

All the evidence available points to the fact that the rhinoceros is the most vulnerable animal in Kenya and in greater danger of extinction than any other species.

The Kenya Wild Life Society welcomes the measures now being taken by the Kenya Game Department, particularly

the trapping and removal of rhino from those areas such as the Makueni area of the Machakos district where human rights must prevail, to other areas where they will be protected.

The Society will give the Department all the support and assistance it can to carry out this most vital project.

THREAT TO ...

BLACK RHINO IN EAST AFRICA

by : G. H. SWYNNERTON

THE Black Rhinoceros is primarily an animal of thornbush country. Though it occurs in other habitats it is never as numerous here as it is in thornbush.

An examination of a vegetation map of Tanganyika reveals that thornbush is the predominant vegetation type in northern Tanganyika, with arms penetrating the central regions of the territory along some of the major water courses, progressively giving way to other vegetation types in the southern areas.

The Black Rhinoceros occurs in greater numbers in northern Tanganyika and, in direct ratio to the progressive diminution of thornbush as one proceeds south, becomes less common until it must be accounted a rare animal in southern Tanganyika, where they have been given full protection since 1940.

This was the situation before the beginning of the present century. During the past 50 years, and particularly since the end of the second world war, an increasingly heavy toll of the rhinoceros population has been taken by visiting hunters to provide trophies, and by resident hunters to supply horns which are converted into cash.

This deterioration in the situation has been appreciated by Government and regulations of increasing severity have been introduced to protect the rhinoceros as its numbers have diminished. In 1921, at a cost of £3 for a temporary licence, a hunter was allowed to shoot one rhinoceros and 103 other animals, or two rhinoceros and 266 other animals on a full licence at a cost of £15. In 1928

rhinoceros were removed from the temporary licence and in 1929 an additional fee of £7. 10s. was imposed for hunting rhinoceros in the Northern Province.

Temporary game licences were revoked in 1934 and replaced by minor licences on which no rhinoceros were included. In the same year the number of rhinoceros allowed on a full game licence was reduced to one, though hunters were allowed to shoot a second rhinoceros at an additional cost of £5.

In 1940, rhinoceros were removed from the ordinary game licences and were available only on a special licence, two being permitted in the course of a year at £10 each. The number was dropped to one in 1955 and the fee payable by a visitor to Tanganyika was raised to £25. Fees were again raised in 1957 to £15 for a resident and £40 for a visitor and in 1958 to £40 and £80 respectively, at which figures they now stand. Further, the controlled area hunting system has been introduced and the intensity of hunting has been related to the availability of animals.

Why, then, it may be asked, is the rhinoceros population on the decrease? There are three answers to this question.

First, the demand for rhinoceros by visitors who are willing to pay £80 for a single animal has increased, and, outside controlled areas, there is no limit to the number of licensed hunters that may hunt rhinoceros.

Secondly, increasing numbers of people are prepared to run the negligible risk of detection for shooting rhinoceros either within or outside

a game sanctuary. The demand for rhinoceros horn is great and the price that is offered is high.

Thirdly, rhinoceros, of all the species of game animals in Tanganyika, is the least capable of adapting itself to intensive hunting and of taking avoiding action. Other animals, such as the buffalo, will retreat to swamps and forests when their numbers are reduced, returning into the open under cover of darkness. The rhinoceros will not. It has poor eyesight and an inquisitive nature and will approach the object that disturbs it to see what it is, often with a great deal of blustering and snorting, rather than take cover. The result is that many rhinoceros are shot in self-defence, either real or imagined.

It is the task of the Game Departments to protect animals against the ravages of unscrupulous, unlicensed hunters. 30 years ago a staff of 11 game rangers and 75 game scouts was sufficient to keep in check the hunting proclivities of a large proportion of a population that had fresh in its mind the strict but effective rule of an earlier administration.

At the present time such a task strains to the limits the ability of a Department with eleven game rangers, not only to supervise effectively the activities of its subordinate staff but also to keep tabs on the situation in even the best game areas. As a result poaching is widespread and the chance of picking up a pair of rhinoceros horns once they have entered the "black market" is remote.

