



Bwana at Port Lympne (Photo: Berry White)

our elephant herd's only live calf in 1984, but tragically, due to inexperience, trampled it to death within minutes of its birth. This traumatic event took her several months to get over, and she spent many hours searching the paddock, calling and pining. We can only hope that she has learned from this experience, and that provided all goes well at the birth she will accept this calf and raise it to maturity. At the moment she chooses to spend a great deal of her time on her own, away from the rest of the herd. She seems content to keep herself to herself, only now and again spending time with Tanya, who we believe will become an attentive aunt to the calf.

Bindu had a very long musth this year, from 2nd March to 12th August. He mated Yasmin on 27th and 28th June, which coincided perfectly with her oestrous cycle, so hopefully we will have more good news from London in the near future.

RHINOS AND HOOFSTOCK

by Alan Luff

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On 14th October 1994 Parky, a proven black rhino bull, arrived from Chester Zoo, and after a short settling-in period, he was introduced to our home-bred female, Arusha. The pairing was quite successful and matings followed shortly. After several months of 'non-activity' between them, with many fingers crossed, Parky was taken out and paired with one of our original cows, Rukwa. Again several matings have occurred, and at the time of writing these two are still together. The other two new arrivals, from South Africa, are covered in a separate article by Berry White, as is the departure of Bwana Kidogo, our four-year-old homebred bull.

PORT LYMPNE



A herd of barasingha grazing at Port Lympne (Photo: Rod Williams)

March 3rd 1995, however, was a very sad day. Mama Kidogo – incidentally Parky's mother from when she was at Whipsnade – died after having a caesarian to remove a very small female calf. The calf unfortunately did not survive and the whole affair seemed a very unfitting way for Mama to end her days, after having reared many calves over her 34 years. Our home-bred male, Kingo, was the father of the calf, his first, and as a result of this Chester Zoo agreed to take Kingo on breeding loan to enable us to keep Parky for a little longer. Kingo took up residence at Chester on 21st July 1995.

After a team of specialists had scanned our female Sumatran rhino, Meranti, an operation to remove tumours in and around her uterus offered the only possibility that she would ever breed. Again specialist vets from Newmarket carried out the operation. Unfortunately, removal of the tumours was impossible and a complete hysterectomy was performed. Although she recovered remarkably from the anaesthetic and was actually taking some food within a very short time, her condition deteriorated rapidly through the night and despite vigorous veterinary efforts she died in the early hours of 4th November 1995. Plans to send Torgamba to a reserve in

Indonesia have unavoidably fallen through, so sadly at present he is living alone.

Happier times on the hoofstock front came with the birth of a female European bison on 26th November 1994 to a pair at Combe Farm. A female Brazilian tapir was born to Tom and Iriri on 23rd April 1995. This trio now live in the orchard previously occupied by Malayan tapirs. Our original breeding female of the Malayan species, Madina, was sent to Twycross Zoo on breeding loan. All looked promising after we learned that she had mated with their proven male, but shortly afterwards we were informed of her death due to heart-related problems. The two pairs of babirusa are well settled into their new woodland home near the gorilla pavilion, and hopefully the future holds many little babirusas.

Fourteen barasingha calves have been reared in the park and at Combe Farm. Numerous axis deer and several sambar have also been born. Six American bison calves have been born and reared to date; another calf unable to stand at birth was taken for hand-rearing but died with a gut infection. An adolescent bison bull and three calves from last year have gone to other collections, and one adult cow died