

WILD ANIMAL FAMILIES

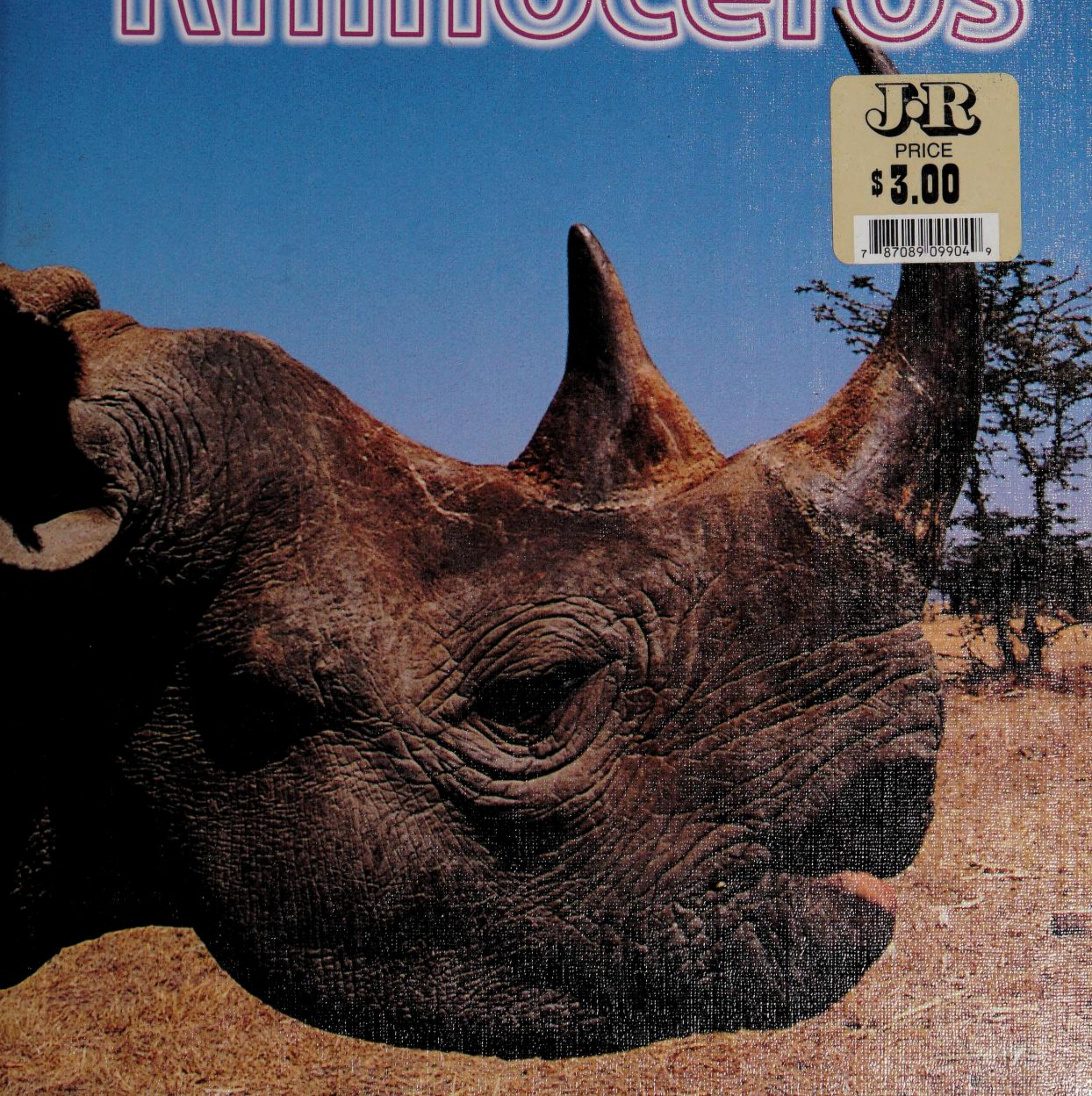
Rudy the

Rhinoceros

J&R

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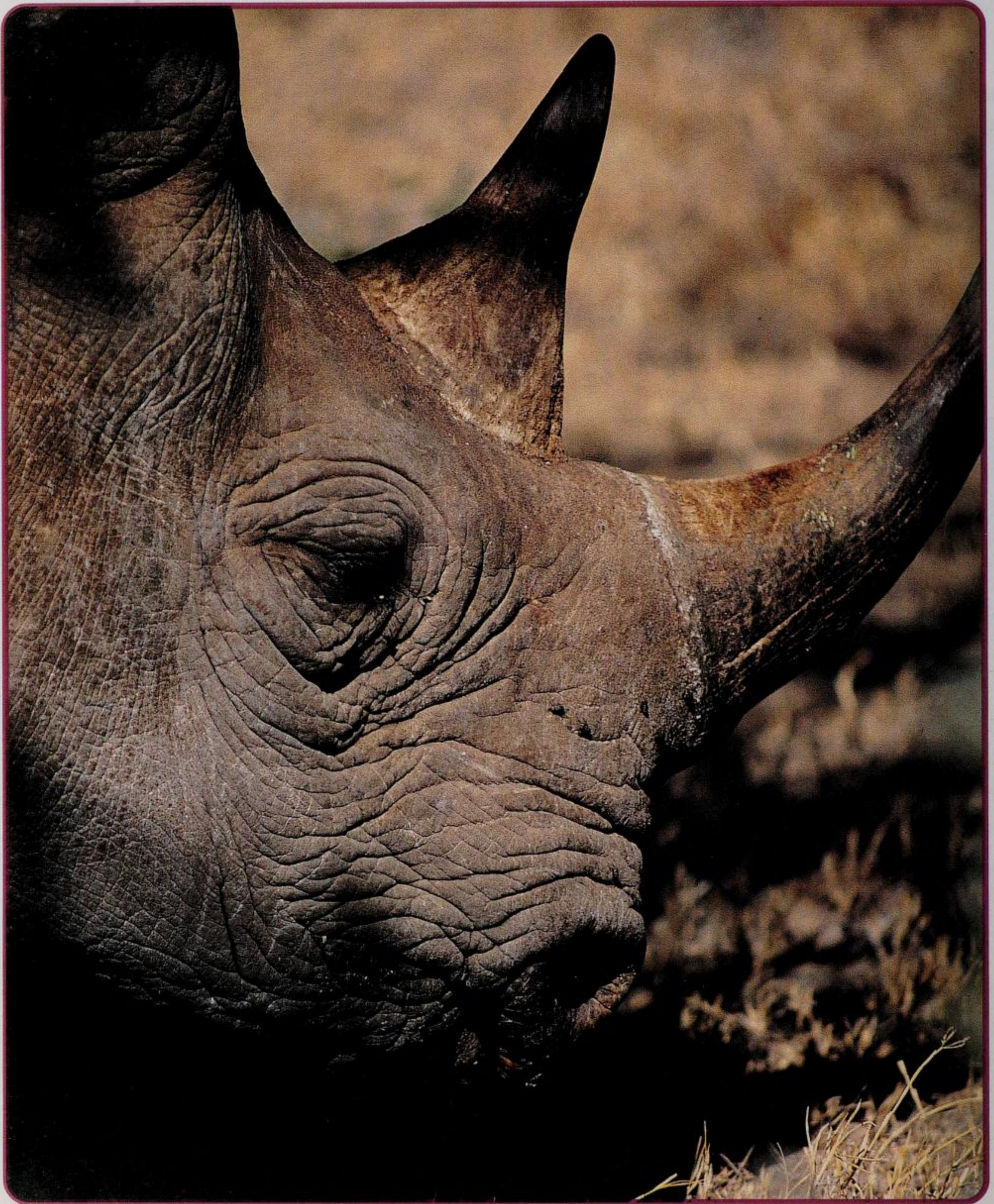
Rudy the Rhinoceros



by Jan Latta

Reading consultant: Susan Nations, M.Ed., author/literacy coach/consultant in literacy development

