

# **Protected Wildlife Species of Nepal**

## **An Introductory Handbook**

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# One-horned Rhinoceros

*Rhinoceros unicornis*

Gaida (गैडा)

- Size** : Adult ht: 1.1 - 1.7 m; adult wt: 2,000 - 4,000 kg
- Characteristics** : The rhinoceros is the second largest land mammal in the world. Its grotesque body is covered by heavy shield-like folds. These shields lie before and after the shoulder, in front of the thighs and on the buttocks. The shields behind the shoulder and in front of the thighs are continuous across the back. Those in front of the shoulders do not continue right across the back. The body is blackish grey and does not possess any hair. The head is boat shaped and bears a horn which is the extension of the nasal bone. The horn of this animal continues growing throughout the animal's life and lost horns are regenerated. Rhino horn is of great value for its alleged aphrodisiac properties.
- Habitat** : Swampy grasslands and tropical jungles in Terai regions.
- Food** : Grass, shrubs, foliage and aquatic plants.
- Gestation period** : 480 - 570 days
- Litter size** : 1 - 2
- Lifespan** : 40 - 50 years
- Status** : Red Data Book (E), CITES (I) and National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act (1973)
- Protected area** : Royal Chitwan National Park, Parsa Wildlife Reserve and Royal Bardia National Park.
- Remarks** : The 1994 census recorded more than 450 rhinos in Royal

Chitwan National Park. Between 1986 and 1991, 38 individuals were trans-located from Chitwan to Royal Bardia National Park. The population in Bardia now stands at about 40.

