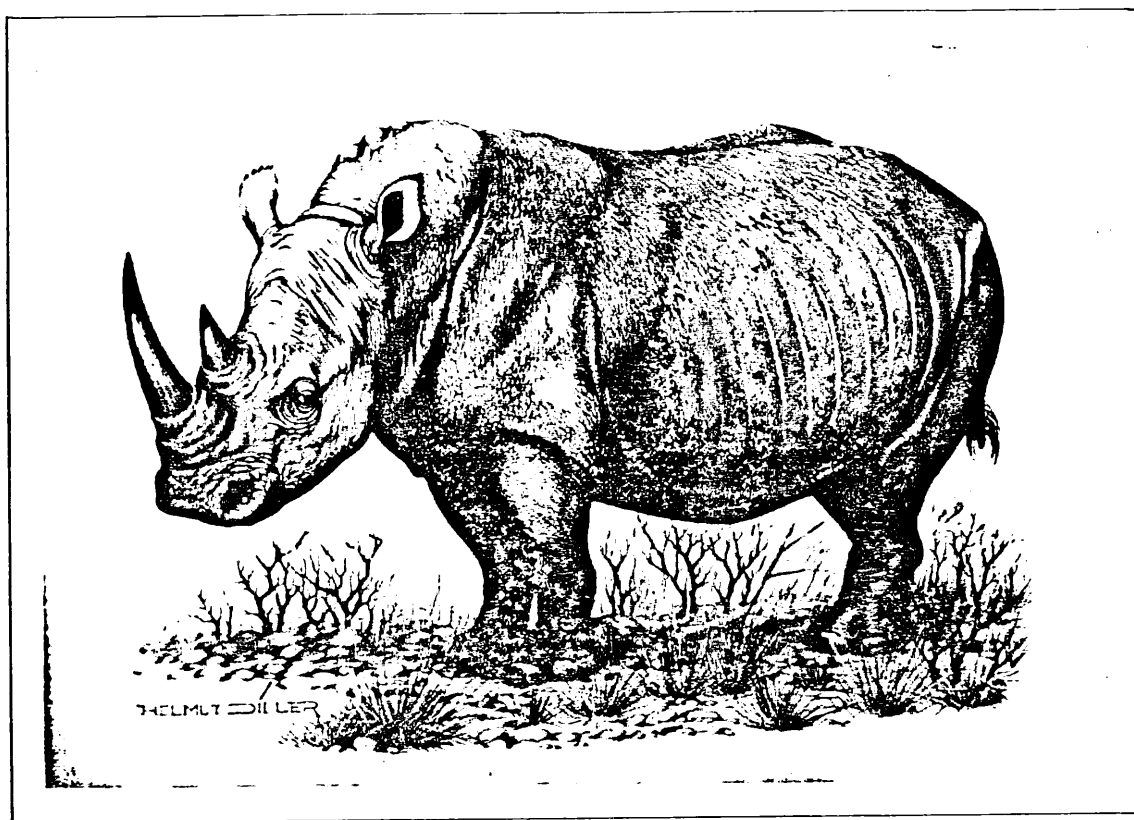




INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

3856

# Northern Square-lipped Rhino



From  
The IUCN Red Data Book

by L. Jane Thornback

## NORTHERN SQUARE-LIPPED RHINOCEROS

## ENDANGERED

Ceratotherium simum cottoni (Lydekker, 1908)

Order PERISSODACTYLA

Family RHINOCEROTIDAE

**SUMMARY** Sporadic distribution in S.W. Sudan, N.E. Zaire and possibly the Central African Republic. Probably recently extinct in Uganda. About 1100 survive of which 400 are in the Garamba National Park, Zaire and about 500-600 in Sudan. Endangered by poaching for its horn and skin, and disturbance by military operations. Effective ban on trade in rhino horn needed, particularly on import to Middle Eastern countries, and increasingly effective antipoaching and law enforcement measures.

### DISTRIBUTION

Sub-Saharan Africa. Formerly ranged from southeastern Sudan between 4° and 13°N, to southeastern Chad and south through the eastern Central African Republic to northeastern Zaire and northwestern Uganda (1,11). Now has an extremely sporadic distribution within this range, still occurring in southwestern Sudan west of the White Nile; in Zaire in the Garamba National Park (1,3,6,13,17); and perhaps in the east of the C.A.R. (12,17). Until 1979/80 it survived in Uganda in the Ajai Game Reserve and Kabelega National Park (where it was introduced); but is now thought extinct there (23).

### POPULATION

About 1100 (16,17).

Central African Republic Numbers unknown but probably a few, possibly in the Reserve de Zemonga and the eastern border (12,17).

Chad Extinct (1,4,17).

Sudan 500-600 and declining, nowhere at a high density; improvement in their conservation badly needed (17). Many of those in the Shambe reserve have been poached (16).

Uganda By mid-1980 it was thought likely that no White Rhino survived in Uganda (23). It was considered highly improbable that any survived outside parks and reserves and those in Ajai Game Reserve are now thought extinct, as are those introduced to Kabalega National Park (23).

Zaire A 1976 FAO survey of Garamba National Park estimated over 400 rhinos and from the large number of calves concluded that the population was healthy and expanding (10), although it is likely that it has since declined. A 1960 estimate for the park was 1000, but numbers declined greatly in the 1960s following incursions into the park by rebels from the Sudan (3,10).

### HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

Grasslands, whether in open acacia woodland or surrounding open country. A grazer, feeding almost entirely on grass. Usually rests in the shade in the heat of the day (6,9,11,15). Social system based on a very clearly delineated mosaic of adult male territories (8,9). Gestation period about 16 months, calving normally occurring about every 2.5-3 years (9).

### THREATS TO SURVIVAL

Poaching and disturbances arising from military operations (3,11,14,17).

Hunting and Trade The main reason for the accelerated killing of rhinos (all species) results from the increased demand for rhino products, especially the skin and horn, in the Yemens, India, Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. (The belief among Westerners that the major use of rhino horn is by the Chinese as an aphrodisiac is unfounded). In the Far East most rhino products are used medicinally to cure ailments, from typhoid to snake bites, but mostly as a fever depressing drug (19). In North Yemen rhino horn is used for making the handles of traditional daggers, called jambias, which are a status symbol for every Yemeni male. During the 1970's North Yemen became the world's biggest single importer of rhino horn. A fact which can be attributed to a five-fold increase of the country's per capita income; there are now more men who can afford to pay up to US\$13,000 for these precious daggers (19). Because of the tremendous demand outside Africa, rhino horn has become an item of great commercial value, not just for the middlemen who arrange its export but also for the poachers, who in Kenya, can make as much as \$400 for supplying on rhino horn to the market (19). Civil disturbance especially in Uganda have contributed significantly to the decline of this subspecies.

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## CONSERVATION MEASURES TAKEN

International The Northern Square-lipped rhinoceros is listed in Appendix 1 of the 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, trade in it or its products therefore being subject to strict regulation by ratifying nations, and trade for primarily commercial purposes banned. Also listed in Class B of the 1968 African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, which provides that it may be hunted or collected only under special authorization by the competent authority. Early in 1979 Hong Kong banned all imports of rhino horn (17).

National Legally protected throughout its range but enforcement has in the past often been handicapped or prevented by civil disturbances. Occurs in the Garamba National Park in Zaire, and the Shambe Reserve in the Sudan.

Studies The IUCN/SSC African Rhino Specialist Group has prepared an action programme for the conservation of the Square-lipped Rhino, a detailed summary of which appears in their Newsletter No.2 (18). In conjunction, WWF has mounted an international fund-raising campaign 'Save the Rhino' to finance the rhino conservation action plan. By October 1980 US\$1.4 million had been raised, and much of this has been committed to anti-poaching operations, creation of new reserves, reinforcement of national park operations, and public education projects. A report on the International Trade in Rhino Products was published by Dr Esmond Bradley Martin in 1979 (19) and is the basis of an official statement by IUCN/WWF on such trade and the action which should be taken to curtail it (21). In particular IUCN/WWF will:

- a) Mount a campaign to encourage interest in producing, consuming and trading countries to join CITES, to enforce CITES more effectively, and to halt trade in rhino products.
- b) Provide technical assistance to producing countries, especially in Africa, on improvements to the administration and enforcement of trade controls under CITES, so as to make full use of this Convention.
- c) Pay particular attention to bringing the seriousness of the situation to the notice of the Chinese authorities, who have recently acceded to CITES and indicated their desire to control the trade in rhino products. Contact will be made with medical and pharmaceutical associations and with practitioners in other Asian countries to persuade them not to prescribe or dispense any rhino derivatives, and to encourage the use of alternatives and substitutes. Far Eastern wholesale dealers in rhino products will be encouraged to withdraw from this market - as dealers in Hong Kong have already done. Particular attention will also be given to drawing the attention of the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the consequences of their demand for rhino horn daggers. An approach which recognises the deep respect of the Yemeni people for Islamic traditions and which urges the use of alternative materials for dagger handles will also be made. Governments will be requested to halt all internal as well as external trade by placing a moratorium on the sale of all government and parastatal stocks of rhino products. Records of these stocks, regularly updated, should be made available to IUCN. Hunting of rhino should be prohibited

anywhere in the world except where such hunting serves to promote the conservation of particular populations and provided proper control of the hunting and disposal of products and trophies is assured. (21).

## CONSERVATION MEASURES PROPOSED

Effective ban on trade in rhino horn, which would be greatly facilitated if the import of rhino horn into Asian countries was prohibited. Increased protection in national parks and reserves. More precise information is needed on distribution and numbers if conservation and management are to be properly planned and implemented. Reintroduction to Ajai Game Reserve and Kabalega National Park, Uganda when protection can be assured.

## CAPTIVE BREEDING

In 1979, 8 males and 11 females were held in 7 zoological collections, 1 female having been captive bred (7).

## REMARKS

For description of species see (1,5). The nominate C. s. simum, of southern Africa, which is the only other subspecies, was nearly exterminated shortly after the end of the 19th century, except in Zululand. However, as a result of good conservation its numbers have increased so greatly that nearly 2500 have been supplied to restock other reserves and zoos (1,4,11,14,18,22). In 1980 approximately 3000 survived in the wild - 50-70 in Botswana, 85 in Mozambique, about 160 in Zimbabwe, a few in South West Africa/Namibia, 6 in Zambia and 2360 in South Africa. About 20 also occur in Kenya but these are outside the subspecies original range (17). The Southern Square-lipped Rhino is therefore relatively secure. This data sheet was compiled with the assistance of the African Rhino Specialist Group under the Chairmanship of Dr Kes Hillman.

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### Northern Square-lipped Rhino Distribution as known in January 1980

