rhinoceros* is the name commonly given to the woodcut he executed in 1515. Many prints were made from Durer's woodcut. These prints were the primary source for European artists who wanted to depict the rhino.

Due to the renaissance in art there became a greater awareness of nature, a revival of classical learning, and a more individualistic view of man. The artist became concerned with matters other than religion. Artists were called on to glorify European imperial power and to make people want foreign adventures. Durer aimed to make an image of the rhino that was recognizable, but would also portray an exotic animal to excite the adventurous to visit foreign shores and actually see this animal.



The first known print of the rhinoceros is a rather primitive woodcut which illustrates a poem by Giovanni Giacomo Penni published in Rome in July 1515. (Biblioteca Colombina, Seville).

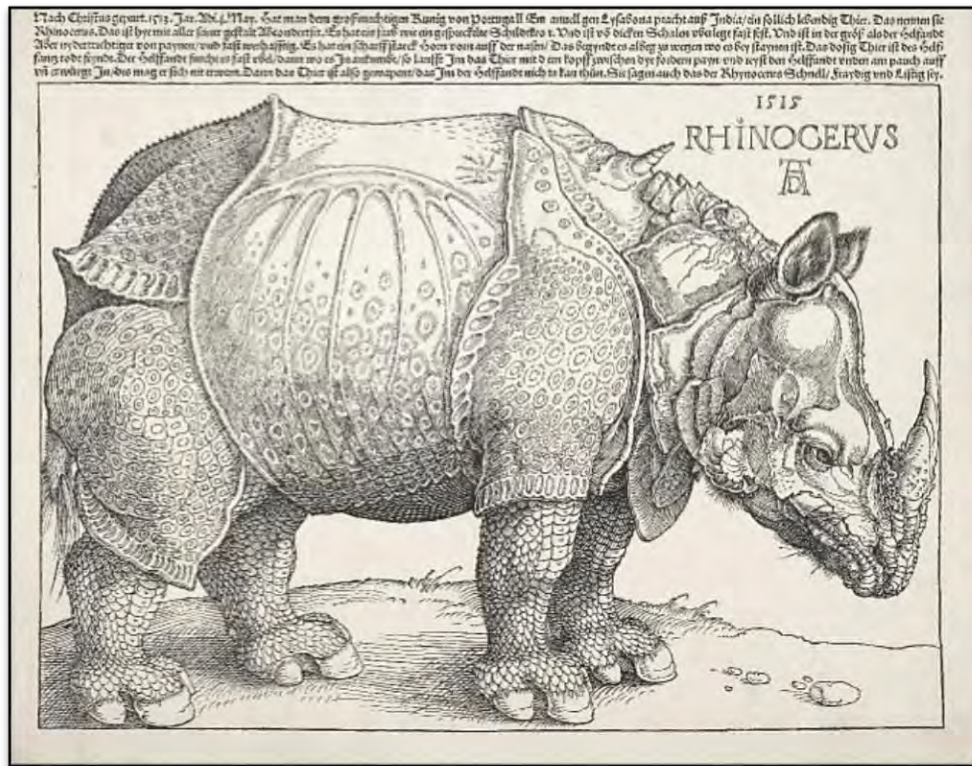


Pen and ink drawing of the rhinoceros by Albrecht Dürer, 1515, now in the British Museum. The manuscript caption gives the date of the arrival of the rhinoceros in Lisbon as "1513".

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Dürer gave a great sense of strength and power to the rhino by drawing a frame tightly around the rhino's body. The drawing gave the impression that the rhino's horn was pushing against the right-hand edge of the frame to escape. Above the printed frame containing the animal are five lines of German text which translated reads:

'On 1 May 1513 [this should read 1515] was brought from India to the great and powerful king Emanuel of Portugal at Lisbon a live animal called a rhinoceros. His form is here represented. It has the colour of a speckled tortoise and it is covered with thick scales. It is like an elephant in size, but lower on its legs and almost invulnerable. It has a strong sharp horn on its nose which it sharpens on stones. The stupid animal is the elephant's deadly enemy. The elephant is very frightened of it as, when they meet, it runs with its head down between its front legs and gores the stomach of the elephant and throttles it, and the elephant cannot fend it off. Because the animal is so well armed, there is nothing that the elephant can do to it. It is also said that the rhinoceros is fast, lively and cunning.'



