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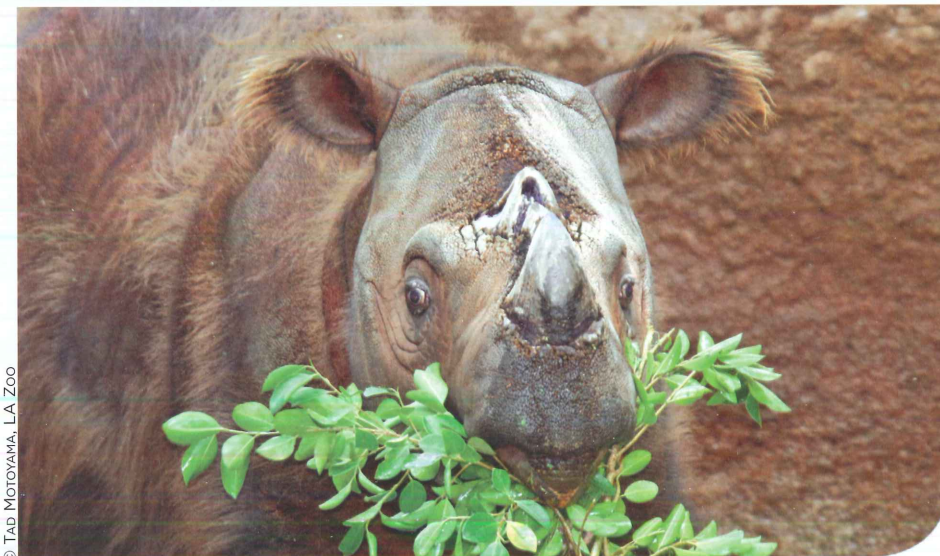
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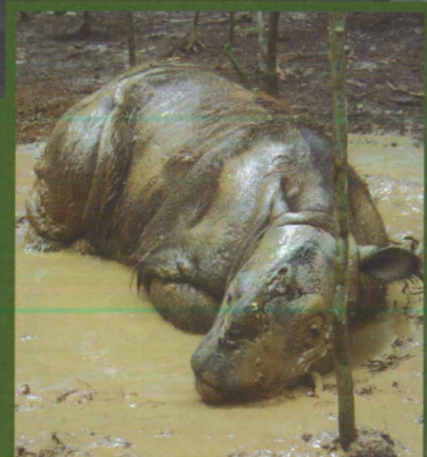
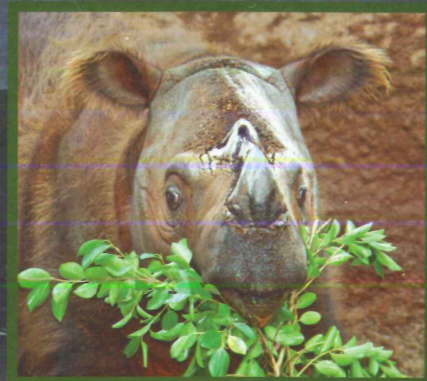
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ON THE COVER

Scientists studying Partula snails in the 1970s and 80s watched in horror as the once abundant endemic snail populations were devastated after the introduction of *Euglandina rosea*, a carnivorous land snail. They moved quickly to rescue the remaining Partula species on Tahiti and helped

establish them in *ex-situ* captive breeding programs in Great Britain. In 1990, the program spread to the U.S. and Partula snails became the first invertebrate Species Survival Plan® (SSP) for the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA).

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MISSION POSSIBLE

A 60-Hour Trek to Save a Species

By Dr. Terri Roth

The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's first born Sumatran rhino, Andalas (the original name of the Island of Sumatra), was moved to his ancestral homeland at the Way Kambas National Park in Indonesia with a clear mission - to save the species from extinction. Not only was Andalas the first Sumatran rhinoceros bred and born in captivity in 112 years, he is also the first Sumatran rhino ever to be translocated from the United States to Indonesia in an effort to reinforce the captive breeding program.

