

Compiled by **ANWARUDDIN CHOUDHURY**

### Rhino census: Assam, West Bengal and Nepal

The latest census of the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* in Kaziranga, RG Orang and Pabitora in 2018 showed increase in the number of animals. It was carried out by using direct visual count method from elephant-back.

The census in northern West Bengal was carried out in 2019 and in Nepal in 2021.

Year →	1999	2006	2009	2012	2018
Kaziranga	1552	1855	2048	2290	2413
RG Orang	46	68	64	100	101
Pabitora	74	81	84	93	102
Manas	–	–	2	22	41

Source: Env. & Forest Department, **Assam**

Year →	2008	2010	2013	2015	2019
Jaldapara	192	155	186	204	237
Gorumara	31	35	43	49	52

Source: Forest Department, **West Bengal**

Year →	2000	2008	2011	2015	2021
Chitwan	535	408	503	605	694
Bardiya	73	22	24	29	38
Suklaphanta	4	5	7	8	17
Parsa	–	–	–	3	3

Source: Dept. of National Parks & Wildlife Conservation, **Nepal**



Rhino with calf in Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary.

(Photo: Anwaruddin Choudhury)



White-winged Wood Duck pair at Choraipung, near Dihing-Patkai National Park.

(Photo: Anwaruddin Choudhury)

### Dihing-Patkai upgraded to a national park

Dihing-Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary (111 km<sup>2</sup>) in eastern Assam which was declared as a sanctuary in 2004 has been upgraded to a national park with an enlarged area of 231.65 km<sup>2</sup>. Known as an important rain forest area, it is home to primates, cats, elephants as well as the White-winged Wood Duck *Arcornis scutulata*.

The identification of the area as a potential Protected Area and the first proposal covering 440 km<sup>2</sup> was made in 1987 and reported in 1989 in a Ph.D thesis by Dr Anwaruddin Choudhury. The second proposal, after further fieldwork in 1992–94, was made in 1996 as Upper Dihing National Park covering 267 km<sup>2</sup> was also prepared by Dr Choudhury and published as a monograph by The Rhino Foundation for Nature in North East India.

### Wild buffalo killed near Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam

A wild water buffalo *Bubalus arnee* was killed by poachers in a *chapor* near Burhachapori Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam in the first half of August 2020. Two poachers were arrested by the authorities.