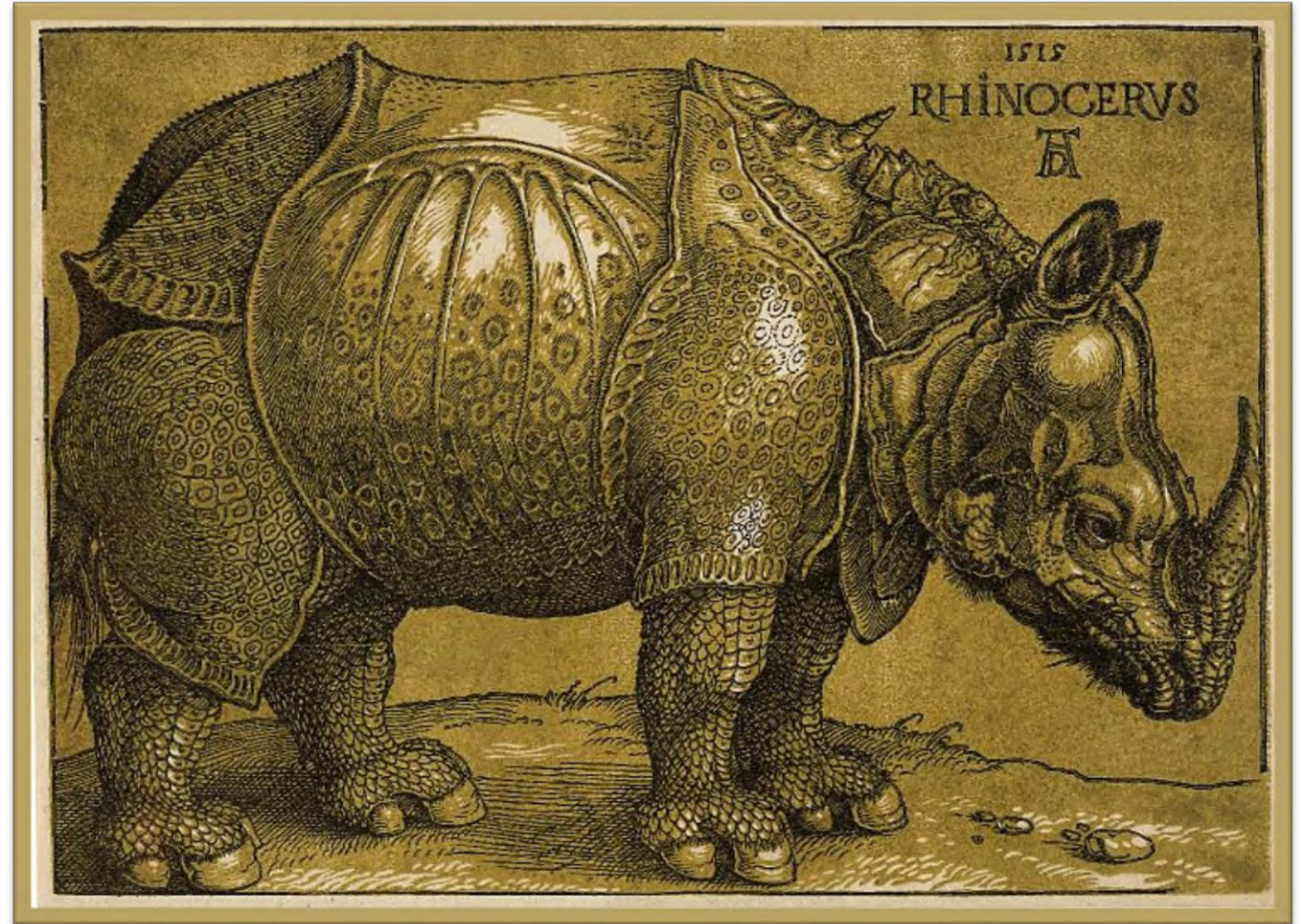
*Rhinocerus* (Rhinoceros). Print in the British Museum. Print made by Albrecht Dürer German 1515. Description: First edition of a broadside of a rhinoceros; with a woodcut of a rhinoceros standing in profile to the right, and five lines letterpress above in German.

The folds of skin of an Indian rhinoceros match up well to the plates of armour depicted by Dürer.

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Further printings followed after Dürer's death in 1528, including two in the 1540s and another two in the late 16th century. Hence due to the printing press *Durer's Rhinoceros* was the image that many believed was a true representation of the animal and this remained so until the mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Durer's woodblock of the rhinoceros eventually passed into the hands of the Amsterdam printer and cartographer Willem Janssen, but by this time the block was very damaged; the border lines were chipped, there were numerous woodworm holes and a pronounced crack had developed through the rhino's legs. Janssen decided to re-issue the block with the addition of a new tone block printed in a variety of colours, olive-green and dark green, as well as blue-grey. The resulting chiaroscuro woodcut, which entirely omitted the text, was published after 1620.