Andalas' 60-hour trek which included a flight from the United States that was followed by an overnight ride from Jakarta by ferry and then a lorry ride in a convoy with officials, conservationists and his personal vet, was a huge success. Upon arrival, a crane lifted Andalas and his wooden travel crate off the lorry, which had a banner that read "Welcome Andalas" tied to its sides. The hairy five-year-old rhino was escorted to a netted, open-air quarantine pen in a lush forest, where he remained for the next two months before he was introduced to two young Sumatran rhino females, Rosa and Ratu.

To send such a valuable and endangered animal back to its country of origin when it is one of just four Sumatran rhinos in the entire U.S. is unprecedented. Ideally, zoos with small populations of endangered species intensively manage and breed them until a vigorous, self-sustaining population is achieved before individuals are sent abroad for reintroduction to the wild or to bolster other breeding programs. However, the Sumatran rhino population is so small (just nine animals in captivity worldwide) and the gene pool so limited, the luxury of waiting for the population to achieve large numbers simply doesn't exist.

Andalas, born on 13 September 2001 at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden to Emi and Ipuh, the only successful captive Sumatran rhino breeding pair in the world, became the first calf to be bred and born in captivity since 1889, when a live birth was recorded at the Calcutta Zoo in India. Emi and Ipuh were both sent to the U.S. by the Indonesian government as part of a Sumatran Rhino Trust agreement developed in the mid 1980s between Indonesia and four U.S. zoos (Cincinnati, Bronx, LA and San Diego). In Way Kambas, experts involved in the breeding program hope to see a pregnancy in under two years, and say Andalas could possibly sire up to eight calves, some who could be returned to the wild.

"In an effort to speed up the breeding process, we have been using the ultrasound technology developed by the Cincinnati Zoo to establish the reproductive cycles of Rosa and Ratu," said Dr. Monica Stoops of the Cincinnati Zoo, who arrived in Way Kambas last month ahead of Andalas to prepare for his arrival and to assist with the breeding program at the sanctuary. "The lack of mating signals and their solitary habits make matchmaking very difficult in this species. It may be a year before Andalas is ready for breeding, but we are hopeful he will be a huge success when his time comes."

Considered the most endangered of all rhino species and one of the most endangered mammalian species on earth, it is estimated that 70 percent of the Sumatran rhino population has been lost in the last two decades. The primary cause is poaching due to the demand for its horn that is believed to contain medicinal properties by some Asian cultures. Today, a population of less than 300 animals is thought to exist in isolated pockets of Malaysia and Indonesia. The Cincinnati Zoo is home to the only Sumatran rhinos in the U.S. and Andalas' mother, Emi, is currently expecting her third calf.

The Cincinnati and LA Zoos are working closely with the International Rhino Foundation (IRF), to protect this venerable species in its home range. The continued loss of animals in the wild, however, makes the success of the captive breeding program that much more important. This program was established as a collaborative effort among Malaysians, Indonesians and Americans.

In the Cincinnati Zoo's plans for the future is a new Sumatran rhino indoor atrium, where visitors can see these incredible animals year-round. This expansion will also enable the Zoo to increase the number of rhinos at the Zoo which will enhance the gene pool of the breeding program.

It really is a bittersweet moment. We persevered through five years of intensive effort and endured many setbacks before finally producing Andalas in 2001, so it was hard to see him go. Yet, we want nothing more than to help save this species from extinction, and if that means giving up our first-born calf, then we rejoice in the opportunity.

For more information on the Cincinnati Zoo's Sumatran rhino conservation efforts please visit www.cincinnati-zoo.org.

DR. TERRI ROTH IS VICE PRESIDENT OF CONSERVATION, SCIENCE AND LIVING COLLECTIONS FOR THE CINCINNATI ZOO & BOTANICAL GARDEN



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