

The Rhino Print

August 2009



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Asian Rhino Project



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Hello and welcome to the August 2009 Newsletter

Of major concern this quarter is the threat to the Javan rhino in Vietnam with a power station being planned for the areas surrounding the rhino habitat. See story on page 3. The ARP is working hard to bring attention to the harm this station may bring to the survival of the already small and highly compromised population of Javan rhino, not to mention the other species within the area. Stay tuned for further information.

Patron Peter Hall has announced a further commitment to Asian rhino projects to the sum of \$280,000! \$270,000 of this is earmarked as part of our commitment to the Indonesia programs supported by ARP through our partners the International Rhino Foundation. See more on page 4.

ARP committee has been busy completing the end of financial year requirements – thanks so very much to Lorraine Dunn and Petra Hancock whose roles are so very important and tedious during this process. Also to Evelyn Wong of Meranti Consulting and Kevin Judge of Judge Constable chartered Accountants for completing the yearly financial reports and audits.

Please note that the ARP Annual General Meeting is scheduled for 12 October 2009. It will be held in Perth once again due to most of our members residing there. We hope to see you there – please come and show your support if you can.

Kind Regards,

Kerry Crosbie
Project Director

*Cover image: Indian Rhinoceros
By Brooke Squires*

Javan Rhino, Vietnam: More Concern!

Of major concern this quarter is the threat to the Javan Rhino in Vietnam, with a power station being planned for the areas surrounding the rhino habitat. The ARP is working to bring attention to the harm this station may bring to the survival of the already small and highly compromised population of Javan rhino, not to mention the other species within the area. Below is a media release published by Rhishja Larson in July 2009.

Last Population of Javan Rhino Subspecies Struggling Against Extinction in Vietnam

Written by Rhishja Larson Published on 15 July 2009. Posted in About Animals (www.newsfromplanetearth.com)

Inside Cat Tien National Park, Vietnam, a rare subspecies of the critically endangered Javan Rhino still survives. Once thought to be extinct, it is estimated that there are only 3-5 of these delicate creatures left in the world. The Cat Tien rhinos have endured ruthless slaughter for their horns and annihilation of their habitat. Now there is yet another threat to their tenuous chances of continued survival.

Plans to build a power plant at the edge of the rhinos' habitat have been approved by the Lam Dong administration. The plant's dam will be slightly less than two miles from the Javan Rhino reserve. An estimated 1,000 tons of explosives will be used for clearing forested areas near the reserve. Construction is expected to take three years.

And even clean energy - such as wind turbines - can have adverse affects on surrounding wildlife (and humans), if not properly sited.

Blasting the forest with explosives, shaking the earth with heavy construction equipment- no matter what "benefits" the end result is purported to have - certainly raises questions about environmental responsibility.

And what about the fact that this activity will be taking place at the edge of a National Park that is home to 40 species on the IUCN Red List? According to wildlife experts expressing concern for the Javan Rhinos in Cat Tien at a conference in Dong Nai:

"The animals are so busy trying to avoid humans that they do not reproduce, something at which they are not good at to begin with.

A "perfect storm" of habitat destruction

In addition to rampant poaching, this Vietnamese subspecies (*Rhinoceros sondaicus annamiticus*) of Javan Rhino has suffered some of the most extensive habitat loss of the five remaining rhino species.

Any one of these factors could wipe out a species - yet this rhino has endured a "perfect storm" of large-scale environmental disasters:

Agent orange (a defoliator) during the Vietnam War. Half of southern Vietnam's mangroves and 14 percent of its hardwood forests were destroyed; bamboo and grassland areas have still not grown back.

Human settlements encroaching on the park. Resettlement has not been done as planned, resulting in continued exploitation of the forest.

Expansion of commercial interests resulting in deforestation. The rhinos have been pushed into undesirable regions by illegal logging activities.

Poaching of endangered wildlife remains a threat in Cat Tien National Park

Unfortunately, the 40 species on the IUCN Red List in Cat Tien National Park are lucrative prey for poachers and locals who are hunting illegally. Inside the park, forestry protection services find thousands of traps each month - set by local people. Earlier this year, wardens discovered dozens of illegal wildlife shops in Lam Dong Province - which have apparently been operating unabated for many years.

Total Javan Rhino population: Less than 60

In addition to this Vietnamese subspecies of Javan Rhino, there is an Indonesian subspecies (*Rhinoceros sondaicus sondaicus*). Currently, the last 50 or so of the Indonesian subspecies are found in only one location - Ujung Kulon National Park, Indonesia. These rhinos are under constant guard by Rhino Protection Units. IRF says that translocation plans are in progress to establish a second population of Javan Rhinos to ensure their survival.

All five species of rhino are under current and constant threat of poaching for their horns, which fetches top dollar in the thriving illegal wildlife markets of China and other parts of Asia.

Despite scientific evidence which points to the contrary, cultural beliefs surrounding medicinal properties of the horns persist - resulting in a 90% decrease in worldwide rhino population since 1970.



ARP Patron Peter Hall meeting a young Black Rhino at the IRF Board meeting held at White Oak Conservation Centre, Florida USA.

Another Mighty Commitment from ARP Patron Peter Hall

Peter recently announced a further commitment to Asian rhino projects to the sum of \$280,000! It is without a doubt that Peter would have to be considered a true hero in the rhino conservation world with his continued generosity and commitment to the conservation of these incredibly endangered animals. Thanks so very much Peter!

\$270,000 of this is earmarked as part of our commitment to the Indonesia programs supported by ARP through our partners the International Rhino Foundation. These funds will be used to support Rhino Protection Units throughout Sumatra and Java,

the Rhino Conservation Medicine Program assisting the SRS and other rhino programs across the world, technical support of rhino specialist Dr Bibhab Talukdar, IUCN Asian Rhino Specialist group Chairman and IRF Indonesia Program Manager and the Javan Rhino Second Habitat/Population Program in Ujung Kulon National Park, Java.

