

Behavioural activity of a pair of Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) at Vienna Zoo

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The Indian rhino has a long tradition of being in human care. However, regarding its behavioural activity in captivity almost no information can be found in the literature. Only one Master thesis is known from Basel Zoo and one study in Japanese. This fact is astonishing since Indian Rhinos face one prevalent health problem in Zoos which is the Chronic Foot Disease (CFD), characterised by non-healing fissures and ulcers between the central toe and the pad. CFD is occurring more often in males than in females. Therefore it is speculated that it can be attributed to different behavioural patterns in the sexes. We had the opportunity to study a male and female wild born rhino not affected by CFD during the course of one year at Vienna Zoo. 185 hrs of direct observation was used to assess the general behaviour and the mean activity level of both animals. To calculate the mean activity level behaviours were categorised into three activity levels 0 (resting and bathing), 1 (feeding and standing) and 2 (locomotion). All activity levels were summarised and then divided by the number of instantaneous scans. No significant differences between the animals could be found in neither of the behaviour categories nor the mean activity level. Further research is vital due to the fact that there are only few studies concerning the influence of activity on CDF and so far no published studies analysing the activity of rhinos affected by CFD.

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