

Northern white rhinos at Garamba

Two more northern white rhino calves were born in Garamba National Park, Zaire in September-November 1987. This brings the known number of northern white rhinos at Garamba to 21.

Nine calves are known to have been born and to have survived in the four and half years since a survey was carried out in 1983, a year before the Garamba Rehabilitation Project started (see *Swara*, March/April 1985). This rate of reproduction considerably exceeds that in captivity under present conditions. Only three of the five known adult females had calves at heel when the project started, but for nearly two years all five have been with juveniles. The mothers of the two newest calves had other calves at heel and the recent births were after intervals of 29-30 and 31-33 months since the previous births. Other observed interbirth intervals in the Garamba population (for two females, including one of the mothers of the new calves) were between 24 and 30 months.

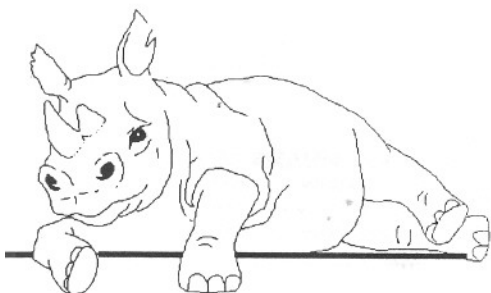
The IUCN/WWF/FZS/UNESCO Garamba Rehabilitation Project had completed its initial three years and has been extended for a further three. The improvements to the park and the increase in the rhino population have fully justified the decision to protect the animals within their natural habitat, but the operations in the park still rely heavily on international aid. A long-term continuation of some form of aid and the development of tourism to improve the park's income will continue to be important for the survival of the rhinos and the park.

Two separate sightings of northern white rhinos have been reported from Southern National Park in Sudan. While this confirms that some still remain in Sudan, the current political situation there means that very little can be done about them and the best hope for the survival of the subspecies in the wild remains with Garamba.

Kes Hillman-Smith, Pachyderm

Really, Rhinos!

Really, Rhinos! is a newsletter published in the United States for rhinophiles. Light-hearted in tone, it gives news of rhino conservation projects, reviews adult and children's books about rhinos, tells you where you can buy rhino bath liquid soap,



publishes poems written by rhino devotees, and much, much else. Published four times a year, an annual subscription costs US\$ 15 (USA) or US\$ 20 (overseas), of which \$ 5 comes as a donation to the East African Wild Life Society's Save the Rhino Fund. Write to P O Box 1285, Tucson, AZ 85702-1285, USA.

Simien jackals in Ethiopia

The Bale Mountains National Park in Ethiopia (see *Swara*, September/October 1985) continues to support the only known genetically viable population of Simien jackals in the world. A survey in December 1987 found that the population appears to have been stable for the last 10 years. There are still 450-600 animals, but the survival of the species rests on this population and measures should be taken to ensure that it remains healthy. Major improvements have occurred in the park in the last 10 years, with improved patrolling, but grazing pressure from domestic animals is degrading some areas in the jackal's prime habitat.

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New competition launched for conservation expeditions

The International Council for Bird Preservation and the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society have established a new competition to stimulate expedition groups to adopt a conservation objective for their work. Expeditions are often in a position to collect useful up-to-date information on many aspects of wildlife conservation in parts of the world rarely visited by wildlife professionals. ICBP and FFPS further encourage such expeditions because of their importance in motivating young scientists to become the 'conservationists of tomorrow'.

The competition is a development and extension of the one run by ICBP since 1985 for ornithological expeditions. Since then seven expeditions have received prizes and carried out successful projects leading to significant conservation action. For example, the 1986 winners produced a management plan for a newly established reserve in Ecuador; one of the two 1988 winning expeditions has just returned from a successful trip to Venezuela where work was carried out in a little studied national park and stimulated interest in its continued protection. The Royal Geographical Society attributes the vast increase in top quality ornithological expeditions to the guidelines issued for the ICBP award, and welcomes the expansion of the competition.

The ICBP/FFPS competition will be open to expeditions consisting of young people, preferably undergraduate students, and taking place in a country outside



The new competition's logo.

Europe and North America. There will be four prizes in two categories: a) Birds (£1,000 and £800) and b) all other wild animals and plants (£1,000 and £800). The closing date for entries is 31 January each year.

For further information contact either: ICBP, 32 Cambridge Road, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0PJ, UK; or FFPS, 79-83 North Street, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 1ZA, UK.

Forest parks in Nigeria

Nigeria is to set up two new national parks in Cross River State. One is the Oban park, separated only by a river from the Cameroon government's Korup rainforest project. The other is the Boshi/Okwango park on the edge of the Nigerian highlands, which is the home of the country's last remaining lowland gorillas (see *Swara*, May/June 1988). The parks, covering over 2,000 km, include some of the most species-rich rainforest in Africa. More than 2,500 animal and plant species have already been identified in the two areas.

Almost 90 per cent of Nigeria's rainforest has been destroyed, and the government recognises the importance of saving the remainder. In addition to the many species found there, the forests are also significant water catchment areas. If the forests were destroyed, there would be a serious knock-on effect in the Rio del Rey, a large mangrove swamp on the Atlantic coast containing some of the best fishing grounds in West Africa. In addition, the parks will protect the water supplies for many towns and villagers.

WWF and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation will provide some funds for the parks but very substantial sums are still needed to pay for a conservation and development programme.

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