From where did the idea come of the rhino being the mortal enemy of the elephant? The German inscription on the woodcut comes largely from Pliny's account in his *Natural History* (C.E. 23-79). Twenty five editions of Pliny's book were published before 1500, so many scholars had access to the book and his statements were accepted as facts. Zoological literature accepted Durer's rhino image and Pliny's account of its hostility and ability to harm the elephant. When Manuel I of Portugal had the Indian rhino in 1515 he tested Pliny's account by arranging for an encounter between the rhino and one of the elephants in his menagerie; the elephant fled.

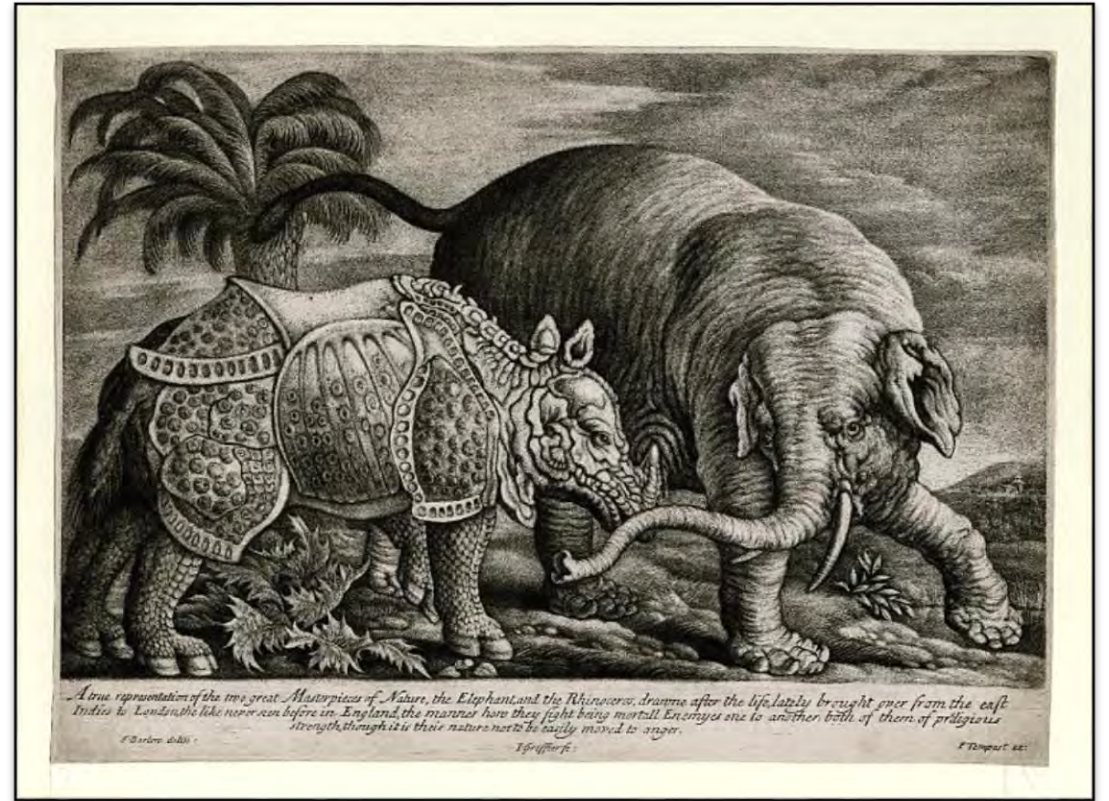


*Rhinocerus* (Rhinoceros). A colour woodcut of a rhinoceros standing in profile to the right, the tone block printed in light olive green, without any text, from the seventh edition published by Janssen in Amsterdam after 1620.

In 1684 Francis Barlow, an English artist, depicted a rhinoceros fighting an elephant. In the text accompanying *Durer's Rhinoceros* the rhino was described as the mortal enemy of the elephant and this is what Barlow depicted in his drawing. Barlow's rhino is very similar to Durer's rhino, but lacks the twisted spiral horn on the animal's back. Below left is Barlow's original drawing. Below right is a mezzotint after Barlow's drawing made by Jan Griffier and published by Pierce Tempest of London in 1685.



*Rhinoceros Fighting the Elephant* by Francis Barlow Year: 1684.



*Rhinoceros Fighting the Elephant*. Mezzotint by Jan Griffier. Year 1685.

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Durer's rhino image dominated the art scene and was used in nature books and in the applied arts for the next three centuries. On the following pages are some of the paintings, sculptures, pottery, porcelain, tapestries, clocks and books that used Durer's image of the rhinoceros.



Rhinoceros with other animals in Grotta degli Animali at the Medici Villa Castello near Florence, Italy. This grotto by Niccolò Pericoli was called Tribolo and was completed after 1537. The rhino, which has the extra horn on its wither is after Durer's drawing of 1515.