The remaining \$10,000 will contribute to the day to day management of the ARP ensuring that funds raised through ARP efforts are channeled directly to projects on the ground.

Communities join patrols to protect Vietnam's Javan Rhinos

Eight local community members of Cat Loc, Cat Tien National Park, have joined the Forest Protection Department in conducting the first joint enforcement patrol into the rhino's core habitat this month, thanks to support from ARP.

Three such teams will patrol Cat Loc on a monthly basis for the next year, to remove snares set to trap

many different large and small mammals, including Gaur, Bear, Muntjac and Wild Pig.

Snares pose a significant risk to the fragile population of Javan rhino at Cat Loc; these intensive patrols will allow their removal from this important area and bring about an overall increase in protection for all of Cat Loc's wildlife.

International Rhino Foundation Update

Indonesia Bowling for Rhinos Trip

I've recently returned from Indonesia, leading the Bowling for Rhinos incentive trip. The trip was a great success, with visits to Bukit Barisan Selatan, Way Kambas and the SRS, and Ujung Kulon National Parks. In addition to the third and the tied fourth place winners from Detroit, Miami, and Tulsa Zoos, we also invited one of the AAZK board members, Bob Cisneros from San Diego, as well as Sophie Lourandos from the Asian Rhino Project (Perth Zoo).

Javan Rhinos

We just completed the survey for a potential second habitat for Javan rhinos. With funding from IRF, WWF and ARP, IRF hired Dr. Andy Gillison, a world-renowned rapid habitat assessment expert to co-lead the survey with Widodo Ramono from YABI.

A small team, including representatives from the Indonesia Scientific Authority, Ujung Kulon NP, YABI RPUs, WWF-Indonesia, as well as our own Bibhab Talukdar, first collected baseline data on a series of representative transects in Ujung Kulon, followed by intensive data collection on transects in Gunung Honje and in Gunung Halimun NP.

Other team members conducted parallel work including sociocultural assessments and geo-referencing of transect data.

The Bowling for Rhinos trip overlapped a portion of the survey, so we had opportunity for dialogue and to see transects laid out and the methodology applied first-hand. The final report should be completed in the next week or so.

Greater One-Horned Rhinos

In Manas National Park, a total of 8 km has been fenced in the Basbari range, with further plans to extend the fence east to cover areas in the Bhuyapara range. The fence construction was delayed a bit because of pre-fencing activities that needed to be carried out with local villagers to garner their support. About 70% of the villagers were in favor of the fence but also expressed concern because their cattle and buffalo normally fed in Manas' grasslands.

Our on-the-ground partners are working with the communities to shift in-park grazing to a system of stall feeding. Villagers have also promised to provide help in constructing and maintaining the electric fence. A few villagers from the eastern side (where fence is not initially planned) also have attended meetings and requested that the fence be extended into their areas. In the meantime, additional translocations from Pabitora and Kaziranga are planned from October–December.

Article: Susie Ellis, International Rhino Foundation

EPRC-II Project Update: In the News

The activities of EPRC-II–Co-Action Nepal and Asian Rhino Project were covered by Nepal's most popular daily newspaper, Kantipur Daily, on 31 May 2009. Here is the English translation of the news.

Construction of wallowing ponds and grassland for rhinoceros has started in the community forests around Chitwan National Park. The community forests are the natural habitat for more than a dozen rhinos.

Gyaneshwar community forest, Setidevi community forest and Majhuwa community forest in Western Chitwan started this program to provide suitable habitat for the rhinos. The program is running with the support of Asian Rhino Project and Co-Action Nepal, a local NGO working for rhino conservation.

"We support the construction of grasslands and ponds in the forests to provide favourable shelter for the rhinos in the community forests and to improve rhino-human relationship," said Mr. Deepak Acharya,

an executive director of Co-Action Nepal. "It also needs to protect community forests for rhino conservation."

Local people and members of the users groups have been involved in grassland management and pond construction. The community forests cover around 500 hectares of land and are flourishing as the rhino corridor. The pond construction and grassland management works will be completed in mid-June.

"Work has been delayed because we needed deep wells so as to continuously provide water to the pond," said Surbir Pokhrel, president of Gyneshwar Community forest. Locals and users group members have committed to protect and manage the ponds and grasslands.



Left: Andalas and Ratu interact while feeding across the fence in the central area. Right: Incisor induced trauma to Ratu's forehead region following a breeding introduction with Andalas.

RCMP Indonesia Report: 8 July – 25 July 2009

Indonesia: Sumatran Rhinoceros

Review of SRS Reproductive Program

Recommendations made in March of 2009 by the Global Management and Propagation Board (GMPB) for captive Sumatran rhinoceros are being followed by the SRS team as indicated in the previous RCMP report. Additionally, the serial introductions of male and female rhinoceros across the fence in order to socialize Andalas with the three sanctuary females are generally proceeding well.

The only minor setback was a rather significant traumatic injury to the breeding female Ratu that was inflicted by Andalas using his long incisors. SRS Veterinarian Dr. Dedi Candra believes that this was not an intentional display of aggression by Andalas because the keeper staff who witnessed the injury reported that the cut was the result of Ratu quickly pulling her head up and away and in the process cutting herself on the male's sharp incisors.

There was no indication that Andalas was trying to be aggressive. On the contrary, the team reports that the daily introductions and socialization between Andalas and Ratu and Andalas and Bina/Rosa are proceeding very well.

Ratu was given a break from the introductions for most of May and part of June in order to facilitate healing of her wound, but that is now complete and introductions with Andalas and all three females has been happening on a daily basis.

Andalas Sedation and Removal of Sharp Points on Incisors via PowerFloat (14 July 2009)

Because of concerns over potential trauma to conspecifics during introductions for breeding purposes—either inadvertently from the female moving quickly or from the male using his sharp incisors as a weapon—we elected to file down Andalas's incisors. While these teeth were not especially long, they did have very sharp (knife like) edges that could inflict significant injury. The above photos of Ratu depict the damage that can happen (even if unintentional) during the often aggressive encounters that typify Sumatran rhino courtship behavior. If nothing else,



Before (left) and after (right) photos of Andalas' incisors that have been the source of trauma to conspecifics during introductions for breeding.



