

RHINO RESOURCE CENTER

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NEWSLETTER #20 AUGUST 2010

Dear colleagues and friends,

This is the 20th issue of the quarterly e-newsletter of the RRC – the Rhino Resource Center. Edited by Dr Kees Rookmaaker.

This quarter, there are 241 new references to literature about rhinos in Africa, in Asia and in captivity (that is an average of 2.6 new items each day). There are now 7625 PDFs (full rhino text) of these papers on the website, which shows an increase of over fourteen hundred in these three months.

Rhinos are under threat globally, partly because the wilderness in which they live is converted to other uses, partly because rhino horn and other products remain to be used in Yemen and in the Far East. It may be repeated here for once. Out of six species of rhino, two are definitely among the most endangered animals in the world. The Javan rhino lingers on with a population of no more than 50, the Central African white rhinoceros is down to eight individuals and may no longer roam the wild. The situation is just as gloomy when a survey would be taken in each (former) rhino range state. Rhino poaching is rife in Zimbabwe and South Africa, in Nepal and Vietnam, or at least that is the message from media reports. On the positive side, many people and organizations give their time and efforts towards ever increasing numbers of projects designed to protect what remains. Zoos contribute immensely, in breeding rhinos, in education and in funding. Conservation agencies in Africa and Asia continue to work miracles often in very difficult circumstances. The battle continues, but is not lost.

RHINO RESOURCE CENTER

FACILITATING COMMUNICATION ACROSS DISCIPLINES AND CONTINENTS



The work of the Rhino Resource Center
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International Rhino Foundation
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In an editorial published in *Oryx* (44 (1), January 2009), E.J. Milner Gulland and his co-authors discuss the relationship between the scientific community and conservation practitioners, who stereotypically base their actions on experience and anecdote, rather than on the results of research. There is a rather disconcerting mismatch between science and practice which constrains effective conservation. They highlight the lack of capacity in especially developing countries to access the scientific literature, and the need for funding agencies to require collaboration of academics and practitioners to influence management before action is taken. In my view, the internet has given the possibility to address the situation. The Rhino Resource Center makes current research available to all conservation workers, students and academics across the globe, without restriction and without prejudice. Even though the literature is available, however, it is unknown how much of existing written knowledge is actually used in designing field projects.

It may be argued that a website like the RRC on the one hand makes literature available to workers in places where otherwise no libraries exist, but on the other hand provides far too much information. Few people consistently read two books or papers on their subject each day, together with all administrative and logistical tasks that they face. There is a real need for synthesis of the information, to provide pages with the latest data arranged in geographic or thematic chapters, where one can find the outcome of the latest surveys in comparison with earlier results, the latest statistics on poaching, the latest veterinary breakthroughs, just to name a few. The means and possibilities are there, in my view it just needs a sponsor who can fund the realisation and maintenance of the information for a minimum of five years.



*The Rhino Resource Center is a charity.
We do not actively raise funds due to the nature of our work,
but need your assistance to provide our service to all rhino lovers worldwide.*

**Join us. Your support will be acknowledged
in our publications and on our website**

Newsletter Rhino Resource Center – August 2010

My suggestion that we may need to rename the two types of white rhinoceros after their elevation to full species status (see RRC Newsletter 19) has received few suggestions. It is not easy to find alternatives for names well entrenched in literature, even though cumbersome. My request to *Nature* to publicize a change of names was rejected. On the RRC website, I now use ‘white rhinoceros’ for the animal living in the southern part of Africa, and ‘Nile rhinoceros’ for the Central African form. The jury is still out for the best proposal.

With the Nile rhinoceros on the brink of extinction, now would be the time to collate all known knowledge about the animal’s biology in a comprehensive book. Maybe some publisher will see the need for such a project.

The RRC website has 2235 pictures of rhinos in the galleries. Last month I was approached by a private collector in Europe who had unpublished drawings of Lucien Blancou. These are now on the website, together with much other original content. We show the holdings of a collector of older rhino prints (16th-18th century) and of a collector of rhinos in modern art, the Gargioni Museum. Many zoo visitors have contributed pictures, which are especially useful when date and name of the animal are known for future reference. Contributions are always welcome (by email).

On a personal note, my wife and I were able last month to visit the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Way Kambas, Sumatra. We were privileged to see Bhima and Torgamba in a wild habitat. We would like to thank all those involved with the protection of rhinos in Indonesia for their logistical support and for all their great work in the field.

The Rhino Resource Center cannot operate without its sponsors. My gratitude towards our faithful supporters is boundless. This quarter there was even the first offer of support from an individual, not an organisation. The RRC desperately needs a new computer, as the one now used is over ten years old, even though the software is upgraded, but it may crash any time. A big thanks for all who assist the RRC with funds or with other types of assistance. It all helps.

NOW AVAILABLE

Rookmaaker’s book on *Encounters with the African Rhinoceros*
All sightings of rhinos in southern Africa 1790-1875 analysed and illustrated.
More information is found on our website.

Visit: www.rhinoresourcecenter.com

**NEW LITERATURE
(finalised 31 July 2010)**

In the second quarter (May to July 2010), we have added 241 new references, to bring the total number of items in the database to 13,591. Of these, 56 percent are available as PDF (total 7621, an increase of 12%), and many are searchable in the notes.

Below I have listed new entries published in the 21st century (and a few special older ones) in four categories: General, African rhinos, Asian rhinos and Fossil species. If you are interested in one of these titles, always check the [RRC website](#) first.

BOOKS AND DISSERTATIONS

- Basel Zoo; Houwald, F.von; Pagan, O.; Rieches, R., 2010. *International studbook for the greater one-horned or Indian rhinoceros, Rhinoceros unicornis, 31 December 2009*. Basel, Zoologischer Garten, pp. 1-51
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Many thanks to all authors and publishers who have sent us recent publications on the rhinoceros. Your contribution is most welcome and appreciated.

GENERAL AND HISTORICAL

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AFRICAN RHINOS

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NOW AVAILABLE

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All sightings of rhinos in southern Africa 1790-1875 analysed and illustrated.
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ASIAN RHINOS

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FOSSIL RHINOS

The RRC focuses on extant species of rhinoceros. The collection of papers on extinct species is slowly being expanded, but will for a long time remain rudimentary.

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