

WHERE THE RHINOS ROAM

COLLEGE PREP:

GUIDE TO THE FRESHMAN YEAR

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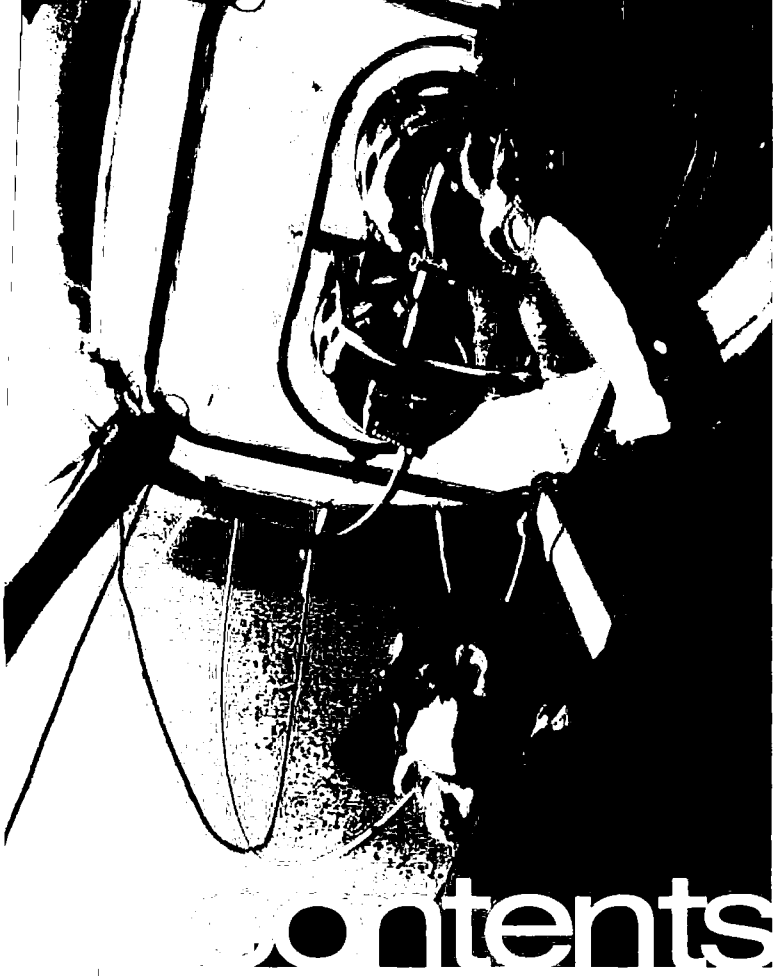
## *Toasting Ohio*

Eight festive wine dinners

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# Contents

Ohio Magazine • June 2002 • Vol. 25 No. 4

**on the cover / Toasting Ohio 32**  
Celebrate Ohio wine month with eight festive meals featuring Ohio wines. *By Jenny Pavlasck*

**Where the Rhinos Roam 42**  
You don't have to travel to Africa, India or Indonesia to study rhinos. Ohio is a center for breeding and conservation of the endangered animals. *By Mary Kay Carson*

**Paper Trail 48**  
The traveling American Originals exhibit makes a stop in Ohio this summer, offering visitors a rare look at the writings and events that shaped the nation. *By Stephen Ostrander*

**Sleuthing for History 52**  
Amateur archaeologists help unearth the true story of the Battle of Fallen Timbers. *By Stephen Ostrander*

**ON THE COVER:**  
The Blue Point Grille's Ohio Spring Vegetables Garden Salad part of the Ohio Grand Wine Dinner (see page 32)  
*Photo by Lisa DeCesare*

## in every issue

- 5 Editor's Note**
- 7 Ohio Digest** Big bugs, Second City Cleveland and a would-be wax museum.
- 14 A Letter From...** Logan. *By Ed Fassig*
- 101 Extra** Your statewide guide to events and dining.
- 120 Ohioan** Jerry King. *By Sandra Louden*

## travel

- 18 borderland: Twist of fate**  
The story of the Blennerhassetts, folk heroes of the Ohio Valley, begins on a little island in the middle of the Ohio River. *By Ann Fazzini*
- 22 weekend: The air up there**  
Looking for a dose of tranquility? Try floating above the countryside in a hot-air balloon. *By Jeff Robinson*
- 27 fieldtrip: Stamping grounds**  
For a growing number of Ohio treasure hunters, the prize — a rubber stamp — is as good as gold. *By Geoff Williams*