Left: Andalas and Ratu interact between the fence prior on a regular basis to help socialize the two and facilitate behavioral observations. Right: Bina showing overt signs of behavioral estrus and turning toward Andalas at the fence.

by filing (floating) these sharp incisors we will give the staff added confidence that they can let the introductions proceed without unnecessary human intervention so as to allow the rhinos to interact as normally as possible.

Torgamba Reproductive Assessment Plans

The a document has been prepared by the Global Management Propagation Board Reproduction Task Force for the proposed fertility assessment of Torgamba as a means to target possible treatments for this male. Although the document is still in draft form, the SRS team felt that they could begin collecting some initial data toward the goal of learning more about Torgamba's fertility or lack thereof. Some of the suggestions in the proposed document can be worked on immediately are:

1. Testing on Torgamba semen sample post-breeding (from samples collected from the female, if possible)
2. Collection of the first post-breeding urine sample from Torgamba to look for sperm contamination consistent with retrograde ejaculation
3. Vitamin A analysis of Torgamba's serum

The above tasks will be ongoing and will be reported to the task force as information is accumulated. The other suggestions will require additional expertise or support including the application of Doppler ultrasound as a tool to better evaluate the male reproductive tract.

General Rhino Health Update

All of the rhinos are healthy and in excellent body condition. Rhino body weights are steady other than Torgamba who shows a moderate trend in weight loss.

Torgamba Health Update

Despite a trend of weight loss, Torgamba's body condition remains excellent and his body weight in early July was near 700 kg. His foot problem is stable and appears to be resolving with routine care. All Tor's teeth look good and do not require floating at this time. Mild anemia and azotemia persist.

Andalas Health Update

Andalas is a large bull. He seems to have reached his adult body size. His blood results remain normal.

Rosa Health Update

There has been no change in Rosa. The paramphistome fluke eggs continue to be observed intermittently but are not causing apparent illness. A drug trial will be done next year as another student project. Rosa appears to be a mature adult female although she still is behaviourally unique in her adaptation to humans.

Bina Health Update

No change in Bina. She is healthy other than for intermittent problems with ocular cloudiness (edema) related to excessive exposure to UV radiation. All of the rhino paddocks have new shade structures in place to



Left: SRS staff at the new gate leading across the lane into the new breeding area. Centre: Training of the health officer of the Banten Province in sample collection and health survey protocols. Right: Dr. Nia collects a blood sample from a buffalo for a comprehensive disease survey of domestic ungulates around Ujung Kulon National Park.

prevent eye problems. It is likely that Bina's problems are the result of previous damage that occasionally recurs.

Ratu Health Update

Normal healthy female. For the first time in over a year, the SRS team was able to successfully "scratch down" Ratu for blood collection via venipuncture of the ear vein. This success is a significant achievement and is the culmination of long hours of behavioural conditioning. It will also help to facilitate post-breeding semen collections to assess male fertility once breeding occurs with Andalas and/or ongoing assessment of Torgamba.

Indonesia: Javan Rhinoceros

Domestic Animal Health Survey around Ujung Kulon National Park

Ujung Kulon National Park Disease Survey YABI, IRF, Rhino Conservation Medicine Program

Only an estimated 25 to 50 Javan rhinoceros survive in Ujung-Kulon National Park (UKNP). This estimate is very broad and concerns exist that the Javan rhino population may actually be in decline. The UKNP park boundaries are increasingly violated by local people and their livestock. It is critical that any conservation program for the Javan rhino include a thorough disease investigation of the domestic animals surrounding the park to protect the rhino's last vital habitat in Ujung Kulon.

In order to conserve the rhinos and plan for any future sanctuary that remains under consideration, we need to better understand the disease risks in the region. In 1982 and again in 2003, several Javan rhino are known to have died over a short period raising suspicion that disease may be to blame (Western Australian News

Report, February 1982). In the 1982 outbreak, five wild Javan rhinos died suddenly of a suspected contagious disease.

Most certainly, the highest risk to the park and its inhabitants (including the rare Javan rhinos) is located at its boundaries in the form of cattle, sheep, goats and other livestock that are kept by local villagers.

What would be done?

A disease survey with two key components: The first step was an informational gathering exercise and involved speaking with public health officials and local villagers about the health of their livestock, meeting with UKNP staff and conducting a thorough literature search. These tasks have been completed. The second step is ongoing and is the field survey to collect data on domestic animal health and disease incidence around UKNP with support of park personnel.

Dr. Kurnia Octavia is a young Indonesian veterinarian who recently completed a yearlong internship at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary and is leading the fieldwork in Indonesia. Dr. Nia is receiving technical support from the Rhino Conservation Medicine Program and assistance from the SRS veterinary team.

Results from these proposed surveys would help guide decisions about management of the population of rhinos in Ujung Kulon National Park. Specifically, it would help guide park personnel in developing a buffer zone around the park, mitigating disease outbreaks at the village level before they could enter and affect the rhinos, and finally, would be critical information needed to support any future sanctuary planning steps for the eastern region of the park (Gunung Honje) which remains surrounded by people.



UKNP Villagers with IRF, YABI and Cornell team working together to better understand potential health risks to the park and its Javan rhinoceros.

Challenges to Study

Initial fieldwork conducted by Dr. Nia and Cornell student, Katie Seeley, has presented some significant challenges. The most difficult has been collection of blood samples from the buffalo as they are quite wild and are not regularly handled by the farmers. Therefore,

restraint for blood collection has been problematic. In order to prevent staff injury while still gaining useful survey data, we constructed a restraint chute from local materials at each field collection site. The blood samples are now more easily and safely collected to meet project objectives.

