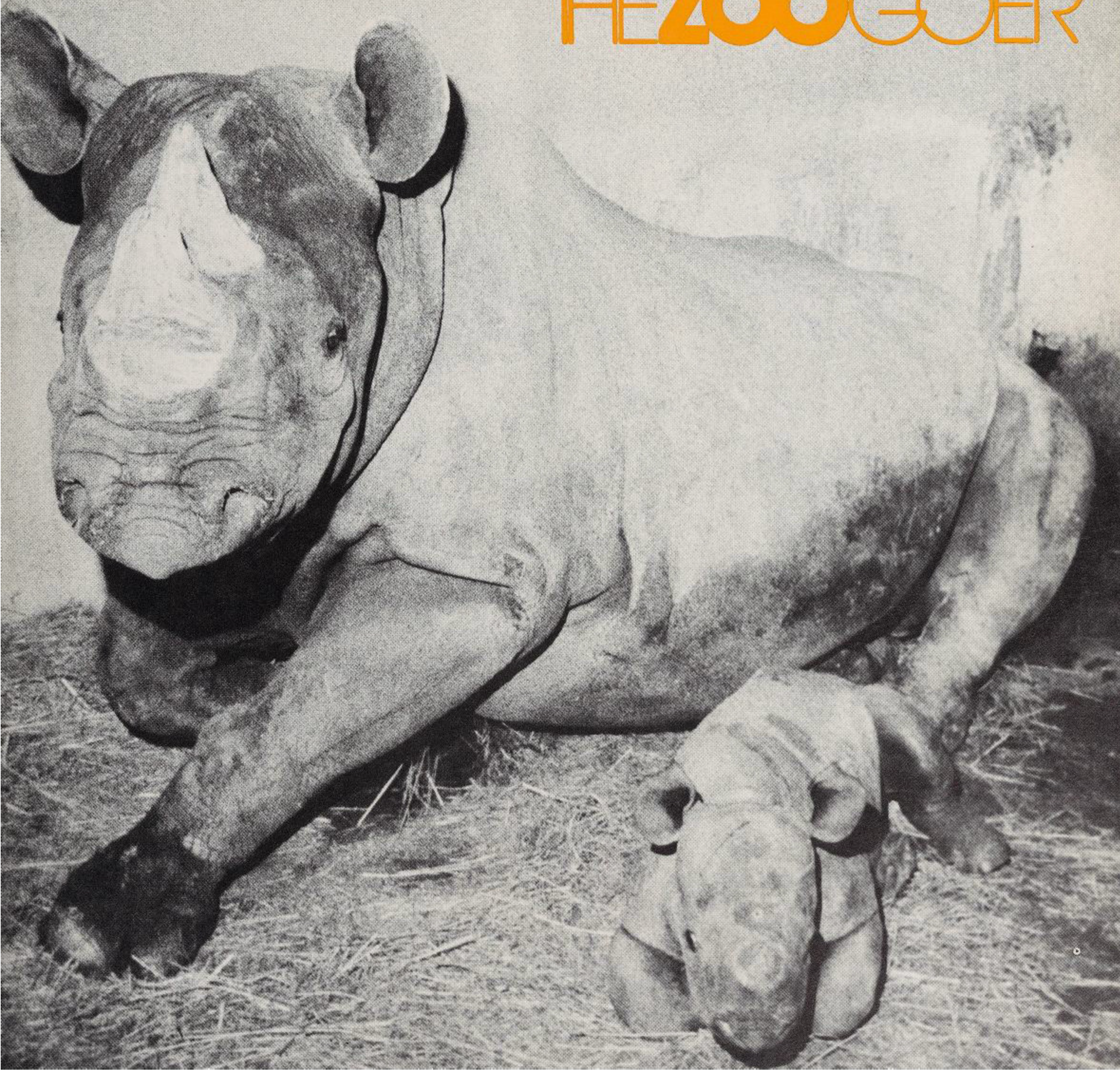


THE ZOO GOER



volume 6, number 6

November/December 1977

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Front Cover: The Zoo's black rhino launched her New Year with a male baby — the third in National Zoo history.

Back Cover: Minnesota Governor Anderson (left) and National Zoo Director Reed admire one of the Bactrian camels on loan at Front Royal for a joint breeding program.

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Photographs on front cover, pp. 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 15 by Francie Schroeder; p. 6 & 13 by Ray Faass; p. 16 courtesy of Times Books; back cover courtesy of Smithsonian Institution; illustration on pp. 20 & 21 by Ben Butterfield.



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60 Pound Rhino Born

by Bill Xanten
Curator of Mammals

After eight years of trying, waiting, and hoping, the National Zoo rang in the New Year with a baby black rhino. Only two others have been born at the Zoo, and only a dozen or so zoos in the United States have successfully bred these prehistoric-looking, 3,000-pound creatures.

Weighing approximately 60 pounds at birth on January 4, 1978, the healthy male calf stood up after eight hours and immediately began nursing. "Nepo" (Latin for grandson) gained an impressive five pounds a day and so doubled his birth size in two weeks. Nepo and his 7½-year-old mother will be on public view in their enclosure next to the Small Mammal House when warm weather begins, probably in late March.

Not to be outdone, the Zoo's other adult female (actually Nepo's grandmother) is also

Born on the fourth of January, "Nepo," a black rhino, and his 3,000-pound mother will go on public view when the weather warms.

thought to be pregnant, with delivery expected in March. Gestation is 15-16 months.

The black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) is one of two rhino species that roam sub-Saharan Africa. Unlike the white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*), which is several thousand pounds bigger and more gregarious, the black rhino lives alone or in small groups of one

or two adult females and their calves.

Once plentiful throughout South and East Africa, the black rhino is now restricted to parks in East Africa. Their numbers have been severely reduced by habitat destruction and poachers who kill them for the allegedly aphrodisiac qualities of their horns.

