



THE

MAMMALS OF INDIA

A Systematic & Cartographic Review



ANWARUDDIN CHOUDHURY

Foreword by COLIN GROVES



ORDER PERISSODACTYLA Odd-toed ungulates

The Order Perissodactyla or the odd-toed ungulates consists of three very distinct families, the rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae), horses (Equidae) and the tapirs (Tapiridae). Of these, the first two are represented in India. The ungulates or hoofed animals are divided into two orders, depending upon the arrangement of their toes. In the odd-toed ungulates, the third or middle toe of the foot is the most prominent. The rhinoceroses have also distinctive 'horns'. The evolution of perissodactyls was reviewed by Prothero & Schoch (1989). Corbet & Hill (1992) and Grubb (1993) provided a recent taxonomic and geographic reference.

Family Rhinocerotidae Rhinoceroses

Rhinocerotidae Gray, 1821: 306; type genus *Rhinoceros* L.

Distribution confined to Africa and tropical Asia. Of the four genera, two (*Rhinoceros* and *Dicerorhinus*) are represented in India as well as South-east Asia with three species. A detailed review on the classification of Asian rhinos was by Groves (1967b) while phylogenies for the family were proposed by Groves (1983) and Prothero *et al.* (1986). Penny (1987) had provided comprehensive popular account of all living rhinos. Khan (1989) had provided account on status and conservation. Status of all the species in NE India was reviewed by Choudhury (2013a).

Genus **RHINOCEROS**

Rhinoceros Linnaeus, 1758: 56; type species *R. unicornis* L.,

259(155). *Rhinoceros unicornis* GREAT INDIAN ONE-HORNED RHINOCEROS, GREATER ONE-HORNED RHINOCEROS

R. unicornis Linnaeus, 1758: 56. Probably the sub-Himalayan Terai of Assam (Lydekker), [India].

SYNONYMS. *asiaticus*, *indicus*, *jamrachii*, *stenocephalus*. **LOCAL NAMES.** *Gorb* (Assamese), *Charak* (Adi, Mising), *Gondar* (Bengali), *Gaanda* (Bodo), *Gainda* (Hindi), *Gaida* (Nepali).

DISTRIBUTION (Map 2.259). It occurs mainly in Assam and northern W Bengal with records of stray animals elsewhere such as in Arunachal Pradesh. One stray record is there from Meghalaya (Choudhury 2013a). Altitudinally it may occasionally ascend higher hills also. A carcass of a poached animal was recovered on 11 November 2012 at 815m in Karbi Anglong, which was killed in November 2011. Found in the floodplains of the Brahmaputra R and in *terai* grassland of the *duars* (Choudhury 1985, 1996e). Largest concentration is in Kaziranga NP (2400 rhinos). Other significant populations are in RG Orang NP (c. 100), Pabitora WS (c. 90; the highest density anywhere) and Manas NP (30; mostly translocated animals), Jaldapara (200) and Gorumara (50). There is a translocated population in Dudhwa NP (30). In the Katarniaghat WS (Uttar Pradesh) and Valmiki TR (Bihar) rhinos often come as stray or visitors from Nepal and a few remain permanently. **EXTRALIMITAL.** Nepal (in Chitwan and Bardia NPs, and Shukla Phanta WS). Wanderers from Assam's Manas NP occasionally go to Bhutan. A female *Rhinoceros* from Gorumara NP had wandered into N Bangladesh in March 1989 (it had to be physically brought back).

REMARKS. Extirpated from Laokhowa WS and Sonai-Rupai WS in Assam. Poaching for its horn is its main threat. CITES: Appendix I; IUCN: VU; WPA: Schedule I.

260(156). *Rhinoceros sondaicus* JAVAN RHINOCEROS, SMALLER ONE-HORNED RHINOCEROS

R. sondaicus Desmarest, 1822: 399. Sumatra, [Indonesia] (Sody, 1946); usually given as Java.

SYNONYMS. *annamiticus*, *floweri*, *inermis*, *javanicus*, *nasalis*.

SUBSPECIES. 260a. *R. s. annamiticus* Heude, 1892: 75, 113, pl. xixA. Locality unknown, presumably Annam, Vietnam.

