

SSP INDIAN RHINOCEROS UPDATE

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Since its inception in New Orleans in 1981, the Indian Rhinoceros Propagation Group has set out to achieve two main goals: initiate reproduction and relocate the males of sibling pairs in participating institutions.

In the beginning, Oklahoma City, Toronto and the Philadelphia Zoo all had sibling pairs. New York obtained the male from Oklahoma City, in turn transferring their older male, on loan from the National Zoo, to Oklahoma City. A male on loan to Philadelphia, from the Basel Zoo, was purchased by New York thus separating the sibling pair in the former institution. Negotiations are still in progress to transfer the Toronto male to either New York or Oklahoma City. In making these arrangements, all three institutions achieved the best potential for breeding unrelated pairs.

As of this date, New York has had two breedings. The male on loan from Oklahoma City and the young male on loan from the National Zoo, have bred with New York's females. All signs indicate to at least one successful breeding, and New York is expecting their first birth around March of 1985. They are still awaiting positive signs of pregnancy with the second breeding.

At Philadelphia, after the departure of the male from the Basel Zoo, the institution commenced breeding their own pair, in time producing a female calf. Unfortunately, this calf died eighteen hours after birth. However, the same pair has already bred again, and if the female is pregnant, she should deliver in November of 1985. It is of great interest to note that the male is the oldest breeding male in the United States and a founder animal.

Births have also occurred in San Diego and Los Angeles. San Diego has produced the most calves in the United States with seven calves, of which four are surviving and Los Angeles has produced three calves, of which one is surviving. Both of these institutions have females that have aborted a fetus about halfway through pregnancy, however, upon necropsy, no cause could be determined. At the present time, both institutions have pregnant females.

In the fall of this year, Los Angeles will transfer a young female born in the institution, to San Diego to pair up with a male that was recently purchased from the zoo in Hyderabad, India. When this male first arrived, it was thought that he was born in 1978, but upon closer examination, it has been determined that he was probably born in 1981. As a result, he will not be sexually mature for several years.

Attempts to breed the pair in Miami has so far been unsuccessful. However, hopes are high that this can be accomplished in the near future.

The male on loan to Oklahoma City, from the National Zoo, was residing in the New York Zoo for several years and showing no interest in breeding their females. The group felt a new environment might stimulate the male into breeding and thus he was relocated. But, as of this date, no breeding has been attempted.