

FRANZ A. RÆDELBERGER – VERA I. GROSCHOFF

and 70 wildlife photographers

present

AFRICAN WILDLIFE

in 250 photographs with 24 colourplates

ENGLISH VERSION BY NIETER O'LEARY AND PAMELA PAULET
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY BRUCE CAMPBELL

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As if from the darkness of primeval times, the horned colossi
step out into the flashlight of 20th-century photography.

White Rhinos (*Diceros simus*) in the 69,000-acre expanse of the
Umfalosi Reservation, Zululand, South Africa.





Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) with her young. This rhino cow subsequently lost her abnormally-formed four-foot-long horn in a fight with an over-passionate admirer.

34 species of rhinoceros, some as small as badgers and others 15 feet high have left their fossilised remains in the earth of four continents. All were victims of tremendous climatic changes as was the European woolly rhinoceros which died out after the last glacial period. Only five species remain in Africa and Asia, yet during the last 150 years *Homo sapiens* has almost driven them off the face of the earth. In India, Java and Sumatra only some 800 survive under the strictest protection. Rescue came to the African rhino at the eleventh hour. The White Rhinoceros of South Africa (see pages 50/51) suffered particularly. They were discovered by Boer hunters in 1812 and from then on "*Witrenoster*", as

they were called, were shot by the thousand. The sociable grass-eaters were an easy prey in the open plains between the Okavango, Zambesi and Orange Rivers. Barely a hundred head escaped the massacre. In 1897, their last refuge on the banks of the Umfalsi River was declared a nature reserve and they have since increased to six hundred head. But in 1907, the big game hunters found a new thrill when 20 degrees to the north, in the valley of the White Nile, another sub-species of white rhino was discovered. The small number left from the resulting intensive killing for "trophies" is now divided between the game reserves of the Sudan, Northern Congo and Uganda... but to-day hardly 3,000 White Rhinos remain.



A colossus weighing 1 1/2 tons on the move. This rhino bull lives in the Ngorongoro Crater, Tanganyika, which has been irresponsibly separated from the Serengeti National Park and ceded to Masai herdsmen.

The rarity of an animal is truly reflected by its catalogued price. A zoo will have to pay over £4,000 (\$12,000) for a White Rhinoceros, and a young Black Rhino will cost £1,200 (\$3,500). In Central and East Africa 11,000 to 13,500 Black Rhinos still exist thanks only to their way of life. In the thorny bush where they pluck leaves from the branches with their prehensile upper lip, these solitary browsers are better camouflaged than their gregarious grass-feeding relatives, the White Rhinos. It was much easier, and less dangerous, too, to take pot shots at the placid "*Witrenoster*" than to expose oneself to an easily angered Black Rhino. Nevertheless, the apparently large number

of these latter rhinos seems alarmingly small to far-sighted zoologists. This dwindling race is further decimated by Nature herself. They are extremely conservative in their choice of locality and keep to their trails between feeding and resting places, and to their water-holes, with such inflexibility that during periods of drought they would seemingly rather starve and die of thirst in whole groups than migrate to a more suitable habitat. In any event, wide rivers are an obstacle to these heavy beasts because they cannot swim far. However, mud-holes and shallow ponds are their delight, for there the turtles will rid their thick hides of the ticks with which ox-peckers could not deal.



A victim of organised poaching. The poisoned arrow can be seen on the shoulder of this Black Rhino. The "miracle working" horns have been removed with an axe.