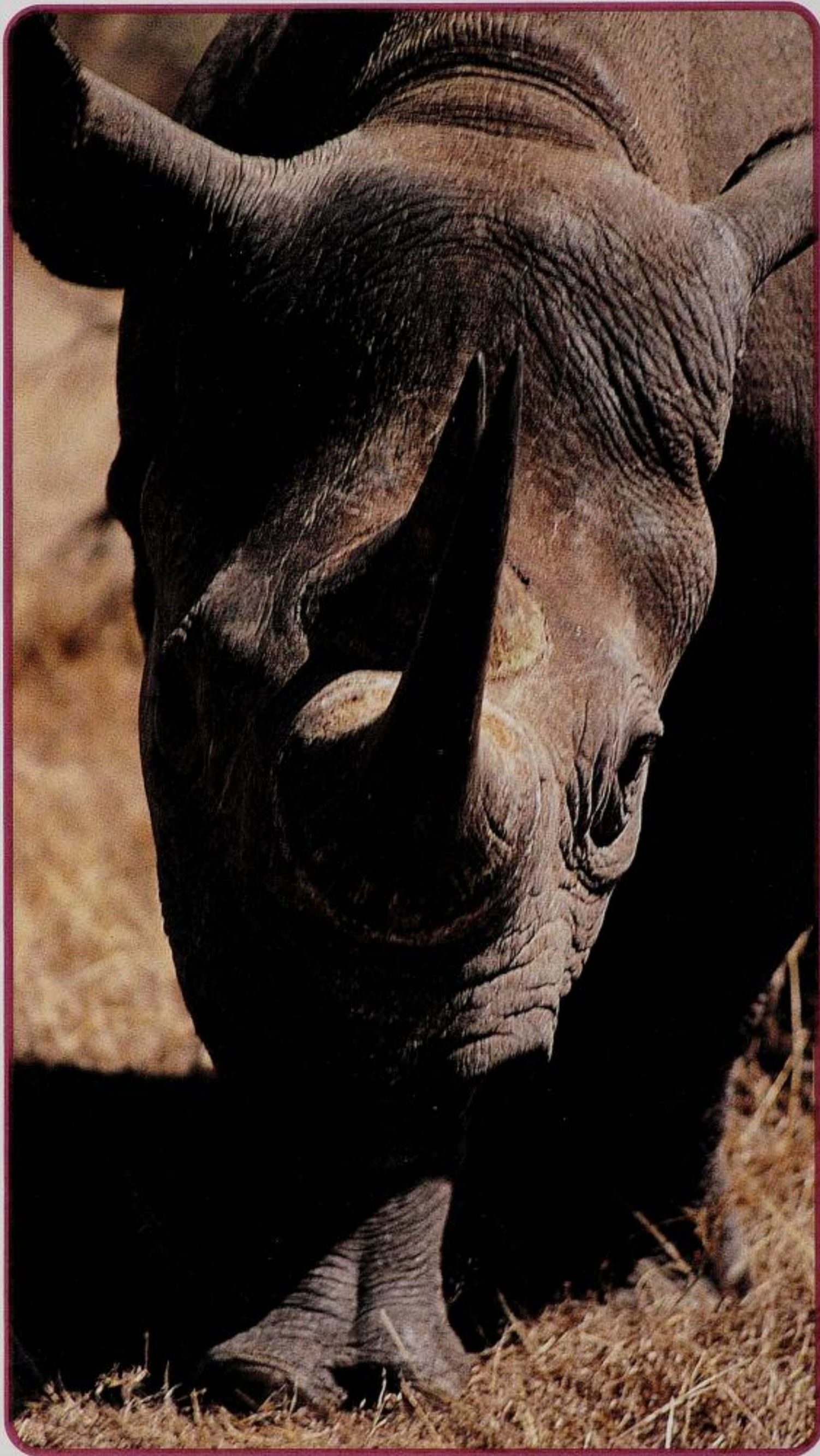
Science and curriculum consultant: Debra Voegel, M.A., science and math curriculum resource teacher



Hello! My name is Rudy, and I am a rhinoceros. My **ancestors** lived on Earth about sixty million years ago.

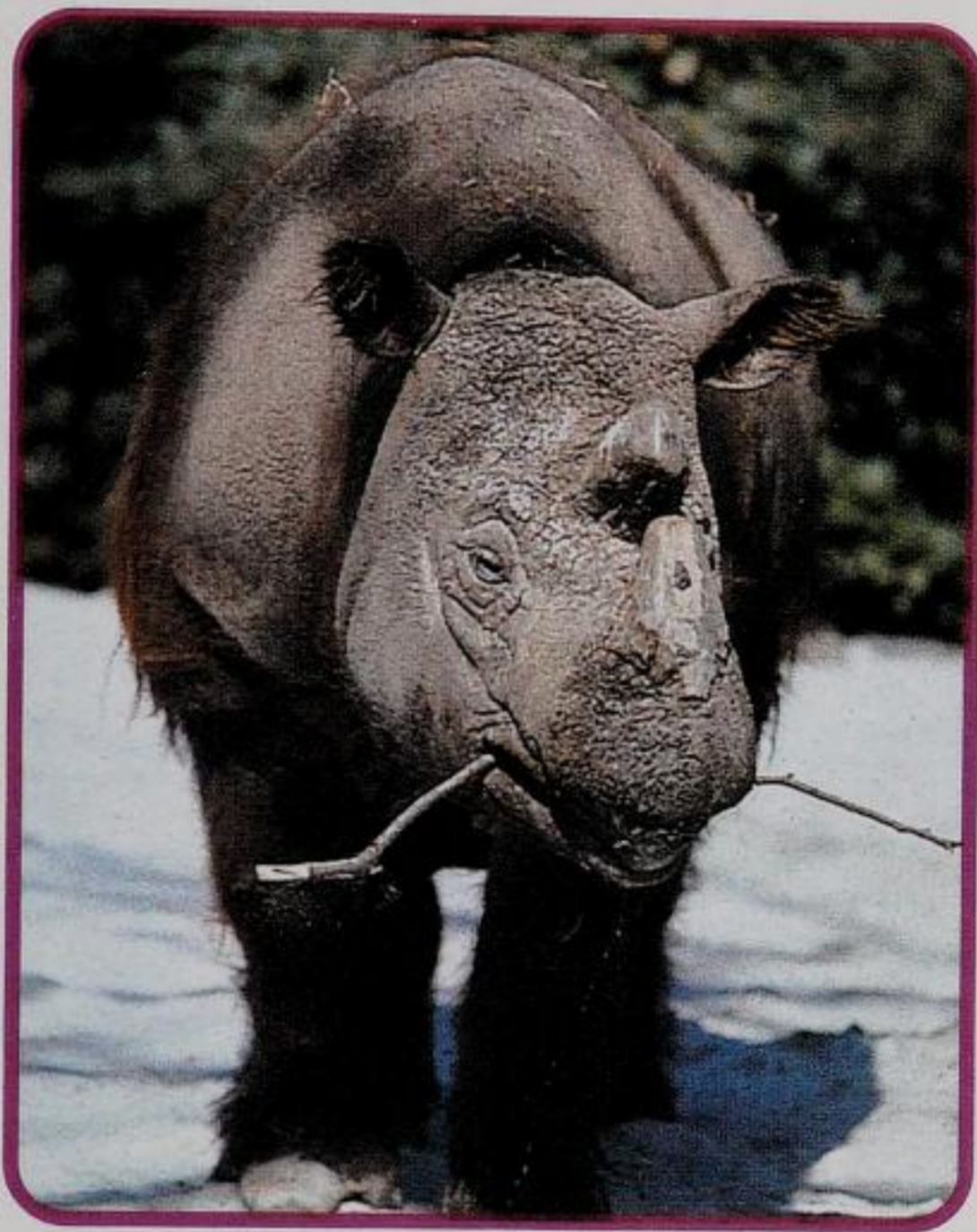


There are five **species**, or types, of rhinos.