Rhinoceros in bronze, in a panel on the left door of the baptistry next to the Cathedral in Pisa, Italy. It was cast by Domenico Portigiani and finished in 1602. Note that although the artist was faithful in representing the body according to Dürer, the neck and head are taken from the Madrid rhino of 1586.

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*Le cheval rayé* by Alexandre François Desportes, oil on canvas, 1737. This painting was used as a cartoon for a series of tapestries done by the Gobelins company in France. The painting now hangs in the Guéret, musée d'art et d'archéologie, France.



Detail from a 'large-leaved verdure' tapestry, of Flemish origin, ca. 1550 (artist unknown) in the Kronborg Castle, Elsinore, Denmark.

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The Apothecaries Society's Coat of Arms, dated 12 December 1617, is signed by William Clarenceux King of Arms. It features Apollo (the god of healing) killing the dragon of disease, supported by two unicorns (from King James's royal arms), and a rhinoceros as the crest (the powdered horn was believed to be medicinal). The motto, from the first book of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses', translates: "I am spoken of all over the world as one who brings help". The Coat of Arms can be seen over the entrance to the Apothecaries' Hall and part of the Coat of Arms is on the entrance gate to the Apothecaries Garden in Chelsea.



Close up of the Coat of Arms over the entrance to the Apothecaries' Hall.

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The rhino can be clearly seen as part of the Coat of Arms on the entrance gate to the Apothecaries' Garden in Chelsea.

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Close up of the Coat of Arms on the entrance gate to the Apothecaries' garden in Chelsea.



There are a number of tiles with the crest. They date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Pills and ointments would have been mixed and made on these tiles. When other methods of pill making were introduced, such tiles were often then used for decoration and advertising.



*Rhinoceros in a Landscape within an Ornamental Frame* by Johann Melchior Füssli (Swiss) ca. 1730 – again a copy of *Durer's Rhinoceros*. Drawn by pen with grey, brown, and black inks, brush and grey wash.



Chelsea Porcelain (U.K.)  
Date: ca. 1752-56  
A copy of *Durer's Rhinoceros*.



Snuffbox by Louis Roucel  
France: 1768–69.

Dürer's print of a rhinoceros, appears here on a black shell ground inlaid (piqué) with hair-thin strips of gold and silver that simulate the lines of the original woodcut.

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These two musical table clocks, both from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, both pay homage to *Durer's Rhinoceros* – both show the rhino with the spiral horn on its back.



A Louis XV gilt-bronze, bronze and Vernis Martin musical rhinoceros table clock.

Circa 1748, attributed to Jean-Joseph de Saint-Germain.

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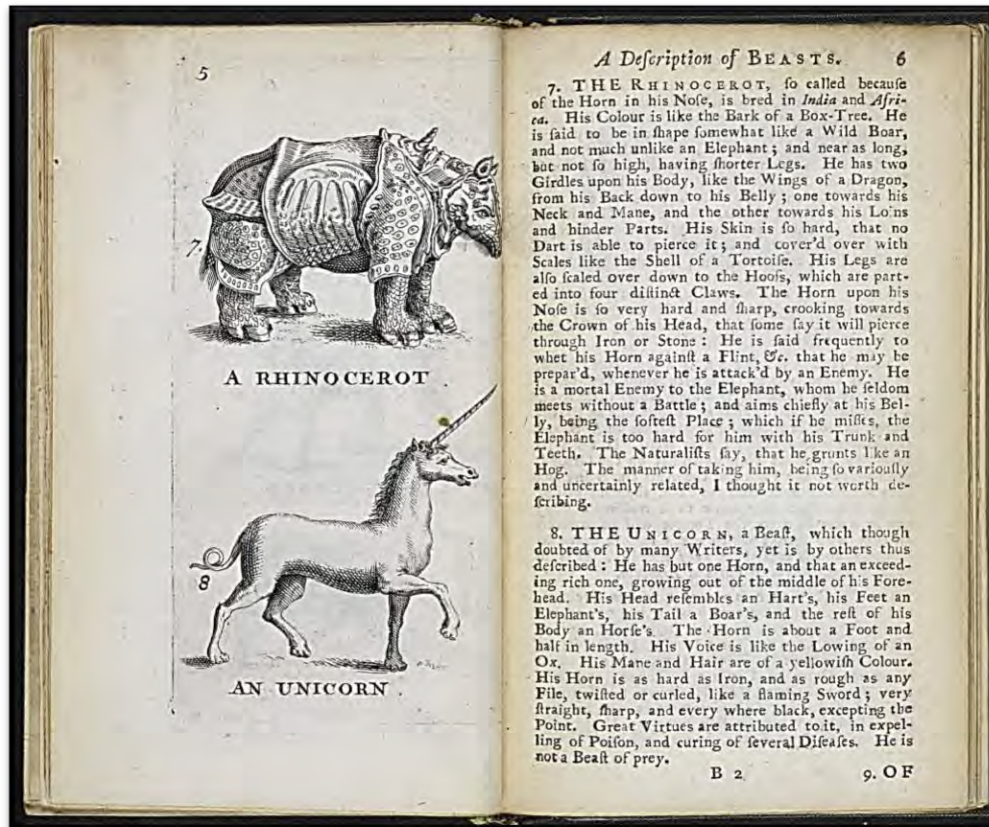