Training for Local Health Officers

As part of this health survey we are training two local public health officers in routine sample collection and health monitoring. Our work represents the first practical training these health officials have received in surveying the health of the rural livestock in the region surrounding UNKP and will help these people do a better job of monitoring domestic animal disease and educating local people on best practices to ensure the health of their livestock and themselves.

Article: Robin W. Radcliffe, DVM, DACZM Rhino Conservation Medicine Scientist, IRF, FRWC, CUCVM

Asian Rhino Project Annual General Meeting

Please be advised that the 2009 ARP Annual General Meeting will be held:

7pm, 12 October 2009

Perth Zoo Theatre
20 Labouchere Rd
South Perth, WA

AGENDA

1. Director's Report
2. Committee Updates
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Election of National Committee Members
5. Any other business

A sausage sizzle will be provided before the meeting. Please confirm your attendance by email to kerry.crosbie@asianrhinos.org.au or phone 08 89760952. Doors open at 6pm.

Friends and family welcome – members eat free, non-members for a gold coin donation. Tea, coffee and nibbles will also be provided throughout the evening along with slide show presentations from the committee members.

We look forward to seeing you again soon!



Rhino Patrol Unit at Bukit Barisan National Park. Sophie Lourandos in green in back row.

Indonesia Projects Visit

On 16 June 2009, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to visit some of the Indonesian projects ARP supports.

I travelled with a group of four American zookeepers who were participants of the annual Bowling for Rhinos Fundraiser, run through the American Association of Zookeepers. These people were the third and fourth highest fundraisers in the US, with all money raised spent on rhino projects throughout the world.

We were accompanied by Susie Ellis, Director of the International Rhino Foundation (IRF), Inov (IRF Indonesia), Widodo Ramono (YABI Director), Bibhab Talukdar (Aaranyak India) and members of each national park Rhino Protection Units (RPUs).

Our first leg of the trip was spending four days visiting Ujong Kulon National Park, in the very south-west tip of Java; around seven hours drive from Jakarta. We met with the national park staff and the team of RPUs based in the national park.

Our days were spent hiking for several hours through dense forest in high humidity and heat, looking for signs of rhino and other wildlife. This gave us a very small insight into the extremely tough job of being a member of the RPU.

These men spend on average 20 days in the forest each month, monitoring rhino and other wildlife, collecting data, preventing illegal activities and gathering intelligence. The conditions they work in are incredible, and a lot of us struggled doing this for even one day!

We were there of course to hopefully see signs of the ghost of the forest- the Javan Rhino. Being such a large (and noisy) group we had no hope of seeing one of them with our own eyes, but seeing foot prints as recent as a few days, fresh wallowing sites and plants they had munched on was just as exciting! What a privilege it was to be able to enter the home of one of the most endangered mammals in the world.

Along with rhino signs, we also saw macaques, reticulated python, a deceased banteng (wild cattle), deer, wild pig, monitor lizards, fish (very fortunate to go snorkelling as well!) and birds. While in UKNP we were also joined by an Australian Scientist, Dr Andy Gillison who was there on behalf of IRF, WWF and ARP, to conduct a survey on potential habitat sites for a second habitat some of the rhinos could be moved to in the future. He gave us a demonstration of a transect while we were in the forest; they then spent another three days in the forest collecting their data.



Above Left: Ratu getting a bath. Above Right: Javan Rhino footprint.

to witness an interaction between Rosa and Andalas through fences. Seeing them play and vocalise with each other was awesome! Meeting the rhinos and everyone on our trip further increased my motivation to assist these animals and the Indonesian people in every way possible to avoid an unnecessary tragedy - the extinction of Indonesia's rhinos.

A big thank you to all the IRF, YABI and SRS staff for their warm hospitality, stories and driving skills! And thanks to Kerry and the ARP committee for allowing me this opportunity. This was truly the most amazing trip and I hope will not be my last to visit such a unique part of the world.

Article and photos: Sophie Lorandos, ARP National Committee Member



The second leg of the trip was flying to southern Sumatra to visit two National Parks: Bukit Barisan Selatan and Way Kambas. We met and travelled with RPUs in both national parks and saw a lot more wildlife here than in Java, including signs of tapir, tiger and elephant.

One of the highlights of the trip was the time we spent talking to each member of the RPUs; hearing the challenges they face on the job, discovering what motivated them to join the RPUs, listening to stories about meeting the rhinos face to face in the forest, even one story of a man who was actually shot in the leg by a poacher, and still loves his job!

These are very inspirational men, all so happy to be working in a team environment, the bond they have with one another is clearly very strong, and they seem to really enjoy their job.

Sumatra was made all the more special by hearing Siamangs calling first thing in the mornings, and finding a very rare and endangered Sumatran rabbit in the forest.

Way Kambas National Park was a perfect end to the two week trip. It is of course home to the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary, 100 hectares within the NP and home to five Sumatran rhinos. This was my first time seeing an Asian species of rhino, and they did not disappoint. We met them all individually, and then got

National Committee Update

End of Financial Year

ARP committee has been busy completing the end of financial year requirements – thanks so very much to Lorraine Dunn and Petra Hancock whose roles are so very important and tedious during this process. Also to Evelyn Wong of Meranti Consulting and Kevin Judge of Judge Constable chartered Accountants for completing the yearly financial reports and audits.

Annual General Meeting

Please note that the ARP AGM is scheduled for 12 October 2009. It will be held in Perth once again due to most of our members residing there. We hope to see you there – please come and show your support if you can.

Secretary Position

ARP is seeking a volunteer to fill the Secretary role on the National Committee. Sadly Olga Karstvo was unable to continue in her role as ARP secretary due to unexpected work, study and family commitments.

If you feel you can spare 1 hour a week to assist us to do the important work we do then we would love to hear from you! A full job description is available upon request.

The ARP would like to pass on its sincere thanks to Olga for her continued dedication to the ARP and for assisting us for the time that she could. Olga is continuing to remain active in assisting the ARP in raising awareness and support by promoting the ARP with pamphlet letter drops in and around her area.