Two species live in Africa. The black rhino has a hooked lip. The white rhino's lip is squared. Despite their names, the color of their skin is not different. Both are the same grayish color as all rhinos.

Three species of rhinos are named after three places in Asia — Java, Sumatra, and India.



Sumatran and Javan rhinos are very **rare**.



Indian rhinos have large folds of bumpy skin. They look like they are wearing **armor** plates.





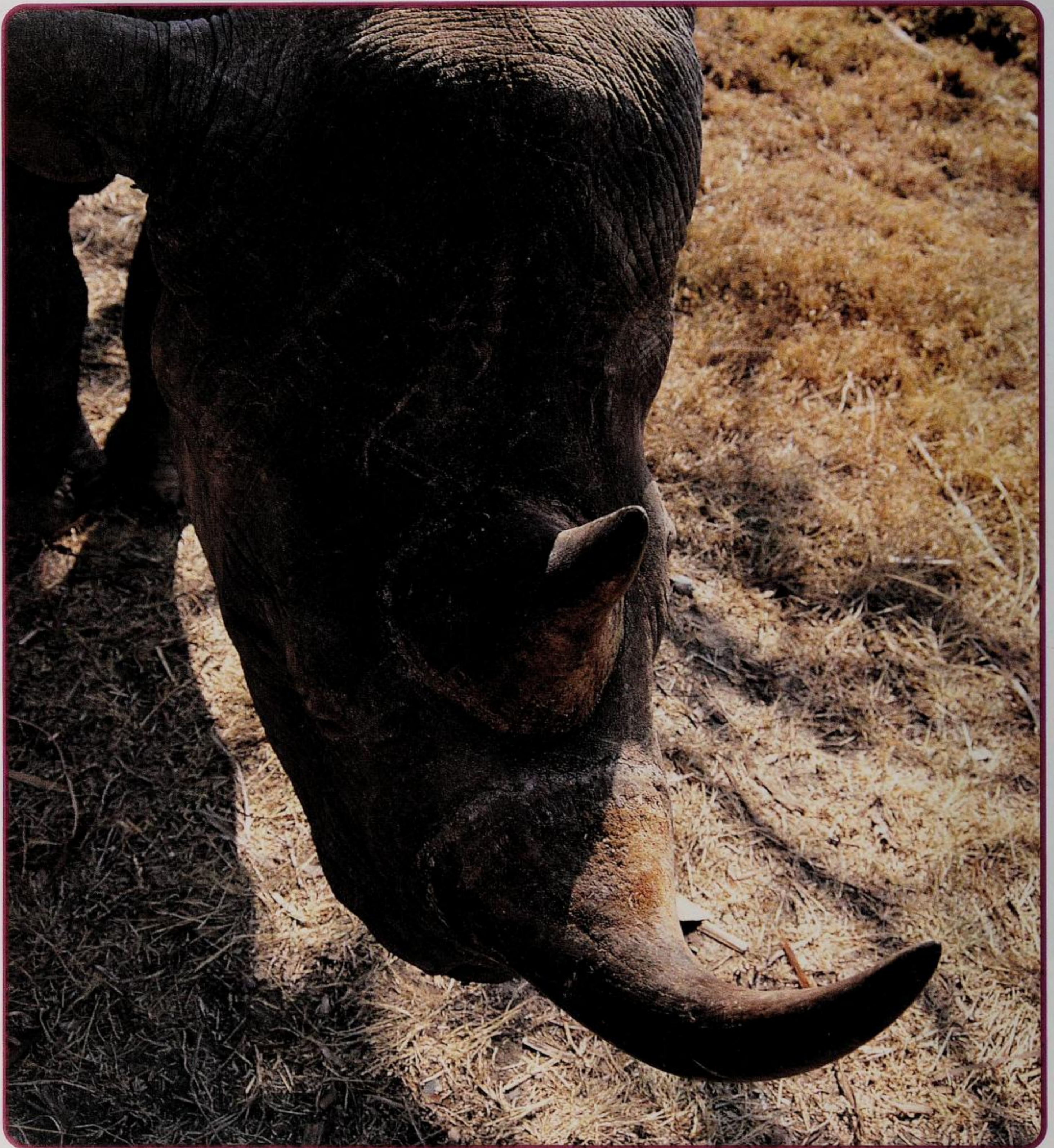
I am a Black rhino. I have a lot in common with my cousins. We all live in hot places and enjoy the shade.



When rhinos are born, we weigh as much as 110 pounds (50 kilograms). Our mothers are very caring. A rhino mom looks after her baby for two to five years until she has another baby. After we leave our mom, we usually live on our own.