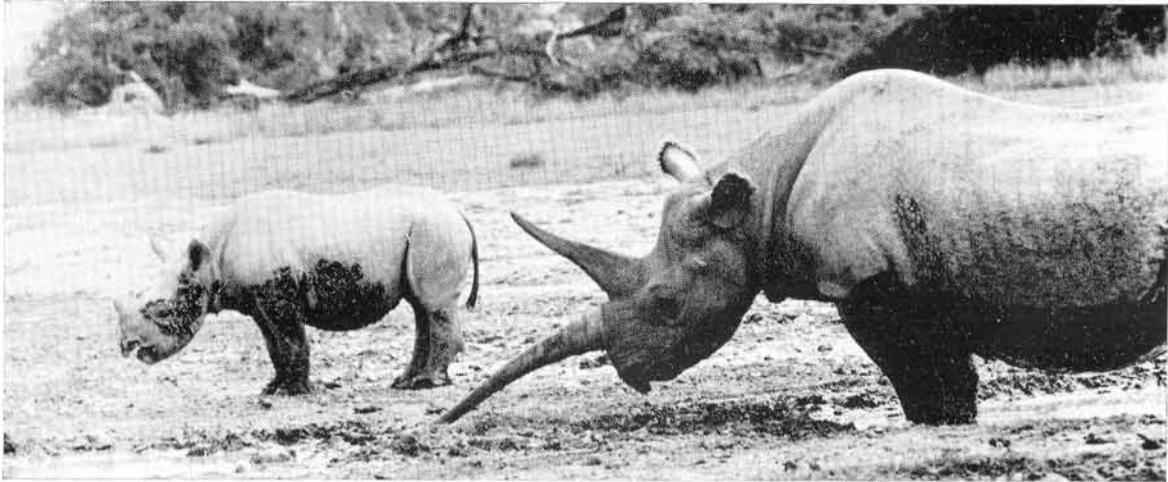
The drain on the rhinoceros population in

Tanganyika, other than in the Serengeti National Park and in game reserves, has been such that the species will soon be placed on the list of animals nearing extinction unless improved protective measures are introduced. Four measures to improve the situation suggest themselves

- (a) the fees charged for licenses may be increased; such a step has the obvious objection that those hunters who hunt within the law may be debarred from taking out a licence; the illicit traffic in rhinoceros horn will not be affected;
- (b) higher penalties may be imposed for offences concerning rhinoceros. Provision for this is contained in the amending Ordinance recently passed by the Legislative Council, which allows a maximum fine of Shs. 20,000/- and/or two years imprisonment to be imposed.
- (c) rhinoceros may be declared royal game; this measure has the same objection as in (a), above. The unlicensed hunter would not be prevented from hunting. Nonetheless this measure could do nothing but benefit the situation.
- (d) the senior staff of the Game Department may be increased. Such a step would be the most likely to effect an improvement in the situation and would benefit not only rhinoceros but all other species of wild life.

It is considered that measure (c), mentioned above, should be implemented at once and that measure (d) should follow as soon as there is an improvement in the financial situation of





the territory. Only if strong action is taken will the rhinoceros be saved from extinction.

KENYA CONTROL MEASURES

by N. Sandeman

The Game Department of Kenya is well aware of the serious reduction in numbers suffered by rhinoceros in recent years and the urgent need to provide adequate protection to this species.

The increase in the cost of rhino licences from Shs. 400/- to Shs. 800/- brought into force on April 1st 1958, reduced the number of licences issued from 204 in 1957 to 130 in 1958 but this has not proved sufficient protection. Consequently, towards the end of 1958, Game Wardens were asked to state what degree of protection rhino—and other species as well—should receive in the hunting blocks for which they are responsible. As Game Department Headquarters are unable to operate a comprehensive system of quotas for all hunting blocks Game Wardens were asked to make their recommendations under three headings :

- (i) Blocks where protection should be complete, i.e. no hunting of rhino permitted;
- (ii) Blocks where semi-protection should be imposed, i.e. only one out of every pair of hunters in a safari should be permitted a rhino licence; and
- (iii) Blocks where no special protection is required.