Whittakers Chocolates: Thanks!

ARP would like to thank Whittakers, a New Zealand chocolate company who recently donated over \$2000 worth of dark chocolate products to ARP to sell for fundraising.

We contacted Whittakers in the hope of sourcing a product we could sell regularly for fundraising, and while their resources are insufficient at the moment to meet this demand, they kindly offered us their chocolates free of charge and at no cost to deliver.

Thank you Whittakers!

World Animal Day – 4 October

Perth Zoo is putting on a special event for World Animal Day on Sunday 4 October and ASian Rhino Project is participating. The Zoo's conservation partners will be there to spread the word about their activities working to save some of the world's most threatened animals.

Normal Zoo admission prices apply with stalls open between 10am and 4pm. Thank you to Perth Zoo for providing this opportunity. We hope to see you all there.

Should you like to do the same – please contact info@asianrhinos.org.au. We wish Olga all the very best in her new role and with her current studies in the field of conservation. All the very best!

WA Branch

WA Branch Manager Sophie Lourandos visited ARP supported Indonesia projects in June along with the IRF team and American Zookeeper association 'Bowling for Rhinos' fundraisers.

It was a great opportunity for Sophie to gain a better understanding of what goes on on the ground and to meet with the wonderful people working to save these incredible animals. Please read Sophie's report on page (10)

Since Sophie's return the WA team are planning two events for next year – one, a walkathon against extinction and the other a murder mystery fun night. Stay tuned for more!

NSW Branch

NSW Branch members, with the support of Taronga Western Plains Zoo and the Taronga Foundation, are planning a very special fundraising event for early next year ROARING FOR RHINOS will be a casino inspired night with a 1920s theme. It will include lots of fun games, such as blackjack and poker as well as an auction and raffle. Attendees are encouraged to wear fancy dress, with prizes given for best dressed and lucky door prizes.

If you have items that would be beneficial for Auction or as a prize or know of companies who might be willing to support us, please let us know info@asianrhinos.org.au or ph: 0889760952.

In The News - Asian Rhino News Stories

If you build it they will come - Locals keen on rhino conservation 10 May 2009

The rhinos are coming to four community forests in Chitwan, and when they arrive, they'll receive a grand welcome: the people of the community forests are planting grass for these guests. "We began planting grass for the rhinos last year. This year, we have plowed the fields with a tractor to begin the planting," says Surbir Pokharel, president of the Gyaneshwor Community Forestry Users Group. Pokharel claims that their users group has spent Rs 200,000 for this purpose. Not to be outdone, members of the Setidevi Community Forestry have gone a step further. They have dug a well that will supply their rhinos' waterhole with water.

More: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=4863

Rhino population overcomes poachers to register increase

The Indian Rhino population, threatened in the past because of rampant poaching, is slowly on the upswing according to a recent census carried out in the three main sanctuaries of Kaziranga, Pobitora and Orang in Assam. Scientifically known as Rhinoceros unicornis, the animals are found only in their natural habitat in northeastern India and Nepal.

According to global conservation group WWF, there are less than 3,000 rhinos left in the world. Bihaab Talukdar, a leading wildlife activist, working for saving the rhinos, said, "As per the 2009 census, there are 2048 in Kaziranga, in Orang it was 64, and in Pobitora it was 84."

More: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Flora--Fauna/Rhino-population-overcomes-poachers-to-register-increase/articleshow/4535251.cms>

Rhino count increases in Pobitora 8 May 2009

Pobitora wildlife sanctuary — the park with the highest density of rhinos in the world — now has more of the animal with its population registering 84 in the rhino census held today. Park officials started the count from 5am and the entire exercise ended by 8am.

"The figure cannot be less than 84," Seal Sharma, divisional forest officer of Pobitora wildlife sanctuary, said. Nearly 80 people participated in the rhino census at the wildlife sanctuary situated in Morigaon district. The 2006 rhino census had estimated the number of rhinos at 81 in an area of nearly 17 square km. Of the 84 rhinos, 24 were males, 43 females and 17 were calves.

More: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1090509/jsp/northeast/story_10935761.jsp

New home for straying rhinos 16 May 2009

Rhinos straying out of their habitat at Kaziranga or Pobitora will henceforth land at Manas National Park, according to a new plan worked out by the forest department. The department's decision to send the straying rhinos to Manas arises from the protracted exercise required to bring back these animals to their original habitat.

More: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1090517/jsp/northeast/story_10975644.jsp

Rhino Poaching Undented by Greater Security 23 May 2009

Rhino poaching continues unabated at Chitwan National Park despite a massive huge in the number of security posts. Poachers have often gone deeper into the park and in some cases shown the temerity to kill the rhinos right in the vicinity of the security posts. They have been able to make off with the rhino horns even when gunshots were heard by park staff.

Park warden Dr Narendraman Babu Pradhan concedes that this has made conservation work more challenging although the actual number of poaching has decreased. "The number of posts has been increased and patrols

have penetrated deeper but poachers are still killing rhinos in the vicinity of the park office," says a baffled Pradhan. He says there is no lack of resources and security personnel but feels it's about time security policy was reviewed.

More: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=5388

Rhino Poaching Increasing in Nepal 23 May 2009

Incidents of rhinoceros poaching are on the rise in Nepal, an official said. Poaching of the one-horned rhino in Chitwan National Park has increased even amid security measures, eKantipur reported Saturday. As recently as Wednesday, park officials found the carcass of a pregnant rhino shot with its horn missing. "We have resources to mobilize rhino conservation efforts inside the park," said park conservation officer Narendra Babu Pradhan. "But we have not been able to identify the poachers."

Since March 2008, 10 rhinos have been killed, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation said. Mangal Man Shakya, a wildlife expert, said a lack of punishment is to blame for the rise in poaching. "Poachers are not afraid of punishment because they get bail soon after arrest," he said.

