

# Two Many Horns

By Ken Stott, Jr.

can Black Rhinoceros, I'm convinced, can only be described as two horns eat deal of power and mind them. How mammals can discuss at length and attributes of the beyond me. In my perience, I've found it concentrate on anything upright and menacingly projects which rise from rhino's snout.

ing to conservationists, Rhino is definitely on se throughout most of this situation being due unscrupulous trophy and the unavoidable en- ts of civilization. For- unfortunately as the e, I've had no difficulty in finding the beasts, verse is equally true. set out to look for oryx nd have ended up with have aimed my camera and looked into the view discover a Rhino almost opening. I have fol- unrecognized bird call bush to meet a much ture face to face. In each I have retreated as rapid- ible.

rhino appears to be just as an animal as past have depicted him. He without provocation and it on the destruction of re which crosses his path.

usually attribute his an incomparably bad but other authorities

offer what seems to me a far more satisfactory explanation.

Rhinos possess notoriously bad sight with the result that they must remain constantly on the alert, depending almost entirely upon their senses of smell and hearing to discern the presence of a potential enemy. Any unknown sound or scent sends them into uncontrolled panic.

It is a strangely pathetic sight to see so large and well armored a beast wheeling frantically about as he attempts to locate the object of his distrust. He squeals and snorts in terror like some gigantic pig, scattering the omnipresent tick birds to every side. If, eventually, he detects the position of his antagonist, he charges full speed ahead towards it and, if not, he runs as fast as his stubby legs will carry him to cover, pushing down anything which stands in his path. Long after he has disappeared from view, his squeals and stampings and the breaking of brush may be heard.

That the Rhino is actually a mild tempered creature has been proven repeatedly by animal trappers who have captured and tamed adult specimens. H. R. Stanton, veteran East African trapper, describes the Rhino as the most responsive captive in his experience. It's all a matter of mutual understanding, he maintains. Stanton has on several occasions completely tamed an adult male Rhino in less than a month's time. Such a convert may be petted, cleaned, and oiled without danger to the keeper, so long as the Rhino



Long horns typify the forest-dwelling Black Rhino.

is treated gently and without haste.

Another factor which contributes to the menace of wild Rhinos is their daily routine. They are active at the hours of dawn and dusk and during the night, at which times they are most difficult to discern and thus to avoid. During the day they usually retire to thickets of thornbush or into the depths of the forest. Once they have entered dense vegetation, they become almost invisible. The nondescript gray of their leathery hides serves as excellent camouflage.

At dusk they emerge from retirement and proceed to the nearest stream or water hole. Upon arrival, they partake of their evening drink and the resulting sounds are scarcely indicative of good table manners. When the prolonged drinking period is finally over, a mud bath is in order. Very gingerly the Rhino lowers himself in the mud but once he is partially submerged he begins to wallow with gay abandon. Legs, head and tail are tossed in every direction as he rolls from side to side on his back. Suddenly, he stops, sits up on his haunches, and looks about him rather apologetically.

As daintily as before, he tip-toes from the mud to begin his nocturnal foraging.

The Black Rhino is a browsing animal. In the forest, his diet is prodigious and varied while in scrub growth he must be content with the brittle twigs and filmy leaves of stunted acacia trees, and similar plants.

Although the Black Rhino is commonly thought of as a denizen of plains and bush country, the species is very abundant in many of East Africa's mountain forests. The mountain Rhinos are usually finer specimens than their lowland brethren and their horns are longer and better developed.

Other than man, the Rhino has few enemies. One notable exception, or so legend has it, is the elephant. Professional big game hunters insist that the two are deadly foes and that the elephant invariably emerges victorious from any conflict. A Rhino, it is said, will never remain in the presence of an elephant. This seems questionable since on several occasions I have seen both drinking from the same watering place, with neith-

## Mission Completed

recently completed four month trip to Africa should provide Stott, Jr., the zoo's General Curator, with ample material for an extended supply of ZOONOOZ articles. *Two Many Horns*, the first to appear, was written in Kenya, British East Africa. The galley proofs and the author returned to the zoo simultaneously.

uring his trip, Mr. Stott visited twenty-three different countries, territories and protectorates. Although his chief task was that of contacting zoo, museum and game department personnel, he devoted as much time as possible to the observation of animals in their native habitat. His notes disclose that he encountered approximately one hundred species of mammals and one hundred species of birds. They also reveal that Africa has undergone a few changes during recent years.

transportation facilities and hotel accommodations are in general excellent, and the element of danger, so prominent in early days of African travel, is almost non-existent. The passage of time and the progress of man have placed Stanley's Africa and Africa poles apart.

slightest attention to

ns of a Rhino to other predictable. Sometimes drinks amidst a herd cies, apparently oblivious presence. On other obviously wants the itself and makes no it. One evening I Rhino charge into a ffalo scattering them ns, and another time ino and calf sent a Giant Forest Hogs way from a water hole. were not content to the Forest Hogs had done the forest clearing. the muddy pool was

does not hesitate to attack regardless of its have been overturned occasions and there records of Rhinos motives on the Kenya Railways line. aspect of a Rhino's to be found in the ex-

treme degree to which it fulfills its parental obligations. There is no more dutiful mother or father than a Rhino. The youngster remains with its parents until it is almost adult and perfectly capable of caring for itself. Even when it has become nearly as large as its elders, they regard it as a precious but completely helpless infant. Any cause for alarm and they move in front of it, daring any intruder to come one step nearer their beloved charge.