The following summarises the Game Warden's recommendations. Some of these are already in force, and others will be implemented at once.

Total Number of Hunting Blocks	Blocks granted Complete Protection	Blocks granted Semi-Protection	Blocks where no special Protection will be given
60	37	16	7

Excluded from the above are Forest Controlled Areas for it is felt that the extremely difficult conditions under which hunting takes place in the forests gives the considerable number of rhino to be found there all the protection they need.

The risk that complete protection in a large proportion of blocks would concentrate hunting for rhino where it is still permitted, and thus lead to a further deterioration of the overall position, is removed by affording semi-protection to all areas other than those where protection is complete and by imposing a 7-day interval between the departure of a safari from a block and the entry of the next hunting party.

It may seem a little incongruous to apply protection now in Machakos District where until recently rhino could be hunted on cheap licences but, although rhino will eventually have to be removed completely from the two areas concerned because of necessary human settlement it is hoped that before this becomes necessary the use of "capture drugs" with which experiments are now being carried out will enable some, at least, of these doomed rhino to be removed elsewhere. Two trappers have been given permission to capture rhino in certain parts of Machakos District on condition that one out of every pair captured is transported to and released in the Northern Frontier Pro-

VANISHING RHINO

The one-horned rhinoceros, royal beast of Nepal, is facing extinction.

Poachers have been killing the rhinoceros for the sake of its single horn, which alone fetches between £400 and £1,000.

It is ground into a powder and widely used as an aphrodisiac and antidote to poison by the Chinese, Burmese, and Siamese.

In addition, rhinoceros blood is highly valued as a medicine.

The skin and horn are used to make vessels for Hindu worship.

Game experts believe that there are now fewer than 100 rhinoceros left in the forests of Nepal, on the Indian border—once the most famous big game hunting country in the world.

The giant one-horned rhinoceros, which is 14 ft. long and stands 6 ft. high at the shoulders, once roamed all over South-East Asia.

To-day it is found only in Nepal and in North-Eastern India.

The beast's main hope of survival is in Assam, where 250 of them are under protection in the game sanctuary.

The royal family in Nepal is particularly disturbed at the threatened extinction of the rhinoceros. It has long been the tradition for Nepalese royal and princely families to offer up rhinoceros blood to ensure a safe passage to heaven for their ancestors.

King Mahendra, the present ruler, recently organised a rhinoceros hunting expedition in south-west Nepal, to perform a libation of rhino blood in memory of his father, King Tribhuvan.

Nepalese authorities have taken strong action to try to protect the rhinoceros.

Game wardens have orders to shoot poachers at sight, and any poacher who is caught is liable to sentence of life imprisonment. Its habits have made it an easy prey for the poacher.

When it leaves its jungle shelter to browse among the 20 ft. high grass and reeds of marshy country in search of food, it is guided on its return by its own smell. Poachers merely have to dig pits to trap it, or lie in wait with guns.

(Reproduced from a U. K. Newspaper.)

vince. It is also hoped by the use of these drugs to capture rhino of breeding or near breeding age.

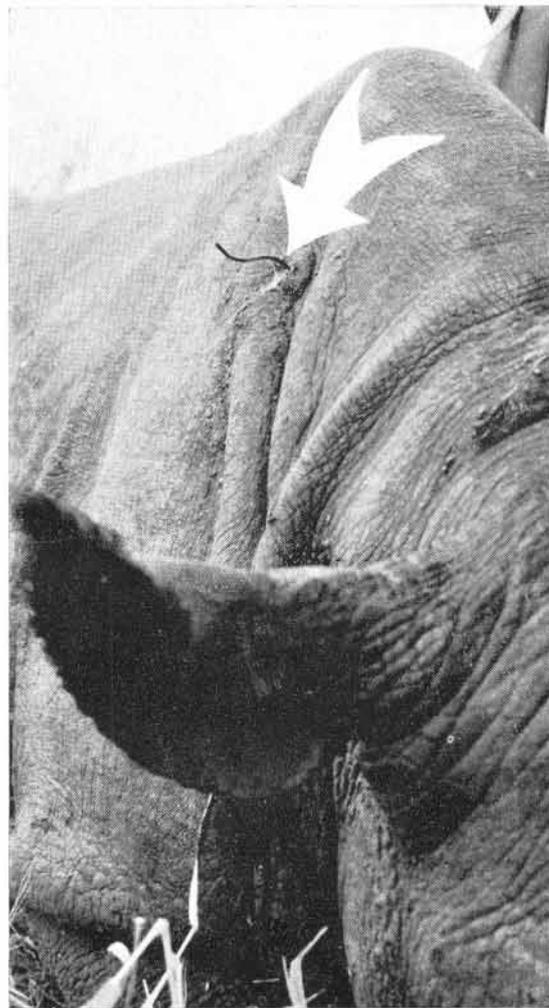
There are various ways in which protection can be given to a species :

