

JOHN HANKS M.A., Ph.D.

**mammals of
southern africa**



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to provide the visitor to the wildlife areas of southern Africa with a simple guide to the principal mammals that can be found there. In no way is it intended to be a comprehensive guide, as many of the small terrestrial mammals and most of the bats have been excluded.

Throughout this book, technical terms have been kept to an absolute minimum. The descriptive notes for each animal emphasise only the more obvious diagnostic features which can be recognised in the field, and where applicable a short note describes how similar species can be distinguished. Information on the habits of the individual animals should be read as an additional aid to identification.

The countries covered by this book are South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, S.W. Africa/Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. The distribution maps show the approximate range

for each species within this area. The distribution and abundance of many of the large mammals in southern Africa is changing almost daily. For example, the human population explosion is resulting in the destruction of suitable habitats and a consequent reduction in range for several species, whereas translocation operations are extending the range of some of the other mammals and re-establishing them in suitable habitats.

This book has been designed as a convenient field guide, and the animals have been placed together in easy-to-recognise groups so that a newcomer to the field should have no difficulty in identifying most species.

Black Rhinoceros

(Hook-lipped rhinoceros)
Diceros bicornis

Recognition

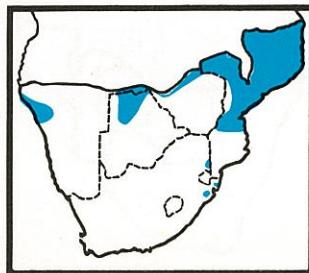
Massively built three-toed mammal with a slightly concave back, and with two horns arising from the skin on the snout (both sexes), the front horn being the longer of the two. Almost completely hairless. Uniform body colour of grey or dark grey. The head is frequently carried high, showing the prehensile pointed upper lip. Females usually have longer and more slender horns than males. Shoulder height about 150 cm.

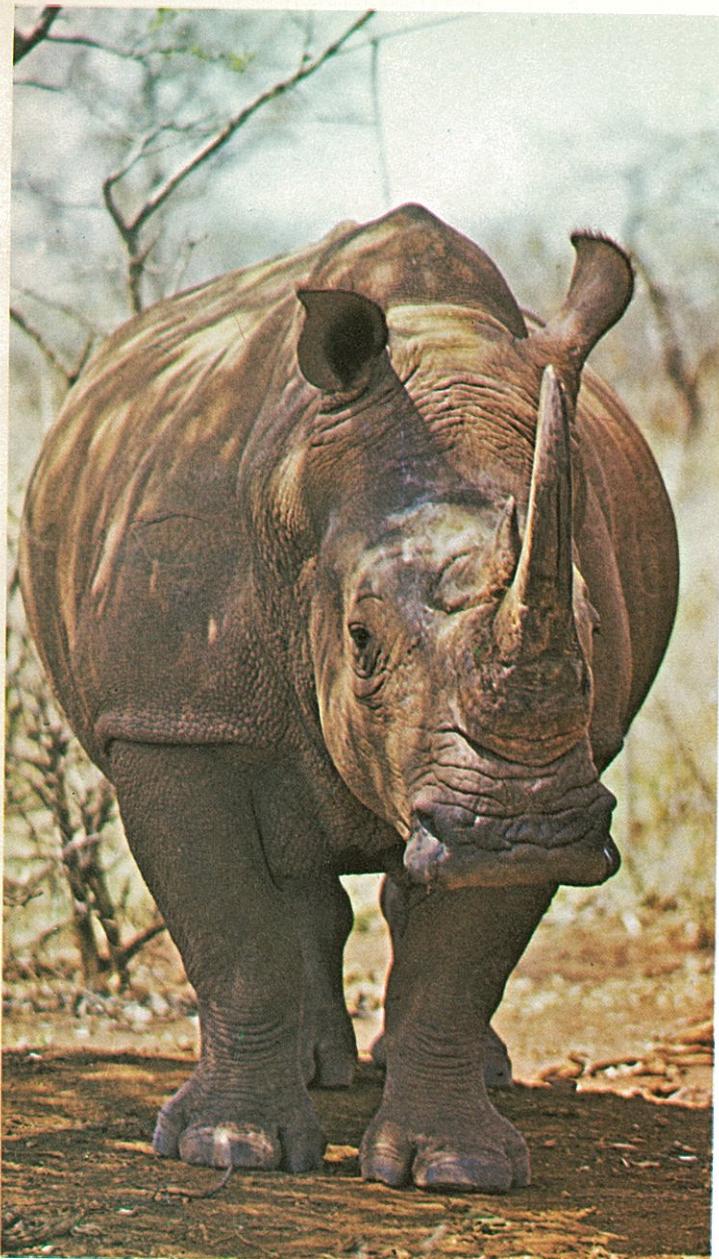
Habits

Usually solitary, or in a pair consisting of a cow and her calf. Black rhino browse on a variety of plant species using their prehensile pointed upper lip to grasp the vegetation. Often seen near mud wallows. When on the move, the young follow the mother. Single young per birth.

Similar species

The white rhino is a larger animal, with a square upper lip and a pronounced hump on the neck. The head in the white rhino is carried low, and the young usually precedes the mother.





White Rhinoceros

(Square-lipped rhinoceros)
Ceratotherium simum

Recognition

Massively built three-toed mammal with a distinct hump on the neck, the middle of the back slightly arched, and with two horns arising from the skin on the snout (both sexes), the front horn being the longer of the two. Almost completely hairless, with a uniform body colour of grey or dark grey. The head is usually carried low, and it has a distinct square muzzle. Shoulder height about 180 cm. The white rhino have been translocated to many parts of southern Africa, often being introduced into regions where they did not occur naturally. The map shows their distribution in 1960 before the major translocation programmes were initiated.

Habits

Rather more gregarious than the black rhino, forming temporary associations of up to 15 individuals. White rhino are exclusively grazers, using their wide square lips to graze close to the ground. When on the move, the young usually precedes the mother. Single calf per birth.

Similar species

See black rhino.