A Rhino infant is a most appealing child, but unfortunately, it rapidly outgrows its infancy. Once its horns begin their development, it becomes to all appearances, except size, an adult and its baby-hood vanishes.

A fully grown Rhino is undeniably a remarkable creature, even a handsome one in a monstrous, grotesque sort of way. However, in all honesty I cannot help but agree with whichever author it was who wrote that a Rhino is something only another Rhino could love.

and blinked at the sun shining on the water of the big pool. He could see his mother, diving under the water and coming up again just barely making the water ripple. Someday he will be able to swim like that. His mother is teaching him a little more every day.

He was hungry. He stretched his flippers in the air, rolled over, rubbed himself and started to call for his mother to come in out of the water to feed him. All mother fur seals know the voice of their babies but this mother fur seal didn't even have to listen twice because her baby is the only one in the pool. His little bark sounds like the baa-ing of a lamb who also wants his breakfast.

Mother pulled her beautiful sleek body up out of the water onto the high ledge. Then came a problem! There sat big brother seal right where she always fed her baby. He was sound asleep. Well, he would just have to move. She barked loudly at him but he didn't move. The baby bleated, but of course the big brother seal didn't hear him. Finally after much grunting and loud barking the big brother seal moved to the other side of the ledge.

The baby had his breakfast and then he began to doze.

He just couldn't keep his eyes open.

He was fast asleep!

Now and then he would roll over, yawn, stretch and go back to sleep.

Paul woke up just a little startled as if something were wrong. He could hear all of the other fur seals barking, and when he looked over the ledge—all of the water was gone from the pool. There was no water coming over the beautiful waterfall and all of the grown-up seals were walking around on their flippers at the bottom of the empty pool.

Paul was frightened and started crying for his mother. There were men walking around in the empty pool, too. One of them came toward the baby and tried to pick him up. The baby jumped around and wiggled and tried to get away. He could not jump off the ledge because it was too high and so the man caught him and carefully lifted him down into the empty pool. The little seal went as fast as his little flippers could carry him to his mother. She bent over him, barking softly, to see that he was all right and then she put him behind her against the wall. She was ready to protect her baby against anything.

The men had carried in a small platform with a post at one end.

They sat it down in the middle of the pool. Then they carried in a large crate. Sam, the seal keeper, moved around very quietly and the first thing you knew, the father seal had walked right into the crate. Paul couldn't see very well because his mother stayed right in front of him. Every time he tried to peek around her she would bark loudly at him and push him back.

Big brother seal was very excited. He kept running back and forth and once he sat down—right on Paul! The baby let out as loud a cry as he could with such a big seal sitting on him, and then he squirmed and squirmed until he wiggled out from under him. There he got a good view of what was going on. The father seal was in the crate and the crate was sitting on the little platform. Sam, the keeper, was having to hold tightly to the crate because the father seal was wiggling so much. Finally one man wrote something in a book, looked up and smiled.

"77½ pounds," he said.

The man carried the father seal in the crate to the high ledge and then opened the crate. There was a fence around the ledge now and the father seal could not get down into the pool. The men put the crate back in the empty pool and started to coax big brother into it. They had to go to the other side of the pool to get big brother, and so Paul flipped over to get a look at the crate. He nosed all around it, but not very long because Mother was barking loudly and pushing him back up to the corner.

Now big brother was in the crate on the platform and the man was saying,

"61½ pounds."

Then big brother was put with the father seal.

Things happened so fast after that, Paul wasn't sure what was going on. The first thing he knew his mother was in the crate and he was alone in the big empty pool. He cried and bleated and flipped back and forth across the pool.

"70 pounds" the man said and then they started toward the baby. Suddenly there were men all around him and the only place to go was into the crate. He hurried in and the door shut behind him. He couldn't get out and he couldn't see his mother. He did the only thing he knew how to do well. He cried and cried. Now he was on the small platform and he could hear the man say,

"19½ pounds."

## FEATURE

### *So Big!*

By Jane F. Ross

Every day is the same of Paul, the baby Seal at the Zoo. He ter the island in the ere his mother used ives in a big pool with father seal and a big Nothing Paul does is to the other seals—to his mother. Every the seals goes near mother barks loudly

and opens her mouth wide. If they touch him, she pushes them away with her body. Usually they do what the mother wants them to do and Paul is able to sleep where he wants and when he wants. As a matter of fact, like all babies, the little seal needs lots and lots of sleep so that he will grow to be strong and healthy.

So today seemed no different than any other day. The baby woke



by Paul, first Northern Fur Seal born in captivity.