

# In at the pointy end



On 30 July 2001, an advert in the jobs pages of The Guardian read: "Director: Save the Rhino International". I knew immediately that I wanted the post.

After fourteen happy years in the art world, fundraising for Tate Modern and writing, publishing and selling art books (I remember giggling helplessly in my very first job when confronted by the dustjacket of "The Rhinoceros in Art". A whole book?), I was searching for a new challenge. A wildlife trip to Madagascar - with fantastic forests and extraordinary snakes, lemurs, giraffe-necked weevils and leaf-tailed geckos - convinced me that my next job should be in the environment/conservation field. Further inspiration came from some of the books I'd been reading: "Song of the Dodo" by David Quammen, "Congo Journey" by Redmond O'Hanlon, and "Last to Chance to See" by Douglas Adams.

Rhinos aren't the most obviously beautiful creatures on the planet, but they do need our help. The funny thing is, once lodged in your brain, rhinos crop up everywhere: a life-sized copper rhino

in the garden centre ("Are you sure it won't fit through the front door?"); rhino stamps on postcards from a friend in Tanzania; another life-sized rhino, this time in fetching red plastic, in the Pempidou Centre.

Now, of course, I've even met real rhinos. In November, Neil (SRI's Events Manager) and I visited Port Lympne Wild Animal Park to discuss the Rhino Cycle we're holding this July. When Berry White, Rhino Keeper, leant over a gate and cooed to her herd, they came running. Scratch a Port Lympne black rhino behind the ears (don't try this on safari) and its hind legs buckle from sheer delight. If only rhinos were so readily found in the wild.

Most of my time at SRI has so far been spent learning the ropes, tackling the Honda Challenge, getting to grips with 2002's calendar of events, drafting next year's budget and mapping out the new areas that we want to explore. There's a lot to do.

In spare moments I'm also training for my first ever marathon. Not so much

leading from the front as from somewhere near the back I fear. A friend has sponsored me on a spread-bet basis. If I break the women's world record, he goes bankrupt. On current form I'll end up owing him money. Working for SRI is an all-round commitment.

Another friend has just given me a CD, "Salad Days" by Adrian Belew, (guitarist with King Crimson). The first track opens with the words: "I'm a lone rhinoceros / ain't a hell of a lot of us / left in this world". Which makes me all the more glad to be working with a great organisation to save as many rhinos as we can.

Cathy Dean, Director



## First baby Sumatran Rhino born into captivity in 112 years!

Throughout 2001, rhino conservationists and members of the zoo-community around the world were anxiously following the pregnancy of Cincinnati Zoos Sumatran rhino Emi (she has had five miscarriages since 1997).

The Sumatran rhino species is endemic to Indonesia, and fewer than 300 exist worldwide. The last successful zoo birth of a Sumatran rhino occurred in Calcutta, in 1889 (hence the anticipation!).

Much to everyone's relief, Emi gave birth to a male calf on 13th September last year. The calf, pictured left, is called Andalas (the original name for Sumatra). I'm sure you will agree he is a beauty!

Barbara Rish, PR/Media Director at Cincinnati Zoo, told Save the Rhino: "the successful birth of the first Sumatran rhino to be bred and born in captivity in 112 years is a monumental breakthrough. The birth of Andalas will hopefully enable managed breeding of Sumatran rhinos in captivity to become a viable part of the conservation strategy to save this highly endangered species."

Cincinnati Zoo is part of a global program dedicated to the conservation of this phenomenally rare rhino. Please see their website [www.cincyzoo.org](http://www.cincyzoo.org) for more info.

Kirstie Wielandt