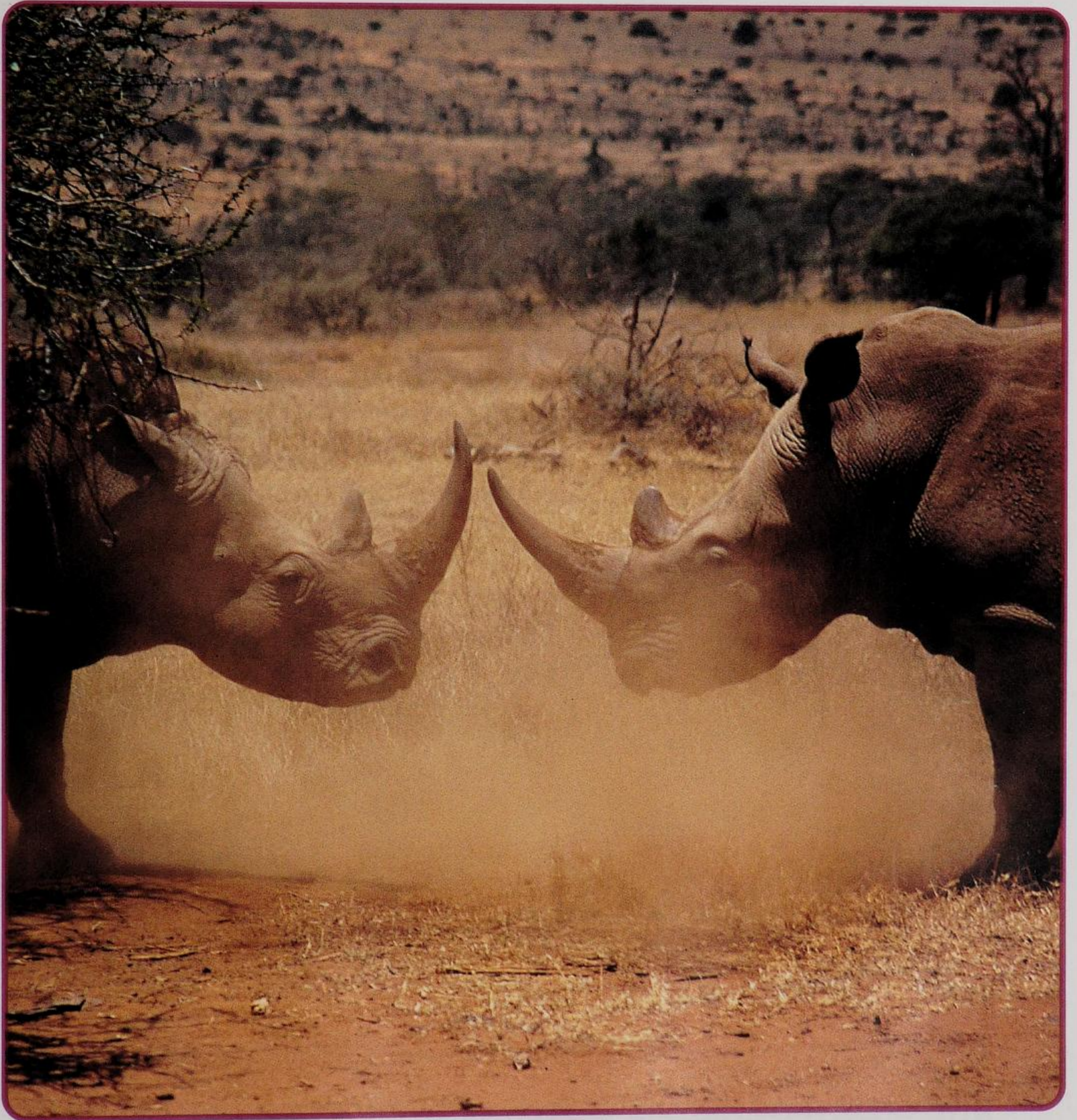


We start to grow our horns when we are two to three months old. When we are about six years old, our horns are big enough to use to dig up food from the ground. Our horns are also strong enough to dig up the roots of bushes and knock over trees.



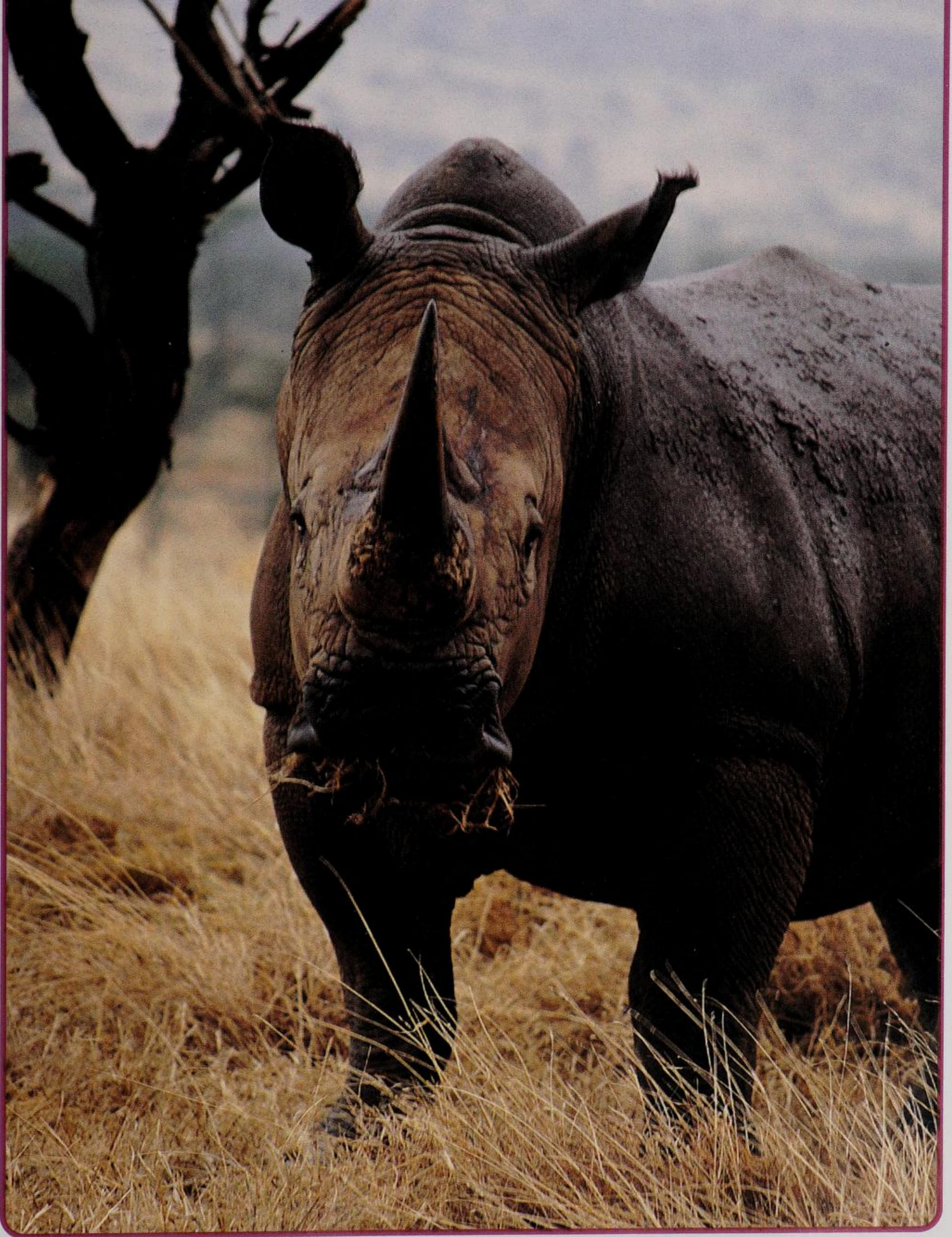
Our horns are made of the same material as your hair and fingernails. No other animal has horns on its nose.

Sometimes, big males fight with their horns. They are trying to see which rhino is stronger. A horn might get knocked off. Luckily, it can grow back.