Musical Table Clock Mounted on Rhinoceroses  
By James Cox, U.K., 1772

Material: gold, silver, metal alloys, agate, pearl and coloured glass.

Thomas Boreman, was the publisher and presumed author of the children's book *A Description of Three Hundred Animals; viz Beast, Birds, Fishes, Serpents and Insects*. First published in London in 1730 with a second edition in 1796, both editions use Durer's image of the rhinoceros rather than the more realistic image of the rhino produced by James Parsons.

This book contains written descriptions and illustrations of 300 animals, including fabulous creatures such as unicorns. To the modern eye, mythical beasts may seem out of place in a natural history book but imaginary creatures such as unicorns, griffins and mermaids were included and each animal was related to a moral tale: the creatures themselves were not as important as the lessons taught.



Two pages from Thomas Boreman's book *A Description of Three Hundred Animals; viz Beast, Birds, Fishes, Serpents and Insects*.



Durer's Rhinoceros appears in the background of the cover image on this 1658 Dutch manuscript about Medical Botany by Gulielmi Pisonis. (See cover left, detail above.)

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There were other images of the 1515 rhino. One of the earliest non Durer rhino images was done in 1515 by Hans Burgkmair. His woodcut image of a rhinoceros showed a much gentler creature than Durer's image and the markings on the body and legs are less stylized than Durer's. There is only one surviving copy of Burgkmair's image and it obviously did not influence the public's image of a rhino.



The only copy of Burgkmair's image of a rhinoceros is held in the Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna.

Another non Durer rhino image was painted about 1517 by Francesco Granacci, a Florentine artist. The rhino walks in the background of *Joseph and his Brethren in Egypt*. It is unknown where Granacci obtained the image – did he see the 1515 rhino or did he use someone else's sketch?



Granacci's painting *Joseph and his brethren in Egypt*.

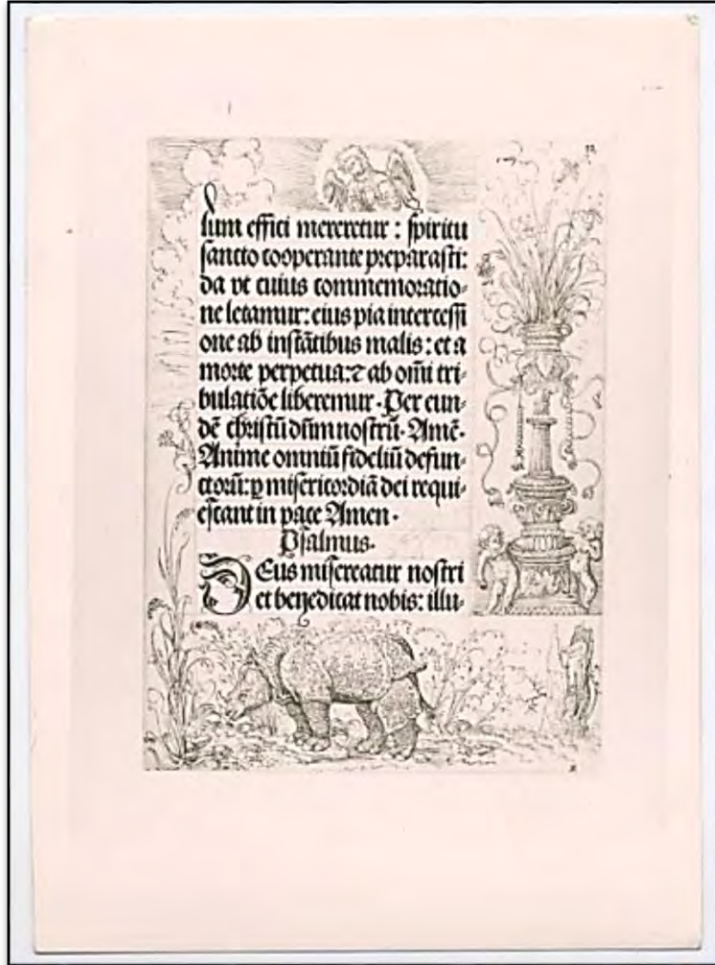


Detail of the rhino found in upper right background of Granacci's painting *Joseph and his brethren in Egypt*.