DISTRIBUTION (Map 2.260). It has been extirpated from NE India since the first years of 20th century. Its historical range extended from NE Jharkhand (Rajmahal Hills), W Bengal (Sunderbans and N Bengal) and Bhutan to Java. One shot by Gordon Fraser, a tea planter in undivided Sylhet district (now in Bangladesh, then a part of Assam) (Rookmaaker 1980; Wood 1930). A part of Sylhet district is with present Assam which is now Karimganj district. In Manipur, Higgins (1934) saw a skull in 1913 in Churachandpur district. He also reported killing of 2–3 in the past 20 years by the Kukis in lower valley of the Barak near Tipaimukh but could not confirm the exact species. A young rhino was shipped from Calcutta to London (for Berlin Zoo) in 1874 was from the district of 'Mooneypoor' (=Manipur) (Rookmaaker 2002). Kinloch (1904) wrote that the Javan Rhinoceros existed in the Bhutan Duars. A young female was shot by J. A. Möller from Denmark at Moraghat in Jalpaiguri district in northern W Bengal on 24 February 1881. Its skull (missing the premaxillae and some teeth) is still preserved in the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen. Shebbeare (1953) mentioned that J. W. A. Grieve shot one early in the 20th century in the Buxa Forest Division, also in northern W Bengal. **EXTRALIMITAL.** Till recently occurred only in Java and Vietnam (Khan 1989). With the extinction of Vietnamese population in April 2010, the only surviving rhinos are in Ujung Kulon NP in Java, Indonesia.

REMARKS. A detailed account on the species is given by Sody (1959) while on NE India by Rookmaaker (2002) and Choudhury (2013a). There is a skeleton in ZSI from Jessore district in Bangladesh, which was obtained by J. H. Barlow in 1834. **CITES:** Appendix I; **IUCN:** CR.

Genus *DICERORHINUS*

Dicerorhinus Gloger, 1841: 125; type species *R. sumatrensis* Cuvier = *R. sumatrensis* Fischer. Conserved by Opinion 1080 (1977).

= *Didermoceros* Brookes, 1828: 75. Rejected by Opinion 1080 (1977).

261(157). *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis* SUMATRAN RHINOCEROS, ASIAN TWO-HORNED RHINOCEROS

Rhinoceros sumatrensis Fischer, 1814: 301. Bencoolen district, S Sumatra, [Indonesia]. Conserved by Opinion 1080 (1977).

SYNONYMS. *blythii*, *harrissoni*, *lasiotis*, *niger*. **LOCAL NAMES.** *Shoun* (Khamniungan Naga), *Selbo* (Tangkhul Naga), *Ke-kyang* (Yumchunger Naga).

SUBSPECIES. 261a. *D. s. lasiotis*

R. lasiotis Buckland, 1872: 89. South of Chittagong, Eastern Bengal [Bangladesh].

DISTRIBUTION (Map 2.261). It is extirpated from most of NE India during the last century. However, stragglers were reported from India–Myanmar border (Choudhury 1997b) and also India–Bangladesh border. The most recent being in 2009. Past records were from eastern Arunachal Pradesh, Assam (till the first few decades of the 20th century with a stray record even in 1967 from Cachar district [which was in all probability a *sumatrensis* although Forest Department

thought it to be *R. sondaicus*]; till 1890, it was infrequently encountered in southern part of Hailakandi district [Late Abdul Majid Choudhury, pers. comm.], Manipur (common in 1930s [Milroy 1935] and stragglers as recently as early 1990s [Choudhury 1997b]), Meghalaya (Khasi Hills [Anderson 1872] and Garo Hills [Pollok 1879]), and Tripura (in February 1876, a male rhino was killed in Comillah, now in Bangladesh [Manson 1876]). It was thought that it had strayed down from the hilly tracts (Rookmaaker 2003). In northern W Bengal, Inglis *et al.* (1919) mentioned that *sumatrensis* no longer occurs although one was shot on the Sankosh R in 1864. He further said that 'in his Settlement Report Sunder says a rhinoceros was shot in Dalgaon forest'.

Two states, i.e., Mizoram and Nagaland were important for the Sumatran Rhinoceros. In Mizoram, it was common in 1930s (Milroy 1935) and stragglers were there probably till 1960s with an exceptional record in 2009 when the hunters and villagers in Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts chased one, which crossed over to Dampa TR. It was stalked by them up to India-Bangladesh border and they returned when the animal had crossed over to India (Suprio Chakma, pers. comm.). Former abundance from this state is evident from old records such as Shakespear (1929). In a memorial stone laid near Siatlai village in Saiha district, it has been mentioned that late H. Hmokha of Zyhno village had killed 'one hundred rhinoceros'. In Nagaland, at the turn of 20th century, one was killed near Noklak in Tuensang district (Choudhury 2005b). In 1967-68 a rhino was reported from Saramati on the lower slopes of this 3826m peak (S. Hukiye, pers. comm.). One came down just below Saramati in November 1999. Some villagers of Thanamir in Kiphire district also saw the animal (Choudhury 1997b).