## living

- 57 food: Flower power**  
Edible flowers are a colorful way to bring the season to your table. *By Jenny Pavlasck*
- 58 gardens: Train yards**  
Railway gardening is a hot hobby for those who like to watch things go and grow. *By Geoff Williams*
- 61 home: Cruising in style**  
Reita and Jim Bayman turned their 53-foot yacht into a home away from home. *By Lori Murray*

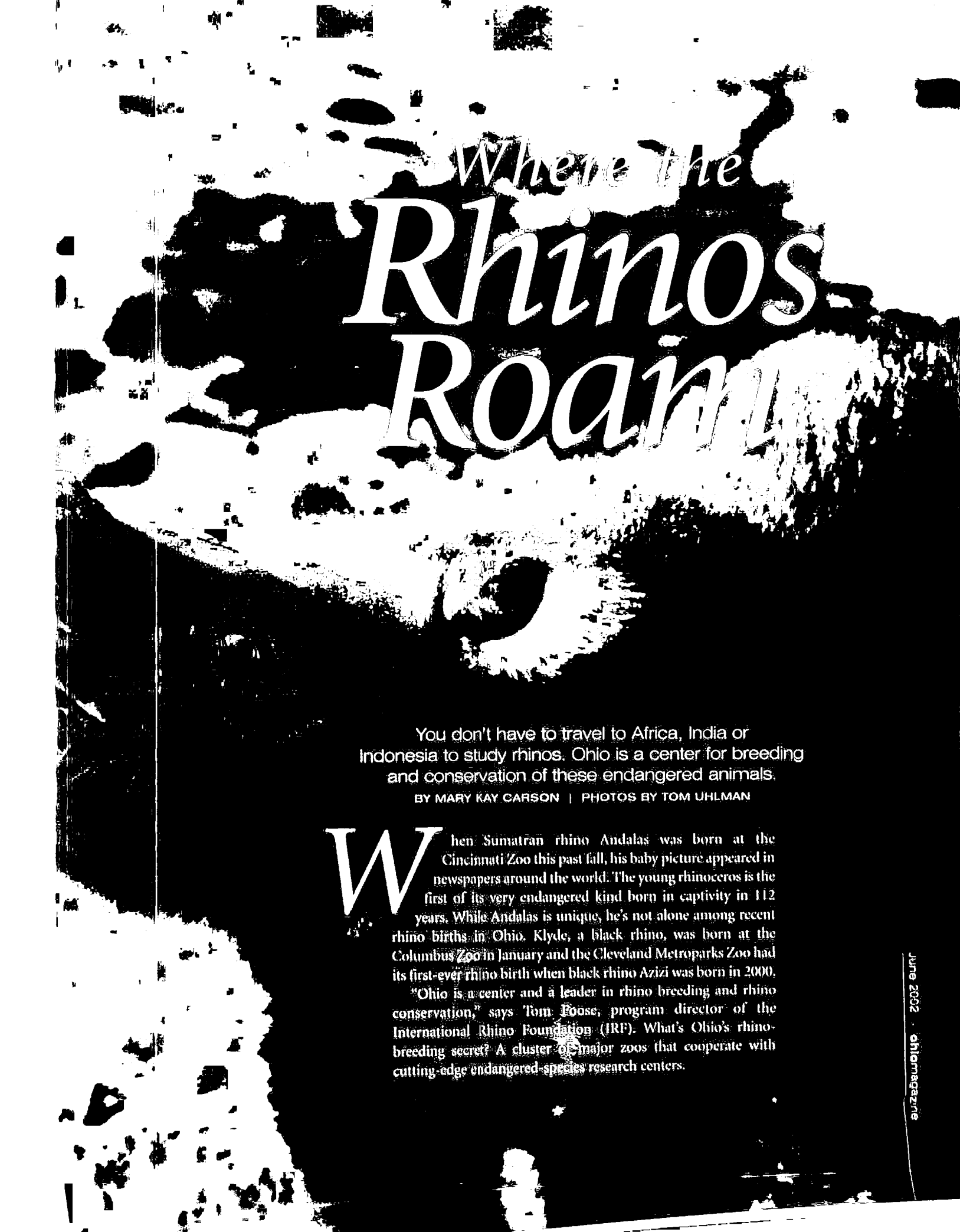
## special sections

- 63 West Virginia:** Visit the Mountain State.
- 73 Cleveland:** See what's new in this all-star city.
- 81 Education:** Preparing yourself for your child's freshman year.
- 95 Retirement Living:** Retirement can bring golden opportunities.



