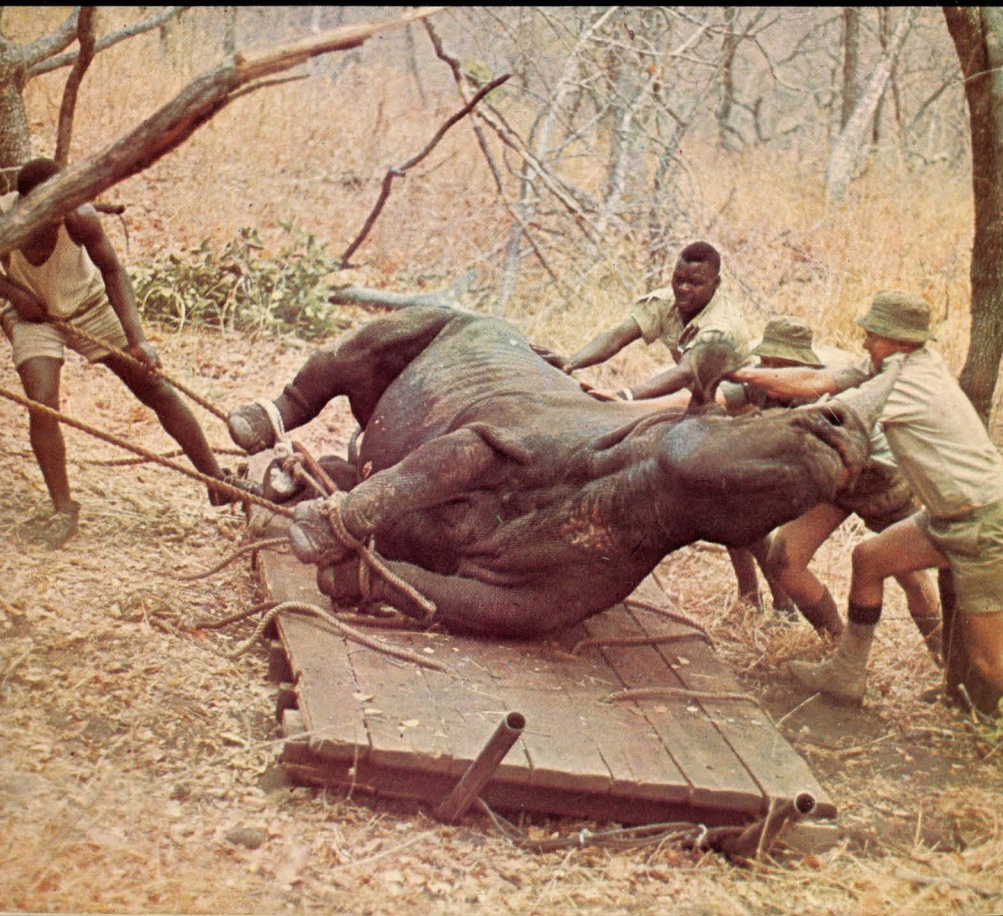


OPERATION RHINO

John Gordon Davis



The Chipimbiri is the African black rhinosceros—a huge and fierce beast. Black Rhinos are the most dangerous of the highly dangerous family. They are over five feet tall at the shoulder, some as tall as an average man. They are up to ten feet long, weigh over two thousand pounds, they can run at twenty-five miles an hour. . . . They are armed with a sharp vicious horn sometimes over two feet long they are highly irascible and given to Herculean murderous charges at their well-intentioned captors. Capturing them alive in their rugged habitat, and then moving the massive beasts out over those hills and valleys and rocks and river-beds, seven hundred miles to their new home, requires the highest hunting and tracking skill, and courage, patience, endurance, sweat, muscle, initiative and dedication to the cause of wildlife conservation.

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OPERATION RHINO

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OPERATION RHINO

John Gordon Davis

With 30 black-and-white photographs

In this book, a popular adventure novelist tells the true story of Operation Rhino, the extraordinary attempt to save the African black rhinoceros from the poachers that threatened it with extinction. The plan was simple: to capture the wild rhinos alive and transfer them to the safety of Rhodesia's vast Gona-re-Zhou wildlife preserve. But pursuing this awesome, savage beast—so powerful and vicious that it has no natural enemies, save man—is a job for only the skillful, dedicated and courageous.

John Gordon Davis participated in every phase of the operation, and vividly describes the challenges of stalking rhinos with tranquilizer guns across rough and inhospitable terrain; holding, protecting and transporting them to their new home, nearly seven hundred miles away; and all the while, remaining alert for their bursts of murderous rage.

(continued on back flap)

(continued from front flap)

Fast-paced and engrossing, his tale captures the dangers, the excitement and the triumph of the men who confronted one of the world's most dangerous animals in order to save it from the most deadly of all species: man himself.

John Gordon Davis was born in Rhodesia and educated in South Africa. His career has been remarkably varied, including service on the Dutch whaling fleet and British merchant marine, periods as a civil servant, a miner, legal advisor to an insurance company, and Crown Counsel in Hong Kong. The success of his first adventure novel, *Hold My Hand I'm Dying*—now being made into a film—convinced him to give up the practice of law and devote his full time to writing; his subsequent novel was *Cape of Storms*. This book was commissioned by his English publisher. Mr. Davis lives in Hong Kong.

JACKET TYPOGRAPHY BY JUDITH TURNER

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JOHN GORDON DAVIS

Operation Rhino

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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1. A drugged beast is being offloaded from the back of the Mercedes recovery vehicle into the stockade at Nyamasota.
2. Released from the stockade at Chipinda Pools, Gona-re-Zhou.
3. A calf is being lassoed in the stockade at Nyamasota.
4. Suckling.
5. A beast unconscious at the end of a hunt.
6. An African game scout examines a fallen beast; the author looks on. *Photograph by Thompson.*
7. A darted beast has tripped over a tree trunk.
8. The same beast, not yet unconscious, has managed to get back to its feet.
9. A small calf, legs roped, is being held down while Thompson measures its foot.
10. An unconscious beast is being heaved onto the sleigh.
11. This beast clambered up a great pile of rocks before collapsing.
12. A fallen beast has been rolled over onto its side to take its weight off its chest.

13. This rhino has been crated at the stockade at Nyamasota preparatory to its journey to Gona-re-Zhou.
14. A rhinoceros, called Barbara, in the process of trying to attack the beast in the adjoining pen.
15. Another beast collapsed over highly inconvenient rocks.
16. An unconscious beast has been covered in evergreen leaves.

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17. A rhino has just been successfully crated at Nyamasota.
18. The hunting party tracking up a dry river bed in the Ruya.
19. A beast is being goaded with sacks to charge out of its pen.
20. The same beast charges through the gap at the sack.
21. A beast is being heaved onto the sleigh.
22. A cow has been darted, and has fallen, and now her calf has also been darted. *Photograph by Thompson.*
23. This drugged beast, while still hobbled, has revived unexpectedly in the stockade.
24. The same beast has collapsed again, Thompson and Peek hang on.
25. Coetsee and Thompson are trying to catch a calf with ropes to avoid darting it. *Photograph by Rhodesia Information Department.*
26. A drugged beast staggers up before its legs have been roped. *Photograph by Rhodesia Information Department.*
27. A beast standing in the stockade, photographed through the gaps in the poles.
28. Coetsee tests the wind with an ash bag.
29. A beast revives suddenly in the stockade; Coetsee leaps for safety.
30. A beast being released at Gona-re-Zhou.

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