- (a) By making a species Royal Game;
- (b) By assessing the licence fee at a high level;
- (c) By affixing conditions to Controlled Area Permits.

(a) Making a species Royal Game is the highest degree of protection that can be given but it is not considered that in the case of Rhino this is either desirable or necessary. The question of making female rhino Royal Game is a difficult one.

(Continued on page 56)

Below: Poaching takes a heavy toll of rhino. This animal shot by a game warden had the shaft and head of a poisoned arrow still embedded in its shoulder.



AMBOSELI

(Continued from previous page)

Is there any possibility of sufficient water arriving to start refilling the dry Lake Amboseli? Very, very much more water has to arrive before any permanent water will appear on this Lake. The amount at present observed would be sufficient, when canalised, to bring water to the fringe of the Lake, but it could make no impression on the Lake itself. The Lake was a true lake when this area had very much more rainfall than it does at present. What is now being observed is probably the result of a very small climatic change, aided possibly by a minor seismic disturbance, but certainly no more than this.

In an area where water has been a problem difficult of solution for decades, even a minor change is very welcome.

These observations are one facet of the hydrologic studies carried out in this area. Finding groundwater has been successful although the main problem is finding water which is not highly mineralised and thus useless to man and beast.

Books – to inform you about AFRICA

**THE TRIBES
THE CUSTOMS
LANGUAGES**

**Histories, Geographies,
Stories and Folk Tales**

**IN ENGLISH AND ALL THE
MAIN VERNACULAR LANGUAGES**

Send your enquiries to:

THE E. S. A. BOOKSHOP
BOX 30167, NAIROBI, Kenya
Branch shops at: Eldoret, Kisii, Kisumu,
Mombasa.

FLAMINGOES

(Continued from page 12)

Lesser Flamingo colony in the same detail, and this is an objective for the future. There is of course much else to be learned about both species of flamingo here, such as how long they live (possibly 20 years is my most recent guess), what causes them to move about from one lake to another, what triggers off the breeding cycle, and so on. The ringing station which has been set up on Lake Nakuru may help to elucidate some of these problems, and we need a body of interested investigators, knowledgeable about algae, the analysis of water, and other abstruse matters, so that in the end we can piece together what remains to be learned about these extraordinary and beautiful birds.

★ ★ ★

BLACK RHINO

(Continued from page 17)

cult one to which consideration is being given. (b) In Kenya, where the fees for Special Licenced animals such as rhino are the same for a visitor as for a resident, it is not practicable to raise fees to a level high enough to give effective protection without making it impossible for the resident sportsman to hunt rhino. What is aimed at is to assess a fee at which commercialisation of the trophies becomes unprofitable but which is not so high that the genuine sportsman cannot afford the licence fee.

The following figures show that this policy has proved successful. Resident hunters are affected by price changes but in general visiting hunters are not. In 1957 the fee for a rhino licence was Shs. 400/-. In that year 127 rhino licences were issued to visitors and 67 to residents. In 1958 the fee was raised to Shs. 800/- and 114 licences were issued to visitors and 16 to residents, of the latter only 4 were issued after the fee was raised.

(c) Affixing conditions to Controlled Area Permits is the simplest, quickest and most flexible way of giving protection. It requires the passing of no legislation, and no gazetting of notices. Protection can be imposed to any degree considered necessary and to any locality or part of a Controlled Area immediately it becomes evident that some additional protection is required.