June 2002

**SUMATRAN RHINOS**  
Eiri and one-and-a-half-month-old Andalas eat a branch of ficus at the Cincinnati Zoo late last year.



Where the  
**Rhinos  
Roam**

You don't have to travel to Africa, India or Indonesia to study rhinos. Ohio is a center for breeding and conservation of these endangered animals.

BY MARY KAY CARSON | PHOTOS BY TOM UHLMAN

**W**hen Sumatran rhino Andalas was born at the Cincinnati Zoo this past fall, his baby picture appeared in newspapers around the world. The young rhinoceros is the first of its very endangered kind born in captivity in 112 years. While Andalas is unique, he's not alone among recent rhino births in Ohio. Clyde, a black rhino, was born at the Columbus Zoo in January and the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo had its first-ever rhino birth when black rhino Azizi was born in 2000. "Ohio is a center and a leader in rhino breeding and rhino conservation," says Tom Boose, program director of the International Rhino Foundation (IRF). What's Ohio's rhino-breeding secret? A cluster of major zoos that cooperate with cutting-edge endangered-species research centers.

## ROMPING WITH THE RHINOS

Clockwise from top: Dr. Terri Roth with Sumatran rhinos Emi and baby Andalas at the Cincinnati Zoo. A white rhino strolls at the Wilds near Zanesville. The Cincinnati Zoo holds the record for the most black rhino births.

the Wilds that is trying to improve our husbandry and management of rhinos in captivity," says the IRF's Foose.

How do you take a blood sample from a two-ton-plus rhinoceros? The animal first has to walk into a chute, a close-fitting enclosure that limits its movement and helps the veterinarian take aim. The rhino chute designed and used at the Wilds, which is also used at other research centers, is a high-tech affair that slowly closes in on the animal from all sides. Developing advanced animal-handling equipment and methods that allow for more research with less stress to the animals is a major focus at the southeastern Ohio facility.

Rhino research is a lot easier if the animals cooperate. "If they don't walk into the chute one day, then we don't do whatever it was that we were going to do," says Cincinnati Zoo's Terri Roth. She finds working with rhinos especially rewarding because they generally don't fear humans and can be conditioned to tolerate many medical procedures without anesthesia. "Because they like food or like to be rubbed," explains Roth, the rhinos will walk into a chute and "let you do ultrasound exams or collect blood without any sedation or drugs." Roth says it's a special treat for animal lovers like herself to work with animals that are awake and aware.

The four young Indian rhinos at the Wilds also participate in a different kind of reproductive research study. "The Indian rhino is another rhino that has been somewhat difficult for zoos to breed," says Roth. The problem is again sparring during courtship, but it can be especially dangerous in Indian rhinos. The large single-horned rhinos chase each other and sometimes the male will get his horn under the female and flip



her, says Roth. "It can get pretty serious; they're powerful animals."

Having lots of open space can alleviate the aggression problem, but that's not an option at most zoos, which have limited open areas. That's why the Wilds is working with CREW to develop artificial insemination techniques for the Cincinnati Zoo's Indian rhinos. If successful methods can be developed, even otherwise non-breeding animals can still contribute to their species' survival.

Here at CREW, we're set up as a gamete [eggs and sperm] rescue for rhinos," explains Roth. CREW's so-called Frozen Zoo even includes sperm collected from a childless black rhino after he died suddenly. "We can keep their genes in the population," says Roth. Not to mention that shuttling gametes or embryos between zoos is a much easier way to prevent inbreeding than shipping rhinos.

## Saving a Species

Rhinos are "some of the most endangered animals on Earth," says Cleveland Metroparks Zoo's Steve Taylor. The Wilds' Blumer agrees: "The situation for rhinos around the world is pretty tenuous." The population



of black rhinos fell from 65,000 to 2,300 between 1970 and 1992, and Sumatran numbers fell 50 percent from 1985 to 1995. "The captive [breeding] program really serves as a genetic and demographic savings account," Blumer notes.

The hope is that someday some of the captive-born animals will go back to the wild. "Many of the black rhinos in Africa right now are in sanctuaries or protected



areas," says Columbus Zoo's Peachey. "A sanctuary could serve as a halfway house for moving an animal from captivity to the wild." But first their native countries need to be safe from poaching. That's why Ohio zoos and the Wilds also support rhino reserves in other countries.