More: <http://www.timesoftheinternet.com/76558.html>

Young Activists Band Together To Conserve Sumatran Rhinos

While some students head to the mall after school or spend their free time watching TV, 20 students of the Jakarta International School in South Jakarta gather once a week to devise ways to save the critically endangered Sumatran rhino from extinction. This group of young activists are known as the Rhino Club. Established in August 2008, the Rhino Club is a group of eighth graders who raise awareness and organize fund-raising activities for the cause.

"There are only about 250 Sumatran rhinos left," said Noah Lumbantobing of the club. "Their habitat is rapidly shrinking." Hannah Macdonald, another member, said: "Rhinos get killed all the time. Their habitats are being destroyed, their food is disappearing rapidly and they can't do anything about it."

More: <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/life-times/article/20717.html>

Treasuring the Javan Rhino

In a tranquil forest on the westernmost tip of Java, the sound of lapping water in a moss-green river is accompanied by an occasional breeze whispering through the foliage of nipa palms as kaleidoscopic butterflies flit across the riverbed. Video cameras are used to monitor and study the Javan rhinos in the 120,551-hectare Ujung Kulon National Park in West Java.

Further down the river, past overhanging branches on which pythons slither and civets spring, across boggy terrain and two coral-bedded creeks, is a mud hole frequented by Javan rhinos. Measuring about 20 square meters, the mud wallow is a resting place for these rare mammals in Ujung Kulon National Park.

More: <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/life-times/article/20725.html>

Poachers Kill Rhino 21 May 2009

Poachers have killed a one-horned rhinoceros near the Chitwan National Park's head office and made away with its horn. The incident happened near Tamor Lake less than three kilometers south of the park's Kasara office on Tuesday. "We heard gunshots on Tuesday evening. We found the gravid rhino without horn when we went for a search the next morning," deputy warden Ashok Bhandari said.

He said a patrol team had reached the spot within 10 minutes of the gunshot, but found nothing amiss. This is the eighth rhino killed by poachers this year, while five others have died of natural causes during the period.

More: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=5300

Army to Train Forest Staff 22 May 2009

The Assam forest department has sought the army's help to train its personnel tackle poachers. This two-day training session on May 30 and 31, organised under the India Rhino Vision (IRV) 2020 programme, is being held for the first time at Orang National Park. "We need their (the army's) help as the frontline staff must know how to secure and maintain arms. Sophisticated weapons alone will not be of much help if these are not used properly," the state's chief conservator of forests (wildlife), D.M. Singh, said. The army will guide the frontline staff on free hand ambush and provide combat training as well.

More: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1090523/jsp/northeast/story_11006012.jsp

Carcass of Rhino Found in Kaziranga 28 May 2009

The carcass of an adult rhino with her prized horn extracted was found inside the Kaziranga National Park today as the number of pachyderms killed in the park this year rose to seven. The carcass was found by forest guards from the remote Metei Chapor area between the rivers Brahmaputra and Difallo inside the Burapahar range of the park.

Park officials said poachers from neighbouring district of Karbi Anglong had entered the park and targeted the rhino before escaping with its horn which has a high price in the international market. Three Karbi poachers have been identified by the forest guards for being responsible for the killing of the rhino and they were being traced out, officials said. With recovery, a total of seven rhinos have been killed by poachers inside the KNP, a world heritage site.

More: <http://www.indopia.in/India-usa-uk-news/latest-news/585049/National/1/20/1>

Save Rhino Drive Down the Drain

Just two days ago, poachers critically injured a rhino inside Chitwan National Park. Officials say the rhino has received two bullets on its head and can die anytime. The vets are helpless as they don't have the technology to extract the bullets from the rhino.

Nepal's one horned rhino is under threat if the latest figures on poaching are anything to go by. Seven rhinos, excluding the latest injured one were found killed by poachers since the latest census in March 2008 in CNP, according to Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC). There were 408 rhinos in March, 2008. Similarly, two rhinos were found killed and their horns and hooves extracted in Bardia National Park (BNP) March 2008.

More: <http://nation.ittefaq.com/issues/2009/06/01/news0871.htm>

Rhino Poaching Goes Unabated 6 June 2009

Three rhinos have been killed this month alone in Chitwan National Park due to a rise in poaching activities. Despite daily monitoring, poachers shot a rhino on May 26 and the beast died of excessive bleeding on Friday while being treated, the park officials said. Although the number of rhinos went up after the end of the conflict, poaching activities have only increased in the national park in the recent days.

A separate rhino monitoring mechanism has been introduced this month to celebrate year 2010 as the base year of rhinos, but the program has not proved effective till date to control poaching.

More: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=5944

Rhino Poaching Rampant Despite Beefed-up Security 9 June 2009

In a stark contrast to the construction of increasing number of security posts inside the Chitwan National Park (CNP), more one-horn rhino continue to fall prey to poachers. What renders wildlife officials speechless is that there has been no let-up in poaching of the endangered despite the fact that new security posts are being constructed for the security of animals.

A case in point is the killing of three rhino in this month alone and the increased number of security posts from 47 to 38.

Park officials during the insurgency period had expected that cases of rhino poaching would go down automatically once the conflict ends in the country. However, years have elapsed since the then rebel party CPN (Maoist) joined the peace process, but the poaching of rhino is still rampant.

More: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=6083

Dudhwa National Park Gets a New Rhino Inmate 6 June 2009

In a boost to rhino conservation programme at the famous Dudhwa national park, a uni-horned rhino has given birth to a calf, taking the population of the endangered animal to 28. "A uni-horned rhinoceros Vijayshree gave birth to a healthy rhino calf of the third generation on May 29 at the Rhino Rehabilitation Area (RRA) of the park," Shailesh Prasad, field director of Dudhwa national park, 200 kms from Lucknow, said. The total population of rhinos in Dudhwa has now reached 28-- seven males, 15 females and six young rhinos, he said.

