

populations of endangered species in their natural habitat. Throughout Africa, the increasing demand for land by an expanding human population (in spite of war, famine and disease) is resulting in decreasing space for wildlife. In order for these wild populations to survive, there is an increasingly urgent need for their planned management, and zoos have a moral responsibility as well as a legal requirement to contribute toward that management. Marwell Zimbabwe Trust offers you a way to meet those obligations, not only in the form of support for this valuable conservation work but also through the opportunity to make a contribution directly as a partner in the organization and planning of this work. Rather than being a passive supporter, here is the chance to become truly involved in sustaining *in situ* conservation of some of the world's most important megafauna.

If you are interested in becoming such a partner you can find more information about the Trust through links on both Paignton and Marwell Zoos' websites, or please contact me at [pmcstevens@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pmcstevens@yahoo.co.uk).

Abridged from Peter Stevens, Chairman, Marwell Zimbabwe Trust, in *LifeLines* (British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums) No. 98 (October 2007)

### Rare rhino sighting in Malaysia

A Sumatran rhinoceros has been photographed in peninsular Malaysia in the first sighting for more than a decade. The image, captured by a camera trap, snapped just a small part of the rhino but experts declared the wrinkly and folded thigh was unmistakable. Rhino footprints were last found in Johor state in 2001, but the last sighting in the wild was in 1994, when a rhino wandered out of a forest in the northern state of Perak.

The report in the *New Straits Times* did not reveal where the rhino was snapped,

but said the photo was taken in a wildlife corridor targeted by the Wildlife and National Parks Department, which also spotted elephants, sun bears and gaur.

'We're going back to areas where the rhinos were once recorded, looking for more signs and taking samples,' said Siti Hawa Yatim, head of the department's biodiversity conservation division. 'We're also looking for doomed animals – individuals alone in a vast area who cannot survive without companions.'

World Wildlife Fund Malaysia announced earlier this year that it had captured video footage of the extremely rare Borneo subspecies of the critically-endangered Sumatran rhino. The footage, taken in a forest in Malaysia's Sabah state, showed a rhino eating, peering through jungle foliage and sniffing the automatic video camera equipment used to photograph it. WWF says scientists estimate there are only between 25 and 50 of the Bornean subspecies left.

*Animal Keepers' Forum* (American Association of Zookeepers) Vol. 35, No. 1 (January 2008)

### Conservationists urge clampdown on internet wildlife trade

An eight-month survey of Chinese-language internet auction sites by the wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC (a joint programme of WWF and IUCN) found 4,300 advertisements for wildlife products, including elephants, tigers, rhinoceroses and marine turtles. The survey included Yahoo, eBay and several independent websites. 'Internet service providers and websites need to take greater responsibility for keeping wildlife trade legal,' says Joyce Wu, Programme Officer for TRAFFIC East Asia. 'Government authorities must also ensure that wildlife trade on the internet conforms to the same regulations as trade in physical markets.'

In the course of the survey, TRAFFIC informed authorities in China, Hong

Kong and Taiwan about suspected illegal trade. As a result, several advertisements were removed, deliveries intercepted and those involved convicted.

Once the report *World Without Borders* was published, TRAFFIC met China's CITES Management Authority and the China Internet Information Security Monitoring Bureau to address different standards in physical and virtual trade. Meetings were also held with major website companies and other relevant organizations such as the State Forestry Administration and the Customs Bureau to find solutions to control illegal wildlife trade on the internet.

The report recommends the development of strategies to police virtual markets, to bring web-based markets under the same regulatory structure as physical markets, and to alert shoppers to the growing use of the internet for illegal trade.

*HerpDigest* ([www.herpdigest.org](http://www.herpdigest.org)) Vol. 8, No. 12 (4 March 2008)

### Bee buzzing can scare away elephants

According to a recent study (L.E. King, I. Douglas-Hamilton and F. Vollrath, *Current Biology*, 9 October 2007), strategically placed beehives might offer a natural elephant deterrent in areas where

humans are encroaching on elephant ranges. Experiments carried out by Oxford University's Lucy King and colleagues in Samburu National Reserve, Kenya, demonstrated that a significant majority of elephants fled as soon as they heard the sound of aggressive bees played from a disguised loudspeaker. The study supports the idea that bees, and indeed perhaps even just their buzz, might be used to keep elephants at bay.

'We expected the elephants to respond to the threatening sound of disturbed bees, but we were really surprised by the speed of their reaction,' says Lucy King. Eight of the 17 family groups tested left their resting places under trees within ten seconds of hearing the bee sound coming from a speaker ten metres away; and all but one fled within 80 seconds.

These valuable experiments are beginning to outline a new tool in the growing armoury of non-lethal elephant deterrents available to farmers. 'More research is needed to understand to what extent beehives could be used to keep away elephants,' says King, 'but we are hopeful that this approach might work. Using bees in this way would enable local farmers to reduce elephant crop-raiding and tree destruction, while at the same time providing some income through the sale of honey. This would be a valuable and significant step towards sustainable human–elephant coexistence.'

*International Zoo News* Vol. 55, No. 2 (2008), pp. 103–106

## MISCELLANY

### Should zoo food be chopped?

In many zoos the food, particularly fruit and vegetables, provided for a range of animals is chopped into small pieces, even though the animals are capable of processing much larger food items. Chopping food takes up keeper time and the

chopped edges increase the risk of bacterial contamination and food spoilage. Leaving it whole may increase food processing time and allow the animals to express more natural foraging and feeding behaviour.

Among the reasons given for chopping food are that it enables all individuals in