"You go through all the trouble, the years of effort, to try and breed these animals in captivity. By the time you get to the point that you're putting them back out, you want to make sure that the problems that they initially encountered have been overcome," says Roth. Andalus, Clyde, and Azizi would surely agree. ●

## A Field Guide to Rhinos

### **Black Rhino** (*Diceros bicornis*)

**Range:** Tropical Africa  
**Height at shoulder:** 4.5–5.5 feet  
**Weight:** 1,750–3,000 pounds  
**How many are left?:** 2,700 in the wild and 240 in captivity

Black rhinos are the smaller, more agile of the African rhinos. They are

browsers, eating stems, leaves, and twigs after grasping them with hooking prehensile upper lips that are perfect for the task. Black rhinos live in bushlands, grasslands and savannas and are usually solitary animals. Though not black, their bare hides are often dark from the soil they roll in. They have two horns.

### **White Rhino** (*Ceratotherium simum*)

**Range:** Southern and Central Africa  
**Height at shoulder:** 5–6 feet  
**Weight:** 4,000–6,000 pounds  
**How many are left?:** 10,400 in the wild and 740 in captivity

White rhinos are the larger African breed and graze the open savannas. Their wide

bottom lip hugs the ground like a lawnmower. Their name comes from the Afrikaans word for wide (*weit*) and doesn't refer to the animal's color. White rhinos are semi-social animals. The females and young rhinos live together in small groups, while bulls usually live alone. They have two horns and the front one is often very long.

### **Indian Rhino** (*Rhinoceros unicornis*)

**Range:** Northern India and southern Nepal  
**Height at shoulder:** 5.75–6.5 feet  
**Weight:** 4,000–6,000 pounds  
**How many are left?:** 2,400 in the wild and 140 in captivity

Indian rhinos are also called Asian

greater one-horned rhinos. They both graze and browse, eating grasses as well as leaves, twigs, and fruit with the help of a semi-prehensile upper lip. Indian rhinos' hides are armor-like and covered in knobs. They live in small groups in swampy areas and grassy riverine plains and are good swimmers.

### **Sumatran Rhino** (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*)

**Range:** Malaysia and Indonesia  
**Height at shoulder:** 3–5 feet  
**Weight:** 1,300–1,700 pounds  
**How many are left?:** 300 in the wild and 15 in captivity

These small Asian rhinos have a red-

dish-brown coat and two horns. They feed on fruit, leaves, twigs and bark in their tropical rainforest home. They are solitary animals, except for females with calves. Sumatran rhinos like to wallow in mud and seek out natural salt licks.

### **Javan Rhino** (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*)

**Range:** Java and Vietnam  
**Height at shoulder:** 5–5.5 feet  
**Weight:** 2,000–3,000 pounds  
**How many are left?:** 60 in the wild and none in captivity

This armor-plated, single-horned, hair-

less rhino once lived in the lowland tropical rainforests of Southeast Asia. Today the Javan rhino is the rarest of the species, with only 60 remaining in a park in Java and a reserve in Vietnam. Also called the Asian lesser one-horned rhino, Javan rhinos eat mostly leaves, twigs and branches.

## Getting There

**Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden**  
 3400 Vine St.  
 Cincinnati, OH  
 513/281-4700  
[www.cincy zoo.org](http://www.cincy zoo.org)  
 Summer hours: 9 a.m.–6 p.m. daily

**Cleveland Metroparks Zoo**  
 3900 Wildlife Way  
 Cleveland, OH  
 216/661-6500  
[www.clemet zoo.com](http://www.clemet zoo.com)  
 Open daily: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

**Columbus Zoo and Aquarium**  
 9990 Riverside Dr.  
 Powell, OH  
 614/645-3550  
[www.cols zoo.org](http://www.cols zoo.org)  
 Summer hours: 9 a.m.–6 p.m. daily,  
 Wednesday till 8 p.m.

**the Wilds**  
 14000 International Rd.  
 Cumberland, OH  
 740/638-5030  
[www.thewilds.org](http://www.thewilds.org)  
 Summer hours: 10 a.m.–4 p.m.



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Thomas Edison's patent application for "an improvement in Electric Lamp;" is part of the Ohio Historical Society's "American Originals" exhibit this summer.