More: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Flora--Fauna/Dudhwa-national-park-gets-a-new-rhino-inmate-/articleshow/4625337.cms>

India Enjoying Success in Increasing Population of Endangered Rhinos 16 June 2009

The Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros is an endangered species, but the good news is that three sanctuaries in India are having some success in increasing its population. The rhinos may not be as magnificent as tigers, but they command an equal demand in illegal trade.

Their horns - made of hair-like keratin fibres - can fetch up to US\$10,000 for two pounds in the international market. The horns are in great demand in China and Southeast Asia, where they are used in traditional medicine.

M. Tamuli, ranger, said: "There has been poaching of rhinos in some areas, but out here, there has not been any in the last three years. Locals cooperate with us and, along with our forest guards, they ensure that no poaching takes place here."

More: <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/southasia/view/436255/1.html>

Wildlife Experts Out to Save Stray Rhinos in Borneo Isle

Wildlife researchers are tracking three Sumatran rhinos roaming an isolated patch of forest in Sabah's east coast, hoping to eventually relocate the animals to a conservation area. WWF-Malaysia Borneo Programme species conservation manager Raymond Alfred said the rhinos -- a male adult, a female and a calf -- were confined to less than 1,000ha of forest surrounded by oil palm plantations.

"This is obviously insufficient for the rhinos which require a home range of about five square kilometres (500ha) per animal," he said following a media briefing about WWF's programmes in Sabah Tuesday. He said WWF was working with the Sabah Wildlife Department that would decide when the translocation of the rhinos would take place.

More: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/6/16/nation/20090616163122&sec=nation>

Seven Rhinos Find Home in India 17 June 2009

Over a year ago, seven rhinos left the Bardia National Park (BNP) and landed in an Indian sanctuary. They have not returned, causing worries to officials, who have been finding it difficult to arrest the decline in the population of the endangered species due to poaching.

During the rhino census conducted in March 2008, BNP had 22 rhinos, while their number was 31 the previous year. Ten rhinos in the Chitwan National Park (CNP) have fallen prey to the poachers after that. Though

Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) officials claim seven rhinos have moved from the BNP to the Indian sanctuary, Indian officials claim they have only six rhinos from Nepal.

"We can bring the seven rhinos, which reached the Kattarniya Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh through a wildlife corridor, back if our government makes an appeal to India," says Laxmi Manandhar, conservation education officer at the DNPWC. Other officials say cross-border translocation of rhinos is easier said than done, saying that the task requires funds and skilled human resources.

More: <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?nid=199588>

All Eyes on Kaziranga, Free Run for Poachers in Orang

With Kaziranga National Park, home to the largest number of one-horned rhinos in the world, getting maximum attention for conservation and protection, poachers have shifted focus to Orang National Park in northern Assam. As this 78.82 sq km park faces a shortage of manpower and equipment, poachers have managed to kill at least three rhinos this year.

"Poaching is definitely Orang's most important problem, especially with the park having very dense human habitation on its western, northern and eastern boundaries," said park director S Momin. While poachers on Saturday killed a full-grown female rhino and ran away with its horn, Momin's men along with the police managed to nab two members of the gang responsible for the crime.

More: <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/All-eyes-on-Kaziranga--free-run-for-poachers-in-Orang/480013>

Rhino Relocation Proposed To Encourage Reproduction

Wildlife authorities want to divide the lone herd of endangered Javan rhinoceros into two populations by 2012 in the hope that this will hasten reproduction, Ujung Kulon National Park spokesman Enyat Sudrajat said at the Banten park on Sunday. "We have been planning a second habitat for the species, but it will not be far away from the original habitat," he said.

Enyat said the new herd - initially three females and one male - would be relocated only as far as the Gunung Honje area, which borders the current population's habitat in the Semenanjung Ujung Kulon area.

Only an estimated 50 Javan rhinos remain in the wild and researchers believe the number has remained largely static over many years through habitat pressure. By starting a new herd, they believe the animals will be encouraged to breed faster.

More: <http://thejakartaglobe.com/news/rhino-relocation-proposed-to-encourage-reproduction/313613>

Rhino Poaching Hits Tourism 22 June 2009

Tourism entrepreneurs here have been unable to make tourists lengthen the stay of tourists in this popular destination, thanks to a dwindling number of rhinos, a major attraction, and lack of fresh programmes. The entrepreneurs have been relying too heavily on Tharu culture, Chitwan National Park safari, elephant safari, sun-setting sights and village tour, which comprise a three-day package.

On top of all this, rhinos have become a rare sight here due to rampant poaching of the endangered species. All this does not bode well for Sauraha, which is rich in biodiversity. Tour operators are already talking about the loss rhino poaching could cause. Tourism expert Dr. Rudra Upadhyaya says rhino conservation is a must for the survival of Sauraha's tourism industry.

More: <http://www.ekantipur.com/kolnews.php?nid=200393>

Saving Rhino Gets Government Backing 24 June 2009

The Pandeglang regency administration and legislative council have voiced their support for plans to expand the habitat of Javan rhinos at Ujung Kulon National Park (TNUK) in Banten province, on the western tip of Java.

Regent Dimyati Natakusumah said the local administration and council hoped the TNUK would become a source of pride for the nation and also a world-renowned site that could pull in international revenue.

More: <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/06/24/saving-rhino-gets-government-backing.html>

WWF urges action to protect Borneo rhino's habitat

The future of one of the world's rarest animals, the Borneo rhino, depends on action taken to protect the forest reserves where it lives, conservation group WWF said Wednesday. Malaysian wildlife officials say that only 30 Borneo rhino remain in the wilderness of Sabah state, on Malaysia's side of Borneo, the island which it shares with Indonesia.