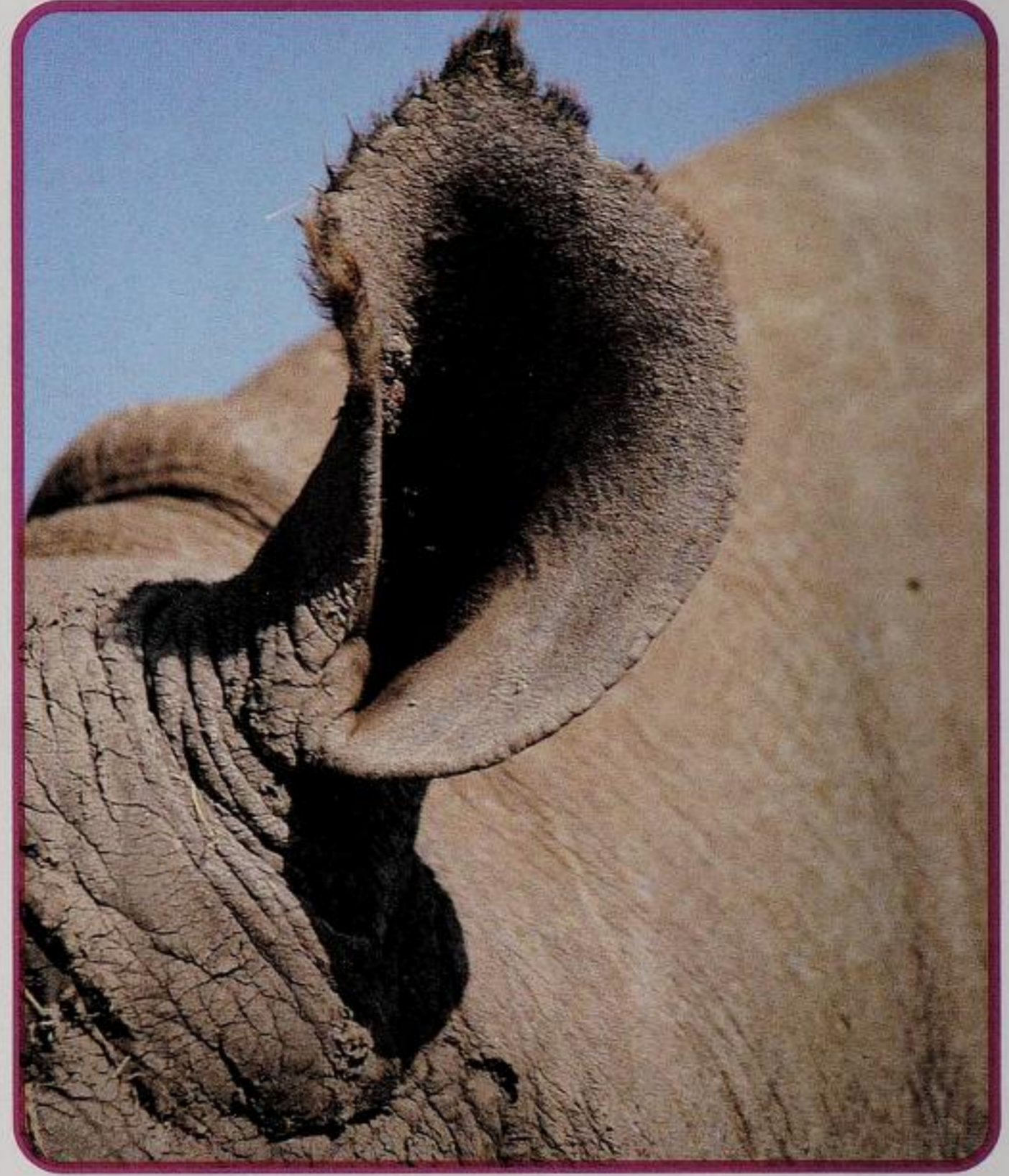
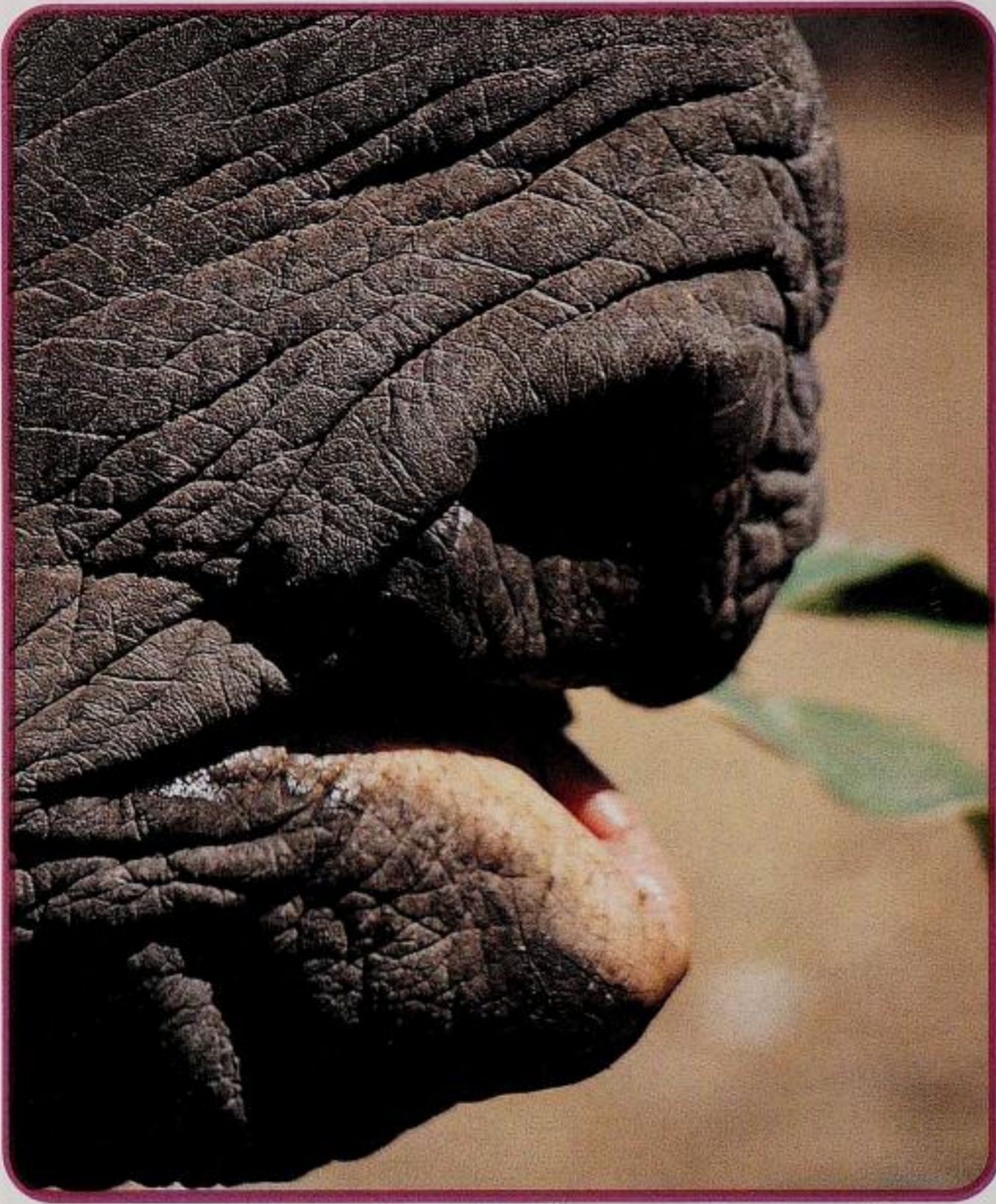




All rhinos are **herbivores**. We eat the buds, shoots, and leaves of plants. I use my hooked lip like a finger to grab leaves.



White rhinos scoop up food with their square lips. All rhinos need to drink plenty of water. We can use our horns to dig for water.



We have a good sense of smell, and we hear very well.



Our eyesight is very bad.

