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One-horned rhino – one of the world's rarest animals – strolls along Malayan estate road

For 20 years it had been feared extinct: but don't try to catch it

by Roger Tanton

[Photograph] The rhino and chief ... more pictures by Pierre Bazin in Page 2

Kuala Lumpur, Thurs. – The rhinoceros seen on a Southern Perak oil palm estate last week has been identified as one of the rarest of great mammals in existence.

It is the first time in nearly 30 years that a Malayan rhinoceros has been photographed.

The man who saw the ambling, grey, three-toed mammal was Mr. P.G. Bazin, young assistant manager on Lima Blas Oil Palm Estate at Slim River.

Game Ranger: I was astounded

The Chief Game Warden, Mr. H.J. Kitchener, expressed himself as "astounded" when he saw the photographs which were taken to him by the Straits Times.

He identified the mammal as a one-horned rhinoceros, the Sundaicus, a rarity in Malaya.

the only other man to have photographed a rhinoceros in Malaya was Mr. T.R. Hubback, the honorary game warden, Pahang, who in 1928 "snapped" the other rarity in the Malayan rhino world, the two-horned Sumatrensis.

Mr. Kitchener said Mr. Bazin's pictures proved beyond doubt that the rhinoceros was not extinct in Malaya as had been feared for the last 20 years.

There had been tremendous destruction of the animal in Malaya in the early part of this century.

Mr. Kitchener was emphatic on one point: He will in no circumstances organise a search party to catch the rhino, dead or alive.

'It is totally protected'

He added: 'The Straits Times or anyone else can offer a million dollar for the animal alive, but I would forbid its capture. It is a totally protected animal.'

“Certainly many people, particularly the Chinese, would be interested in getting it. Its horn and other parts of its body are valued for their supposed medicinal properties.”

Mr Kitchener said he had seen the wallows of rhinos in the Kenaboi Hills of Negri Sembilan on more than one occasion.

“But these did not appear to have been used for at least 20 years.”

The mammals dig troughs with their horns in river banks and little rises.

When the rough fills with water, the rhino gets into it, stirs up the mud, and then wallows.

And it was in a wallow in a swamp on the oil palm estate that the rhino was first seen last week.

