



White rhinos aren't white. The name is thought to be a corruption of the Afrikaans word for "wide," referring to lip size.

A RANGE OF RHINOS

The southern white (left) has walked away from endangered status. Other rhinos remain in peril.

Near threatened

Southern white (Africa)

Endangered

Indian (Asia)

Critically endangered

Javan (Asia)

Sumatran (Asia)

Black (Africa)

Northern white (Africa)

Rhino Revival The African southern white rhinoceros has stepped back from the precipice, reaching a population of 17,500—large enough and genetically diverse enough to survive. The turnaround is stunning. At the end of the 19th century this fearsome yet relatively placid grass-eater, which can grow to more than 5,000 pounds, was nearing extinction, a victim of indiscriminate hunting.

Then in 1895 a remnant population of 40 or fewer rhinos was located. In a long-term project, South Africa set aside a game reserve,

now Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Park, to nurture them. By the 1960s private landowners had also begun building white rhino herds so trophy hunters could take a shot at a few each year; the fee is currently about \$40,000. Making rhino ranching profitable was key to saving the animals, says Michael Knight, head planner for national parks. Another species in South Africa, the aggressive black rhino, lives a solitary life that makes protecting it more of a challenge. Like other rhino species, it is clinging to survival. —Chris Carroll