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Another image is the likeness of a rhino drawn in red ink in the lower margin of Emperor Maximilian's prayer book. This likeness is a composite of both the Durer and Burgkmair images.



Maximilian's Prayer book, 1517. This decoration for the prayer book is thought to be by Albrecht Altdorfer.

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In Raphael's fresco only the head and part of the neck and forelegs are visible – these do not appear to have been taken from Durer's rhino – the source is closer to Penni's and Granacci's images of the rhino.



Raphael's fresco in the Vatican, 1518. This fresco said to be by Raphael was most likely painted by his assistant Giovanni da Udine from 1518-19. It depicts God naming the animals and is found on the second floor of the Palazzi Pontifica in the Vatican.

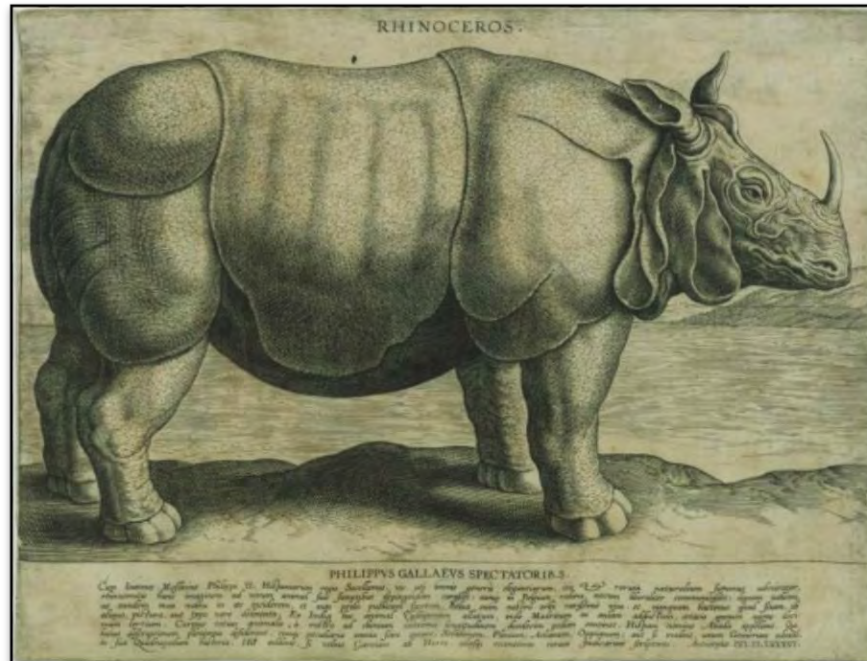
## Arrival of the Second Rhinoceros to Europe - 1579

Durer's rhinoceros of 1515 was followed by the 'Madrid' rhinoceros of 1579. This rhino was originally known as *Abada*, (the common name used in Portugal and Spain to refer to any rhinoceros) and was sent by an Indian viceroy to the Portuguese King, Sebastian I. There was much turmoil in Portugal at the time and the King was killed and replaced by Philip II of Spain. So *Abada* became Philip II's rhinoceros. Philip II lived in Portugal for a few years to establish his reign over the Portuguese. When Philip returned to Madrid in 1583 he took *Abada* with him and the rhino then became known as the *Madrid Rhinoceros*. The rhino was housed in a street called *Calle de la Abada* and this street is still called by that name. The *Madrid Rhinoceros* lived in captivity until 1588 and many drawings were made of it. Below is a print of Philippe Galle's engraving which was done in 1586, two years before the *Madrid Rhinoceros* died.