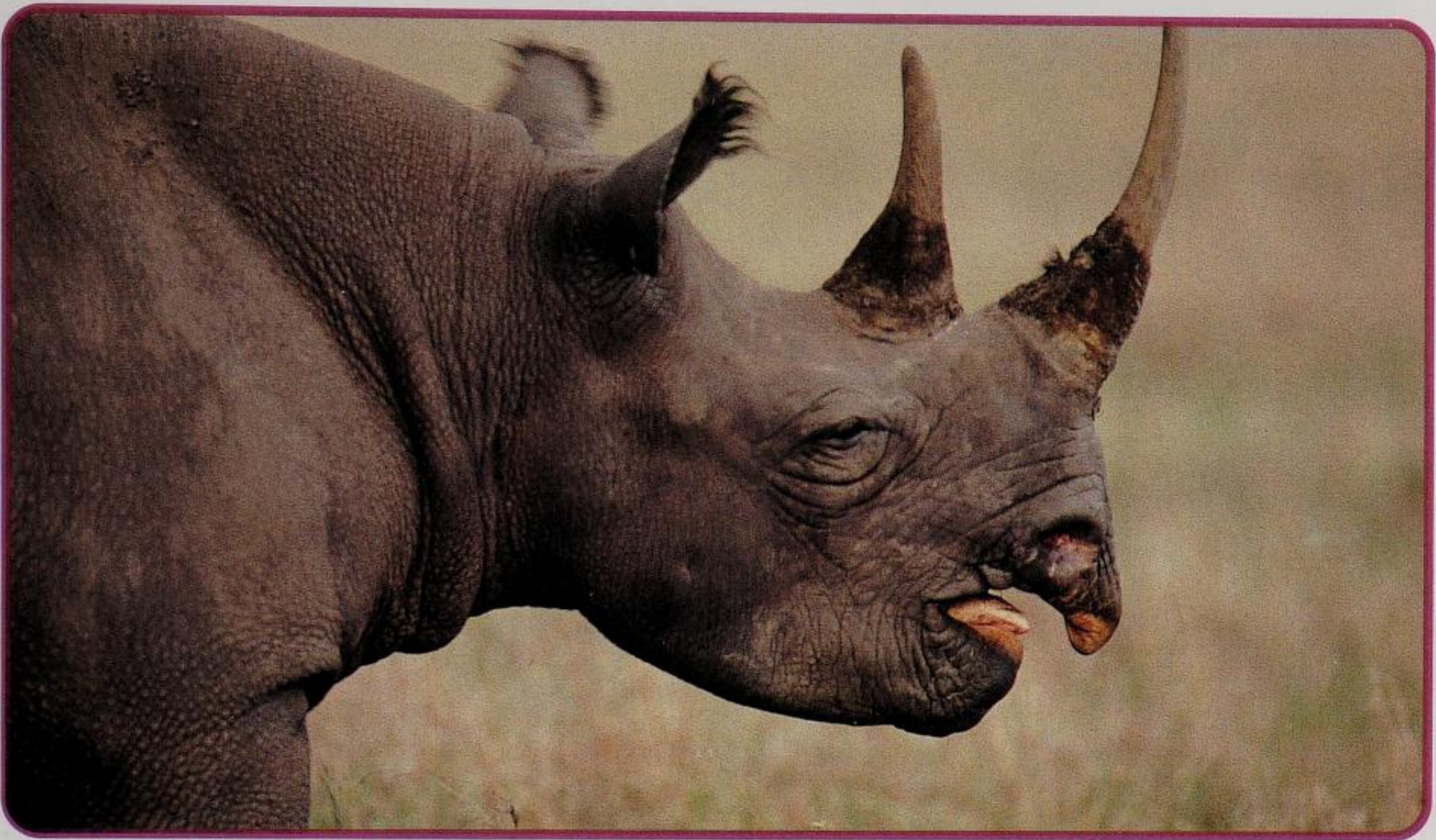


Our poor eyesight sometimes causes us to make mistakes. We might **charge** at trees or rocks, thinking they are enemies! We can run 35 miles (56 kilometers) per hour. It is easy for us to outrun humans.



Rhinos have three toes on each foot. Our middle toe supports most of our weight. White rhinos are the heaviest of the five species. They can weigh up to 6,013 pounds (2,727 kilograms)!





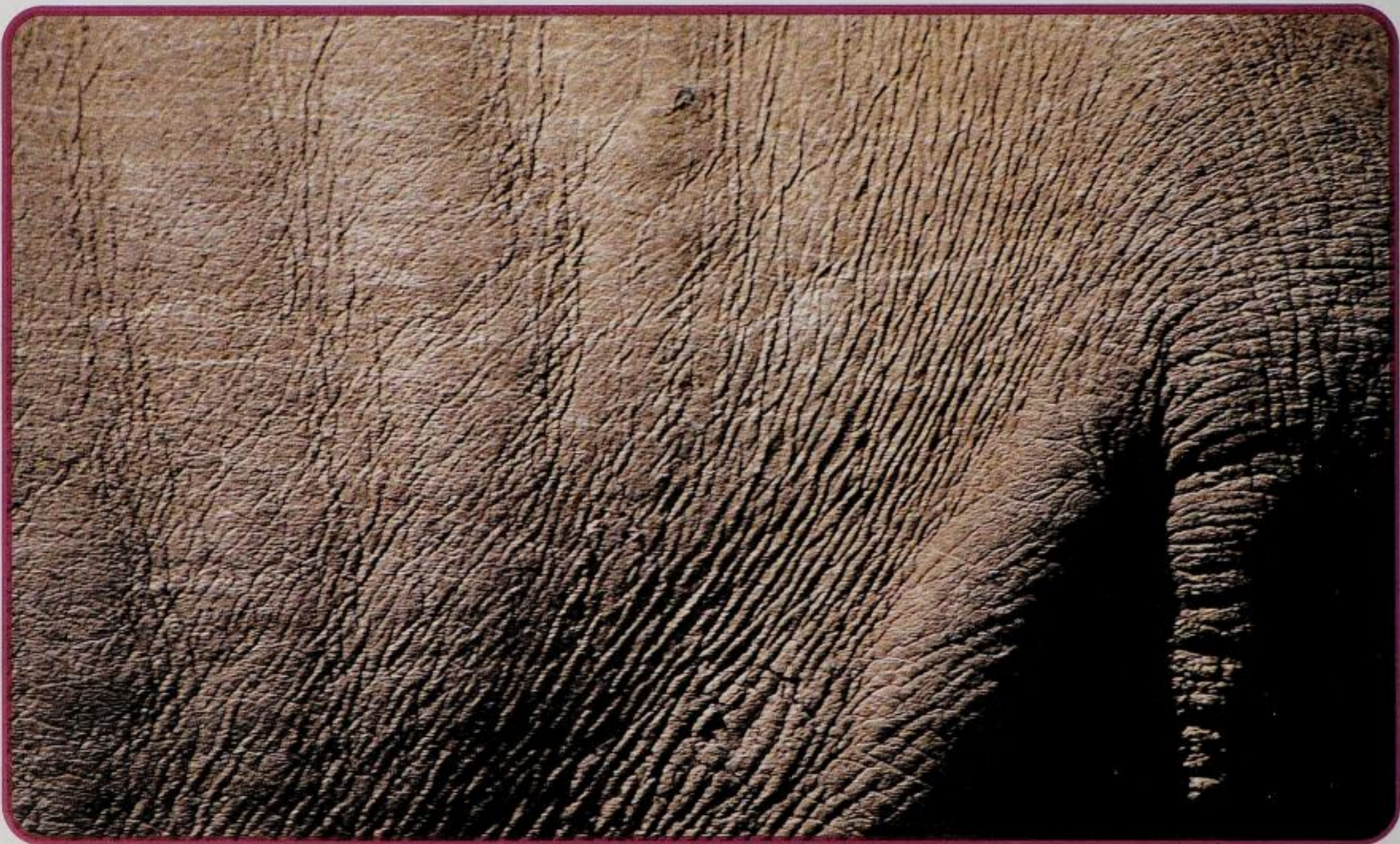
We can make a lot of noise! We growl, grunt, puff, squeal, and bellow.