In spite of the strictest conservation laws poachers still slaughter every year about a fifth of the rhinoceros herds. A birth rate of 5% cannot compensate for such losses. Rhinos are particularly threatened because both sexes carry the horns coveted by poachers, so that even pregnant cows, or those with young offspring, fall victim to wire nooses, traps and poisoned arrows. Negroes once hunted rhinos only for the flesh and leather. However, when the Asiatic rhinoceros was nearly exterminated, the search for the allegedly aphrodisiac horns spread to Africa. Black market groups comprising hunters, dealers and seamen were organised and even to-day a pound of rhino horn will fetch £ 4.15s (\$ 14) at the port of exit. How much more will the owners of harems eventually

pay for one ounce of this supposed love-potion? Even herdsmen as the Masai are tempted by the market demand to kill the *Kifaru*. The only possible way to stop poaching is to impose a collective fine — equal to a number of head of cattle — on the tribe so that the "business" no longer pays. In regions where rhinos are in danger, evacuation to safe reservations, after temporarily paralysing the animals with darts carrying anaesthetic, has been tried. But poachers soon reappeared and in their haste took only the horns, leaving the meat to rot. So rhinos have to die because of their ornament and weapon, a boneless structure of compressed hair, which is worth 3 ½ times as much as ivory, and which — if it could be removed from the living animal — would always grow again.



Before birth came death. The most brutal hunter must surely feel remorse when his bearers cut his victim open and reveal the unborn calf inside the mother.

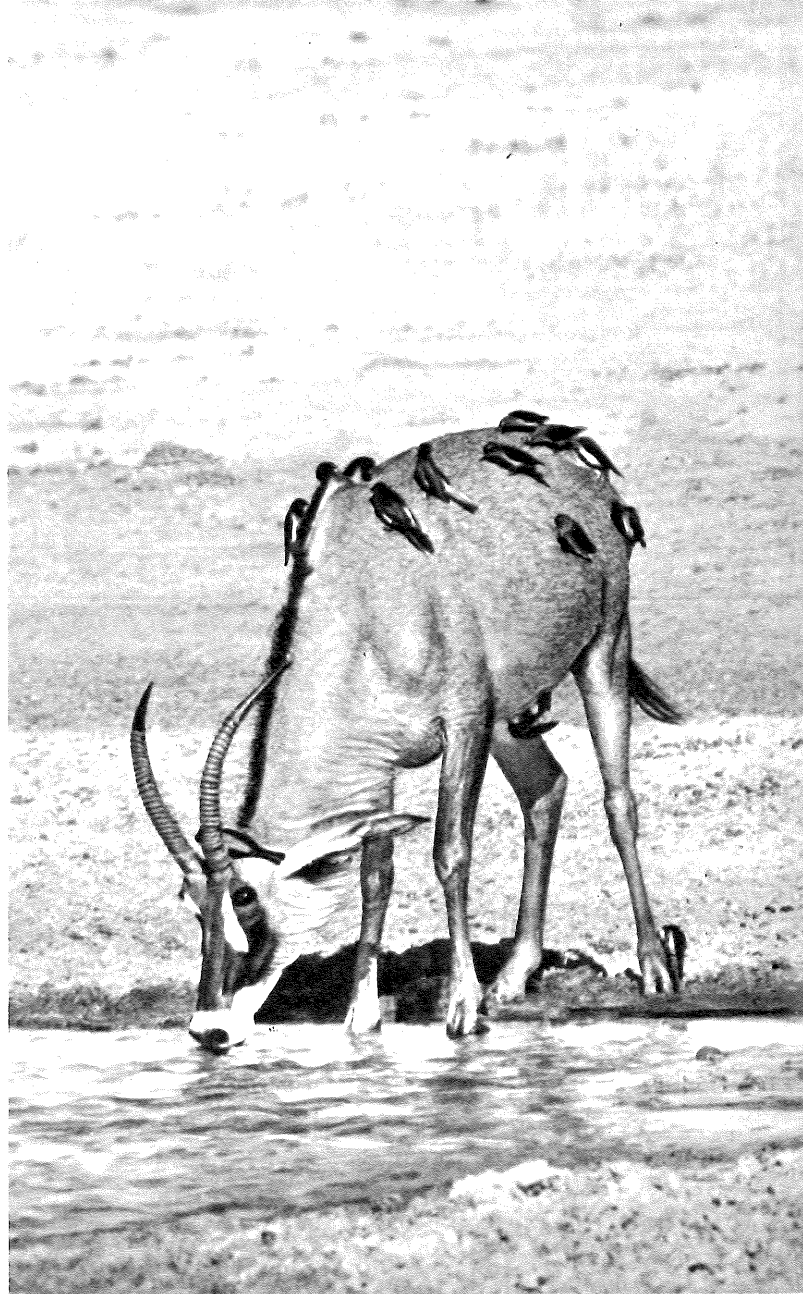
The easiest, but also the most tragic death is that of the unborn. Was it a rich white man who could afford the costly elephant hunting-licence, or was it a profit-hungry black poacher? Whether licensed or unlicensed, even unintentional killing of the unborn is a crime. — There have always been many different ways of hunting elephants, and the oldest were by no means the most humane, but through the centuries hunting Negroes hardly thinned the ranks of the huge pachyderms. In the Nile valley it was customary to dig deep traps across elephant paths and spread over them a deceptive covering of dung. The leading animal was thus made to believe that another herd had already passed in safety. By contrast the Njamnjam and other tribes, a thousand warriors strong, went out with drums