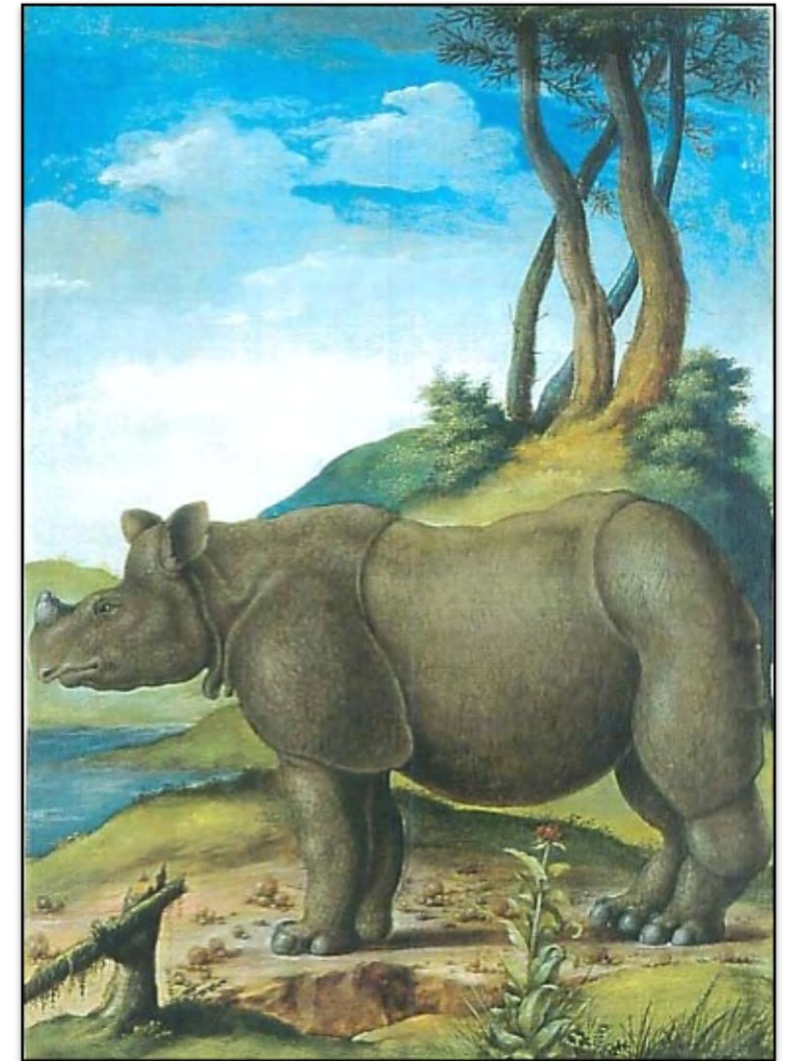
Galle's and the unknown artist's more accurate images of the rhino did not impact on public perception of the rhino. This was because few people saw these images - whereas a large number of prints were made from Durer's engraving and hence it became the recognised image of a rhinoceros.



A street sign for Calle de la Abada, Madrid, Spain. Photo by Alfredo Ruiz de Luna.



Engraving of the *Madrid Rhinoceros* by Philippe Galle. Printed in Antwerp in 1586.



Gouache painting of the *Madrid Rhinoceros*, 1577 (Artist unknown). This painting was found in the *kunstammer* (cabinet of curiosities) of Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor 1552-1612. The painting is in the Austrian National Library in Vienna.

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## Arrival of the Third and Fourth Rhinoceroses to Europe – 1684 and 1739.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> live Indian rhinos arrived in England in 1684 and 1739. These rhinos aroused great excitement in the city of London. The 1684 rhino was exhibited at the Bell Savage Inn on Ludgate-Hill and many paid the sum of twelve pence to view it. There are few images of this 1684 rhino. There is the Thomas Barlow illustration of the [Rhinoceros Fighting the Elephant](#) – but this is basically a copy of *Durer's Rhinoceros*. The only other image of this rhino is an anonymous engraving found in the Glasgow University Library.

*Advertisements.*

☞ A Guide to the Practical Physician: Shewing, from the most Approved Authors, both Ancient and Modern, the truest and safest way of Curing all Diseases. Lately Published in Latin by Theoph. Boner, M.D. And now Rendred into English. With an Addition of many considerable Cases, Rules and Means of Cure, that were omitted by the aforefaid Author. To which is added an Appendix concerning the Office of a Physician, by the same Author. Printed for Thomas Fletcher at the Angel and Crown in St. Pauls Church-yard.

A Very strange Beast called a Rhynoceros, lately brought from the East-Indies, being the first that ever was in England, is daily to be seen at the Bell Savage Inn on Ludgate-Hill; from Nine a Clock in the Morning till Eight at Night.

Taken from: London Gazette - 1684  
Copyright: British Library Board

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Anonymous engraving of England's first rhinoceros, 1684. *The Exact Draught of the Famous Beast the Rhinoscerus*, Glasgow University Library.