More: http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20090701/sc_afp/malaysiaenvironmentrhino

Sime Darby Foundation Plans Rhino Sanctuary In Sabah 30 June 2009

The Sime Darby Foundation (SDF) and Sabah government will set up a sanctuary in the Tabin Forest Reserve for Sumatran rhinos to protect the wildlife from extinction. A 4,500-hectare area will be allocated for the project with the cost of providing the infrastructure including a fence around it being funded by SDF. An agreement on the cooperation was signed at Tabin Wildlife Resort, about 48 kilometres from here, between the foundation and the state government Tuesday.

More: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=421889>

Borneo Rhino Habitat In Danger 1 July 2009

Conservation group World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said on Wednesday that the future of the Borneo rhino, one of the world's most endangered animals, depends on action taken to protect the forest reserves where it lives. According to Malaysian wildlife officials, only 30 Borneo rhino remain in the wilderness of Sabah state, an island that the country shares with Indonesia.

"The future of rhinos in Borneo now depends on how seriously the forest reserves can be managed sustainably," Raymond Alfred, senior manager of WWF-Malaysia's Borneo Species Program said in a statement.

More: http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/1714524/borneo_rhino_habitat_in_danger/

Rhinos in Danger as Illegal Trade Booms 13 July 2009

Despite years of successful conservation work across Africa and Asia, a dramatic new rise in illegal poaching means several rhinoceros species are under increased threat. The growing demand for rhino horn in countries like China, Thailand and most recently Vietnam, where its use is prescribed for an increasing range of medical conditions, is behind the latest threat to the world's rhino populations.

Rates of illegal killing have leapt alarmingly in the past few years, according to new research by WWF, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and their affiliated wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC.

More: http://www.wwf.org.uk/news_feed.cfm?3158/Rhinos-in-danger-as-illegal-trade-booms

Rhino Poaching Hits 15-year high

Rhino poaching has reached a 15-year high, say conservationists. A recent Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species briefing suggest organized crime groups have moved into poaching in Asia, where rhino horn is used in traditional medicines.

"Rhino poaching is no longer used as a means of survival and sustenance," says Susie Ellis of the International Rhino Foundation, in a statement.

Rhino numbers in Nepal and Indonesia are declining due to the poaching, Ellis says. Poachers have exterminated the Northern white rhino and the Western black rhino subspecies within the last three years, according to Save the Rhino International. Rhinos are often illegally shot from helicopters in conservation zones and poisoned at waterholes for their horns, report the groups.

More: <http://blogs.usatoday.com/sciencefair/2009/07/rhino-poaching-hits-15year-high.html>

WWF-Malaysia's Borneo Species Programme team has captured images of Sumatran rhino, one of the world's most endangered species.

The team said the pictures strengthen "the argument to sustainably manage the forests" in the Hearts of Borneo, where the pictures were taken.

re of rhinos in Borneo now depends on how seriously the forest reserves can be managed sustainably with effective monitoring carried out and supported by appropriate activities," said Raymond Alfred, the senior manager of the programme.

More: <http://www.borneo-blog.com/2009/07/15/wwf-captures-images-of-near-extinct-sumatran-rhino/>

Poachers Killed 12 Rhinos Last Year 16 July 2009

Twelve rhinos were killed by poachers in Chitwan National Park during the past fiscal year. Another five rhinos met natural deaths during the same period. According to Assistant Conservation Officer Ganesh Pant, the rhinos were killed by poachers between September 2008 and June 2009.

The first rhino was killed on September 8, 2008, at Gaidasaakha. The last one was killed near Bhawanipur inside the park on June 5, 2009. Most rhinos died during the month of March in which four were killed by poachers, while one died of natural cause.

No rhino was killed in the months of October, November and January.

More: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=7523

Rhinos, Other Animals Continue to Face Problem in Kaziranga

Already in the list of highly endangered species, the one-horned rhinos in Assam's world famous Kaziranga National Park face additional threats during the rainy season - waters of Brahmaputra that flood the park.

Rhinos and other animals in the park move towards the national highways which are on higher level exposing them further to poachers, say park officials. Less rains so far have been helpful as there are no worries but the park authorities are leaving nothing to chance and taking steps to protect the animals, they say.

More: <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/008200907261340.htm>

Over 100 Arrested for Poaching 46 Rhinos in Assam : Ramesh 22 July 2009

At least 132 persons were arrested for poaching 46 rhinos in Assam since 2006, the government informed Lok Sabha on Wednesday. Replying to a written question, environment minister Jairam Ramesh said nine rhinos were poached in 2006 while 21 and 16 in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

He said the estimated population of rhinos in the four different protected areas of Assam was 2,021 of which 2,048 rhinos were found in Kaziranga National Park, followed by Orang National Park (64 rhinos), Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary (84) and five in Manas national Park.

More: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Environment/132-held-for-poaching-rhinos/articleshow/4807975.cms>

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1 year = AU\$30 3 years = AU\$80 5 years = AU\$130 Life = AU\$400

Membership includes quarterly newsletters. We encourage members to receive newsletters by email – not only to save administration costs but also to conserve paper.

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Rhino Rembrandts – \$475

The artists are Indian and Sumatran rhinos from Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, USA. Painting is a special activity that has become one of many ways to enrich the rhinos' day. Not only do the paintings enrich the zoo rhinos' lives, they also help their wild cousins with proceeds of painting sales going to Asian rhino conservation.

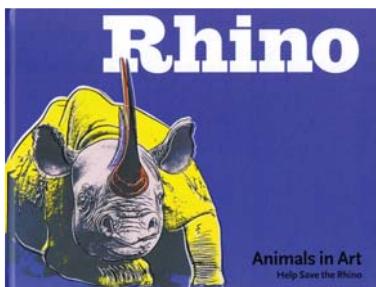


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Rhino Earrings	\$20	gold	silver			
Pen	\$4	red	blue	green		
Sticker	\$2	N/A				
Magnet	\$2	N/A				
Wine Cooler	\$20	terracotta				
Thermal Mug (350ml)	\$10	purple green black	pink blue			
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BSB: 016 263 Account: 4984 19705 Transfer receipt number: _____

Please charge my: Bankcard Mastercard Visa

Card No: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____