beating and set the savannah on fire to drive the grey giants together. But the true *elephant-eaters* live in Central Africa. They approach to dangerously close quarters and cut the sinews of the hind legs with sharp bush knives. This, of course, is justified only if the fallen colossus is killed immediately to feed an entire starving village. Of greater cruelty is the uncontrolled *modern* method of a wire noose from which the elephant often struggles free only to stagger round with deep suppurating wounds. Yet the scorned native poachers cannot understand why the white man penalises them since he himself set the example for mass murder when, between 1889 and 1909, he exported 7,000 tons of ivory from the Congo region alone, and even in 1946 still exported a further 274 tons.

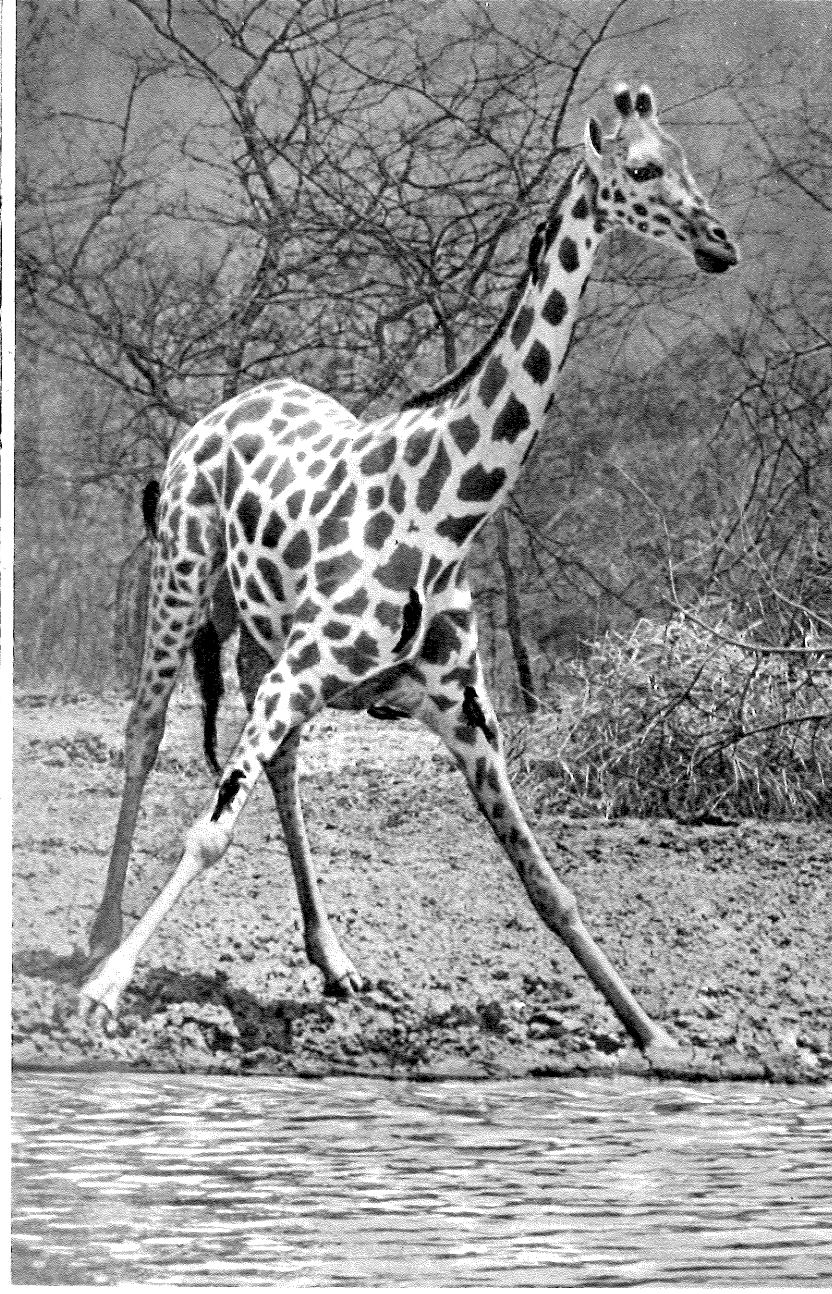


Ten oxpeckers cling to a Sable Antelope (*Hippotragus niger*) ... and twelve more climb about on a Roan Antelope. (*H. equinus*).

Never a Sable Antelope without tick birds! These vigorous ungulates, inhabitants of the bush, live among thorny shrubs where innumerable ticks fall on their backs. Thus they seem to be the favourite host of the oxpeckers. The most common are the grey-brown Roan Antelopes which live in the south, east and west in the security of the sparsely wooded uplands where, with bizarre faces they snuffle around under the cover of thorn and shrub. Also the proud black Sable-buck does not like to lead his herd of dark brown females across open ground. Because the black silhouette with the yard-long horns strikes the eye too easily, this magnificent specimen of East African bush fauna is now alarmingly rare.



