



Rhino Cycle 2003

We hope to have the opportunity to repeat the Rhino Cycle next year. Discussions with the various parties are in progress and we should be able to announce a date very soon. If the event goes ahead we will be making a number of changes, primarily to shorten the long route to around 50 miles and have a common start/finish point for both long and short rides, preferably at Port Lymington. This will make the event more enjoyable for participants and far easier to manage. Watch this space....

Tanzania:

Update from the Selous

We have had a very successful wet season. For the first time, we have been able to map the elusive black rhinos' movements during the rains, allowing us to identify a seasonal migration range for individual rhinos. This knowledge will enable us to protect the scattered rhino populations much more effectively during the crucial wet season. Our dry season rhino range data are almost complete, but during the rainy season the rhinos have previously disappeared into unknown areas.

Since June 2001, we have increased our rhino sightings by 64%, giving us a clearer understanding of ranges and seasonal habitat preferences. This allows us to monitor these animals over longer stretches of time. On one rhino tracking survey we found the spoor and dung of a young rhino calf with its mother, both fit and in good condition. More exciting still, the tracks of another calf have been found in a zone where no breeding has been recorded since 1995.

Our new anti-poaching patrols, spending more time in the field and covering a wider range, have undoubtedly contributed to the population growth. Continuous field training and recruitment of new rhino rangers have also helped the recovering population. However poaching remains a daily threat, and this vast area has

to be patrolled by a very small and underpaid ranger force working in tough conditions. There is still a long way to go to ensure the complete recovery of the Selous rhino population to its 1960s level of 3,000. Ranger motivation and spirit can only be kept alive with continuous and committed support from Save the Rhino. If anyone would like to visit us, it can be arranged and it would be an amazing morale boost for the rangers. Karibu!

Friedrich Alpers,
Project Scientific Coordinator,
The Selous Rhino Trust