EXTRALIMITAL. Myanmar to Vietnam and south to Sumatra and Borneo (Khan 1989).

REMARKS. Included in the genus *Didermocerus* (Brookes 1828; Ellerman & Morrison-Scott 1951). CITES: Appendix I; IUCN: CR.

Family Equidae Horses

Equidae Gray, 1821: 307; type genus *Equus* L.

Distributed in Africa and Palaearctic. Of about seven species, only two occurs in India. Groves & Willoughby (1981) reviewed the classification of Equidae. Only one genus, *Equus* is recognised (Groves 1986, Corbet & Hill 1992) although often another genus, *Hemionus* for the Asian asses is recognised.

Genus *EQUUS*

Equus Linnaeus, 1758: 73; type species *E. caballus* L. Conserved by Opinion 271 (1954).

262. *Equus hemionus* ASIATIC WILD ASS, ONAGER

E. hemionus Pallas, 1775: 394, pl. 7. Tarei-Nor, Dauria, Transbaikalia (50° N, 115° E), [Russia].

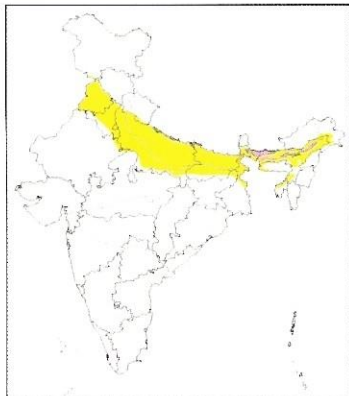
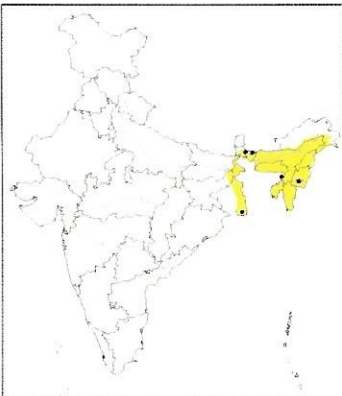
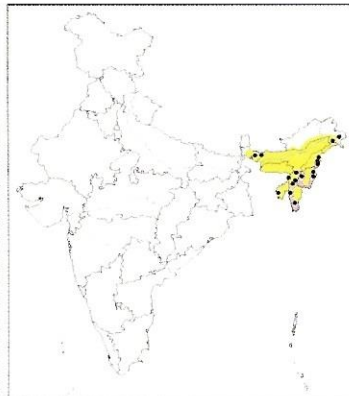
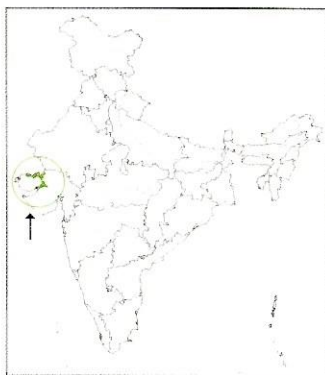
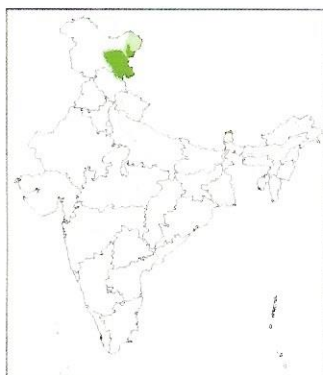
SYNONYMS. *blanfordi*, *indicus*, *kbur*, *onager*, and also other extralimital synonyms. **LOCAL NAME.** *Ghorkbar* (Kutchi).

SUBSPECIES. 262a. *E. b. kbur* INDIAN WILD ASS

E. kbur Lesson, 1827: 347. The Little Rann of Cutch, [Gujarat], India.

DISTRIBUTION (Map 2.262). It is found only in the Little Rann of Kutch in Gujarat with some

PERISSODACTYLA Odd-toed ungulates

Map 2.259 *Rhinoceros unicornis*Map 2.260 *Rhinoceros sondaicus*Map 2.261 *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*Map 2.262 *Equus hemionus*Map 2.263 *Equus kiang*