We also **communicate** by spraying our scent on grass, bushes, and trees. Other animals can smell this.



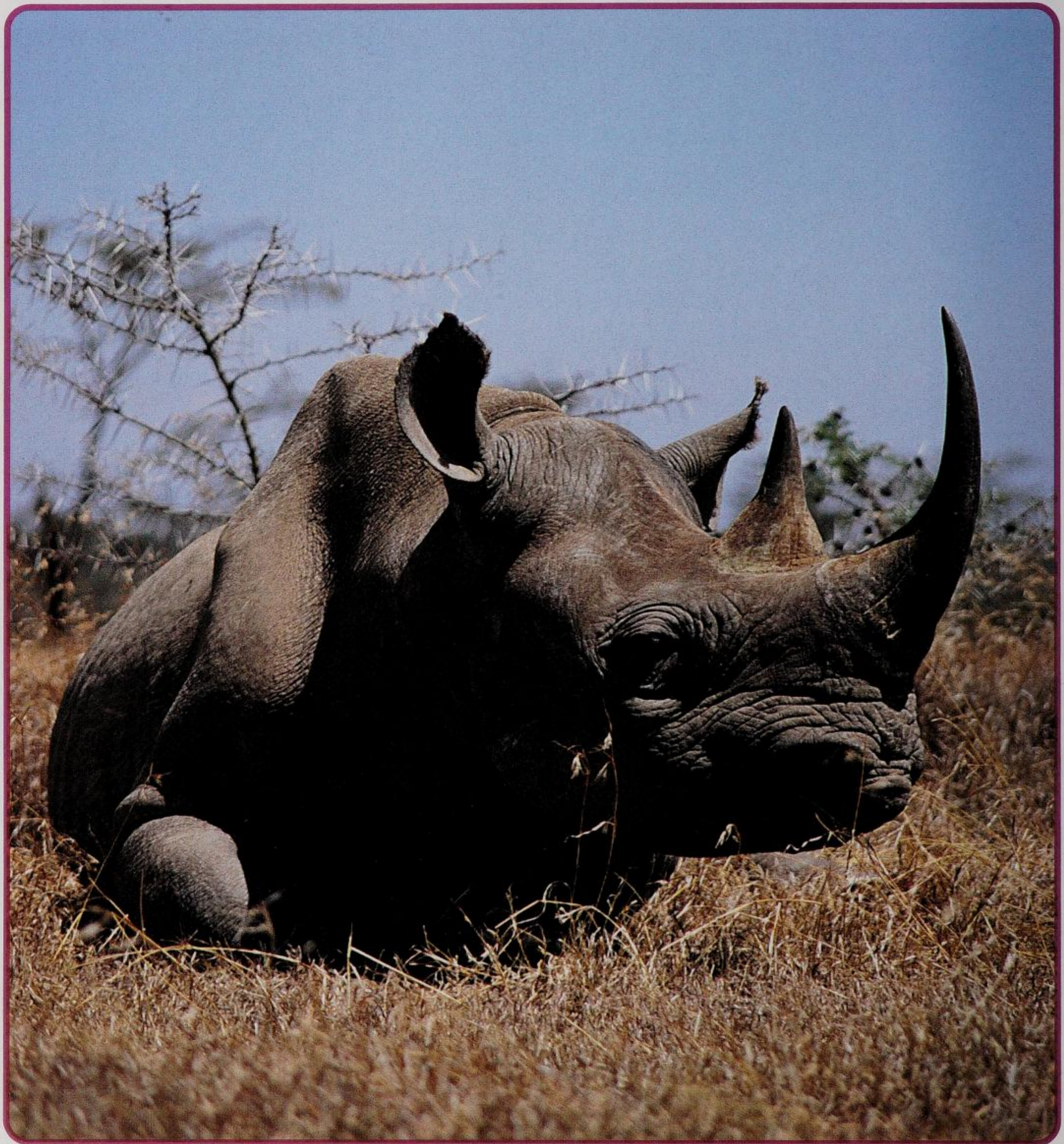
We love to take a bath in the mud! We cover ourselves in mud to stay cool in the heat.



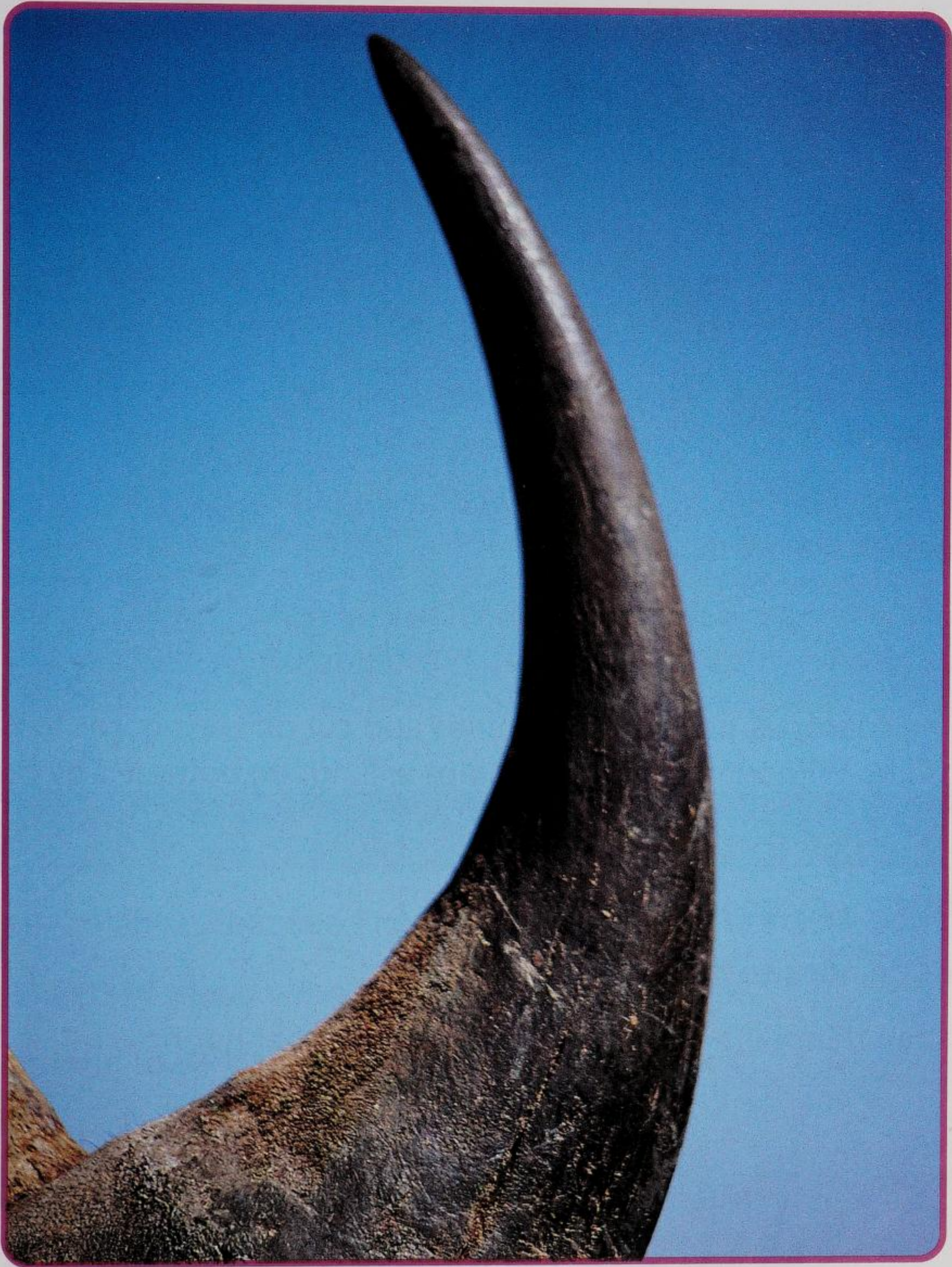
Mud is healthy for our thick skin. It keeps flies and other insects from biting us.



