



INTERNATIONAL ZOO NEWS

INTERNATIONAL ZOO-NEWS

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WHIPSNADE ZOO
GREAT BRITAIN

RARE WHITE RHINO HERD

1970

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The Natal Parks, Game and Fish Preservation Board, the body responsible for the administration of the game reserves in Natal, where the impressive White Rhinoceros has been saved from extinction by years of careful management, has decided that the interests of conservation will be served by setting up, outside southern Africa, of viable breeding herds of this once rare species.

The stock of White Rhinos in Natal has been built up to over 1,000 in the Umfolozi and Hluhluwe Game Reserves and about 500 have been re-located in other parts of Africa; now that the species is relatively safe in its natural habitat, the time for establishing viable groups in other parts of the world has come.

Thus, after a visit to Europe by its Chief Conservator, Mr. Ian Player, the Natal Parks Board has designated the Zoological Society of London as the sole agent and distributor in Europe of White Rhinos from the areas under its control and the Society will:

- a. establish a breeding herd of approximately 20 White Rhinos at Whipsnade Park;
- b. hold additional White Rhino stock at Whipsnade Park, up to a maximum of 20 at any one time, for distribution to other zoological collections in Europe;
- c. keep full records of the White Rhinos held and distributed under this arrangement.

The Zoological Society of London is delighted to have been given this unique opportunity to further the conservation of this important species and in particular during 1970, European Conservation Year.

Whipsnade Park, an area of 500 acres of open paddocks and downland, has an excellent record in the zoo world for the breeding of hooved animals, including such species as the European Bison, Pere David's Deer and Przewalski Horse, all extinct in the wild, and other interesting species such as the Thomson's Gazelle and Musk Ox. At the present time about 80 % of the animals at Whipsnade were born in the Park itself, an all-round achievement which is made up of many individual breeding successes, such as the first Cheetahs to be bred and reared to maturity in a zoo.

30 acres of Whipsnade Park have been set aside initially for the reception of the White Rhino herd and plans are in hand for the paddocks and buildings for the animals. It is hoped that the Rhinos will arrive at Whipsnade Park during the summer.