In the early 1700's the natural sciences had become a subject of serious study, so when a young, male rhinoceros from Bengal, India arrived in England on 1 June 1739 it gave the natural scientist, Dr. Douglas and his assistant Dr. James Parsons, the opportunity to study and draw the animal in detail. Douglas had Parsons do a number of drawings of the rhino whilst he prepared a detailed description. James Douglas lectured on the subject of the rhinoceros to the Royal Society on 21 June 1739. Douglas died in April 1742, but Parsons continued doing sketches and paintings of the rhinoceros. Using the reproduction on the left below Parsons read the first accurate paper on a rhinoceros, to the Royal Society on 21 June 1743. One of Parsons paintings of the rhinoceros, set in an imaginary landscape, hangs in the Natural History Museum of London. Also the museum possesses a reproduction of an engraving from *Rhinoceros: a Natural History of Four-Footed Animals, 1739*, the illustration used in Parsons talk to the Royal Society in 1743. The Hunterian Library at Glasgow University possesses a number of Parson's drawings – most are done in red chalk. Even though Parson's depiction of the rhino was more accurate it made no impression on people and *Dürer's Rhinoceros* continued to be used.



**Indian rhinoceros, *Rhinoceros unicornis***

**James Parsons (1705-1770)**

*Reproduction of engraving from **Rhinoceros: a Natural History of Four-Footed Animals, 1739***

This illustration accompanied the first accurate description of a rhinoceros, read to the Royal Society on 21 June 1743. Its author, the physician James Parsons, heard of a young male rhino brought to London from Bengal. He seized the opportunity to study and sketch it. Parsons' careful observations, detailing the rhino's shape and the texture of its skin, corrected older images of an armour-plated beast.



*Rhinoceros* by James Parsons now hanging in the Natural History Museum of London.

## **Arrival of the Fifth Rhinoceros to Europe – 1741**

A “mover and shaker” came onto the rhinoceros scene in 1741. An enterprising Dutch sea captain, Douwe Mout van der Meer, arrived in Rotterdam in 1741 with a two year old female Indian rhinoceros. This *Dutch rhinoceros* became known as Clara. Clara was a sensation in Europe - due to Douwe Mout 's brilliant publicising. Towns were littered with posters, engravings and medals. Clara's tours included Stuttgart, Brussels, Vienna, Zurich, Paris, Prague, Krakow, Copenhagen, and Rome. Douwe Mout 's enterprise with Clara proved so profitable that he left the sea and travelled all over Europe with Clara full-time. Over the next 17 years Clara was seen by many thousands of people in France, Germany, Austria, Italy and England.

The best animal artists wanted to paint Clara. The artist Jean-Baptiste Oudry painted a life-size portrait of Clara on a canvas 4.57 metres long and 3.05 metres high. This painting is held in the Staatliches Museum Schwerin. When T. H. Clarke published his book *Rhinoceros from Durer to Stubbs 1515 – 1799* this painting was in a very bad state of repair and not even stretched. It has now been restored and is on exhibition. See an image of Jean-Baptiste Oudry's painting on the next page.

In 1748 the engraver Johann Elias Ridinger, already famous for his animal prints, made a series of six drawings of Clara, which he engraved and printed and used in the background of his other works. [Click here](#) to see two images of Johann Elias Ridinger's work.

In 1751, while in Venice, Clara was the subject of two famous paintings by Pietro Longhi, one of which is held in the National Gallery, London. [Click here](#) to see images of both paintings.

The artist and engraver Jan Wandelaar was employed by Bernhard Siegfried Albinus, a professor of anatomy and surgery in Leiden, to illustrate his *Atlas of Human Anatomy*. For his two plates illustrating the bones and the fourth order of muscles, he included Clara grazing in the background, her bulk and armour gave a strong contrast to the human skeleton in front. [Click here](#) to see images.

Despite her unusual lifestyle Clara survived 17 years in Europe, dying in London on 14th April 1758. Clara's image finally replaced *Dürer's Rhinoceros* image. From the mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century onwards Clara's image is usually found in natural history books and on artists' canvases.

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*Clara the rhinoceros in Paris 1749* by Jean-Baptiste Oudry.

Oil painting on canvas.

The Staatliches Museum Schwerin spent five-years on a conservation project that restored the canvas as close as possible to its original condition.

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Pietro Longhi (1701–1785)

Exhibition of a Rhinoceros at Venice, probably 1751

The rhinoceros was brought to Europe in 1741; a decade later it was seen in Venice at the carnival. Exotic animals were often displayed in the city as a spectacle on festive occasions. The keeper holds up the animal's horn; behind him stand several Venetians wearing masks. The woman holding a fan carries her mask in her hat.

**On this page are two paintings of Clara in Venice done by Pietro Longhi. On the left a showman displays his rhino to a group of spectators in carnival costume in Venice. The showman is holding in one hand the horn of the animal and a whip. (The horn was rubbed off or removed for safety reasons in Rome the previous year.) The painting below shows the surprise and interest of the public who have paid to see Clara.**



*Rhinoceros in Venice* by Pietro Longhi, probably 1751. Source: Collezione Banca Intesa, Vicenza.

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