We have little helpers, too. Birds called oxpeckers, or **tick** birds, eat the ticks on our skin. These insects can hurt us! Oxpeckers also screech loudly to warn us of danger, such as a tiger trying to hunt rhino babies.



Rhinos can live up to sixty years. Today, there are fewer than eighteen thousand rhinos left in the world. People destroy our **habitat** and hunt us for our horns.



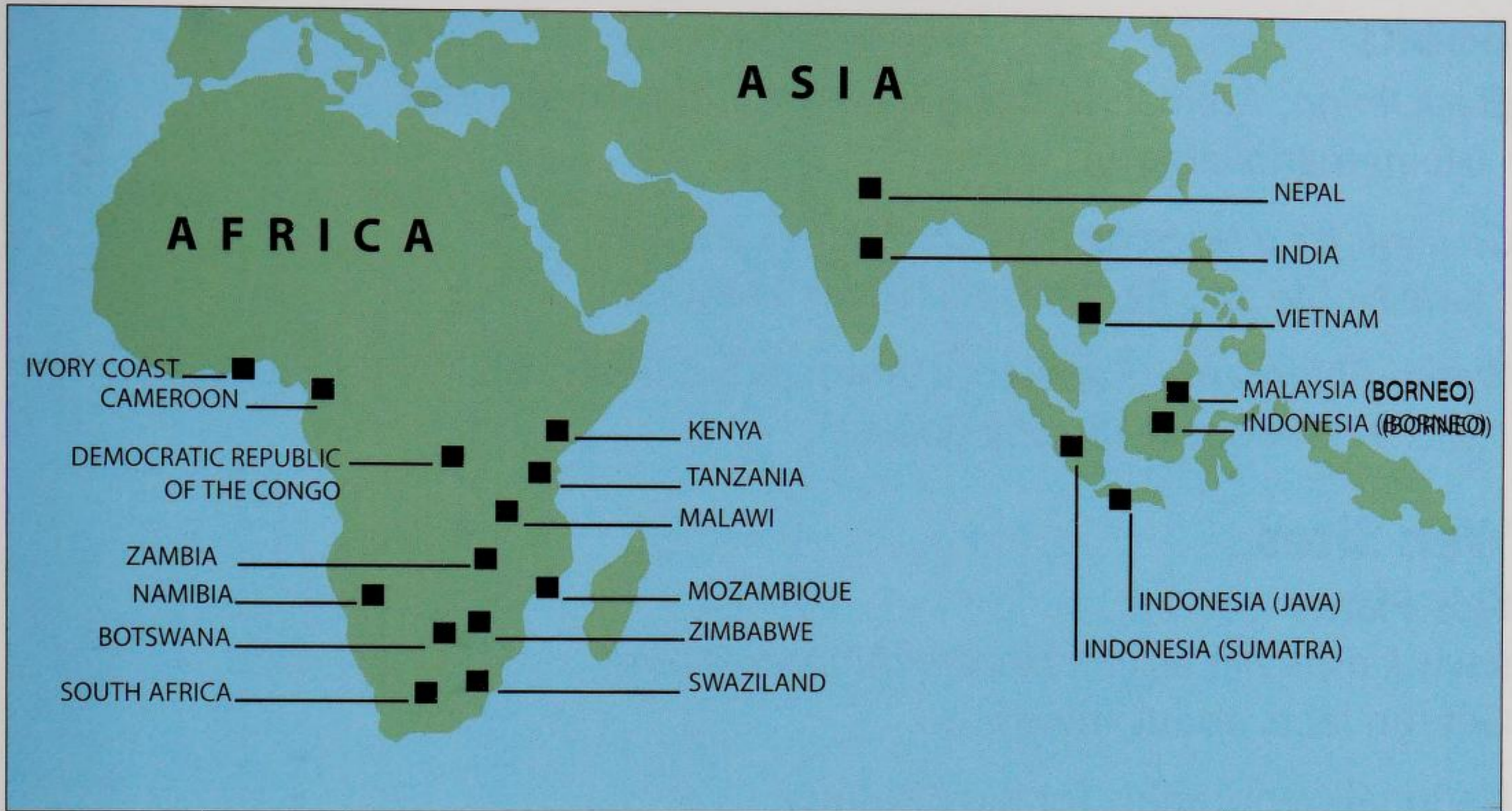
Humans are the biggest danger to us. Luckily, some people work very hard to help our wild animal family continue.

Rhinoceros Facts

Did You Know?

- The word "rhinoceros" comes from Greek. *Rhino* means "nose," and *ceros* means "horn."
- Rhinos can live in many kinds of places. They can live in hot, dry grasslands called savannas. They can also live in forests or swampy areas.
- Black, White, and Sumatran rhinos have two horns. Indian and Javan rhinos have one horn.
- The longest horn on record belonged to a White rhino. It measured 62 inches (158 centimeters) long.
- In the Middle East, people use rhino horns to make handles for daggers. In Asia, people crush the horns into powder to use in medicines.
- In some countries, people catch rhinos and cut off their horns to protect the rhino's life. Without horns, these rhinos will not be bothered by hunters.
- Rhinos can live thirty to sixty years.
- Rhinos are very good swimmers.
- Rhinos do not sweat.
- Sumatran rhinos are the only species of rhino that has hair.

Map — Where Rhinoceros Live



Glossary

ancestors — relatives that lived long before one's parents were born

armor — sheets of metal worn to protect against attack

charge — to run toward something very fast to attack it

communicate — to send messages to others

habitat — the environment, or place, where an animal lives

herbivores — animals that eat only plants

rare — not common or usual; not seen very often

species — types of an animal

tick — a small insect that attaches to an animal and sucks its blood

More Information

Books

Black Rhino. *Animals in Danger* (series). Rod Theodorou
(Heinemann Library)

Oh Look, It's a Nosserus. *African Stories* (series).
Kate Noble and Rachel Bass (Silver Seahorse)

Woolly Rhinoceros. *Prehistoric Animals Set II* (series).
Michael P. Goecke (Buddy Books)

Web Sites

Kids' Planet

www.kidsplanet.org/factsheets/rhinoceros.html

Get fun facts about rhinos.

National Geographic for Kids: Rhinos

www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/creature_feature/0205/rhinos.html

Send a post card, listen to audio, watch videos, and find fun facts about rhinos.

Publisher's note to educators and parents: Our editors have carefully reviewed these Web sites to ensure that they are suitable for children. Many Web sites change frequently, however, and we cannot guarantee that a site's future contents will continue to meet our high standards of quality and educational value. Be advised that children should be closely supervised whenever they access the Internet.

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In *Rudy the Rhinoceros* find fun facts about:

- The ways that people try to protect rhinos
- The many uses rhinos have for their horns
- The five different kinds of rhinos

WILD ANIMAL FAMILIES

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Lisa the Lion • Rudy the Rhinoceros • Timba the Tiger

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