On the coastal hills inland from Mombasa, the Sable Antelopes made themselves very unpopular by eating pine seedlings in the new forest areas of the Shimba Hills. But Nature herself has settled the argument between foresters and animal conservationists, for the seedlings which were imported from Australia do not thrive in Kenya. Bulldozers had already cleared large areas of bush-land for the new forests to grow, but now the antelopes can have back their dispoiled homeland. — Will Angola protect the remaining Giant Sable Antelopes who have found refuge on the high plateau of Cuanza, before the last world-record horns, nearly two yards long, are hung up on someone's wall?



Also this young Niger Giraffe has "visitors" ... and the Black Rhino is being treated at the same time by a tick bird and a cattle egret.

Every symbiosis stems from the initiative of the weaker partner, as here for example, from the friendly importunity of the yellow or red-beaked tick birds (*Buphaginae*). Agile as woodpeckers they creep up and down their "flesh-and-blood trees" and warn the herd of danger by their loud twitterings. With their strong feet and supporting tails they even hold on to their hosts when at full gallop. If the patients sometimes cringe with pain they know full well that the little "medical orderlies" are being helpful when they peck under the skin to get food for themselves and their brood. With precise blows from their beaks the birds puncture the suppurating boils which en-



close the pupae of the warble-fly larvae. They pick all the parasites out of the wound and even drink the pus and sanies. Expertly they remove ticks as large as kidney beans which, after a long period of waiting on some tree branch, have gorged themselves with the blood of their host. When the birds extended their attentions to domestic animals, too, the farmers were at first horrified by these "nature surgeons". They were afraid that healing wounds would be opened up again and re-infested. However, careful investigation has proved that 95% of the ticks found in the stomachs of birds were disease carriers... so the tick-birds are, indeed, guardians of good health.