

INTERNATIONAL RHINO FOUNDATION



Marking 27 Years of Protecting Indonesia's Rhinos

Facing habitat loss, encroachment by humans, and poaching for their horns, Indonesia's two species of rhinos (Javan and Sumatran) were in dire need of protection. Something had to be done to prevent them from disappearing. On August 31, 1995, a line was drawn and the first Rhino Protection Units (RPUs) were formed to safeguard rhinos and other wildlife.

There were many applicants for those first units in Kerinci Seblat National Park in the southwest corner of Sumatra. The program, celebrating 27 years of operations this month, has shifted and expanded. RPUs now patrol Sumatra's Bukit Barisan Selatan

August is National Make-A-Will Month!

This Make-A-Will Month, you can protect your future, loved ones - and rhinos - by creating your estate plans. All month long, the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) is encouraging our community to plan for the future thanks to our partnership with FreeWill: a free online estate planning tool that makes it easy to write a legally valid will in just 20 minutes. Plus, you can **establish a legacy that helps us create a world where rhinos thrive in the wild.**

Do you have an IRA, 401(k), life insurance policy, or any other asset that your will does not cover? These are called non-probate assets and it's important that you set your beneficiaries for them separately. You can even **use FreeWill to designate the International Rhino Foundation as a beneficiary** of these assets to ensure the survival of rhinos for years to come.

and Way Kambas National Parks and Ujung Kulon National Park in Java. Similar Wildlife Protection Teams patrol Gunung Leuser in Sumatra, and the RPUs have served as a model for patrol units focused on other threatened species, including tigers, elephants and orangutans.

P.S. Have you already included IRF in your plans? **Please let us know** so we can thank you and include you in IRF's Legacy Society!

Authorized by the National Parks and Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry, RPUs are highly trained four-person units that patrol key areas of rhino habitat. IRF's on-the-ground partner, the Rhino Foundation of Indonesia (Yayasan Badak Indonesia or YABI), operates the RPU program.

Prospective RPUs must pass a written exam as well as several physical tests. Members are recruited from local communities and even today, there are many applications for any opening.

Recruits undergo a rigorous selection process that includes running, swimming, hiking, and other physical activities. That is followed by an intensive training course that includes classroom instruction, field exercises, and law enforcement practices.

RPUs don't just patrol for poachers. They perform vital monitoring activities, documenting rhino tracks or other signs and any human disturbance encountered. They also remove wildlife snares and traps. RPUs apprehend people they find perpetrating illegal activities in the parks, collect evidence, and then transport suspects to the national park's headquarters for further processing by civil investigators.

Because of you, the dedicated individuals of the RPUs will continue to protect and monitor the critically endangered rhinos of Indonesia.



Images courtesy of the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

A New Home for the Way Kambas RPU Teams



RPU's spend long days away from their homes and families on patrol in Indonesia's forests. They pack and prepare in the RPU office for each 7-10 day trek, and meet there after each patrol to upload data and exchange information. For the past 15 years, the RPU's that patrol Way Kambas National Park called this office home:



Soon, they will move into a newly remodeled office closer to the Park's entrance. The new space features a beautiful view in the back and a badminton court in the front, a favorite way for the RPU members to unwind.



IRF congratulates the RPU's on their new home and wishes them a successful next 15 years.

TEAM RHINO SPOTLIGHT

In each newsletter, the International Rhino Foundation spotlights a different Team Rhino member, sharing the stories

of how they became interested in rhinos and became involved in wildlife conservation.

This month, we feature Arief Rubianto, director of the Alliance of Forest Integrated Conservation (ALeRT) and winner of a Disney Conservation Hero award for his work with Indonesian rhinos.



Arief describes himself as “old school.” He travels constantly between ALeRT’s program areas across Indonesia. His years of experience make him a rhino expert as well. Yet, listening to him, new ideas for saving rhinos and other wildlife flow freely. This is a valuable combination for conservation.

ALeRT was started in 2009 and Arief joined in 2019 as the Executive Director. The organization’s programs include monitoring, area surveys, habitat restoration and community development. ALeRT recently began wildlife crime investigation programs to support Way Kambas National Park.

Arief was studying veterinary sciences when his career took a different path. He turned to conservation because of a broken heart. Looking to get away, he left school and joined a survey team from the United Kingdom in 1993 that was documenting Sumatran rhino populations.



He did return to school and finished his degree but chose not to become a veterinarian. In 1995, Arief joined the first Rhino Protection Unit in Kerinci Seblat National Park as its manager, and trained the initial members.

ALeRT and Arief work closely with IRF, monitoring Javan rhinos in Ujung Kulon National Park and surveying Way Kambas National Park and Gunung Leuser for the potential captures of Sumatran rhinos under the Indonesia Ministry of Environment and Forestry’s national breeding program.

“Sometimes I think it is mission impossible,” said Arief. “But I realize if we work together, then we can accomplish our goal.” That goal is to save Indonesia’s rhinos for future generations.



IN THE SHOP

The dog days of summer are here and we've brought back a popular design just for your pup! IRF now has dog collars and leashes in our shop and they feature a colorful design with all five species of rhino: white, black, greater one-horned, Javan and Sumatran.

And of course, we've brought you the best collars and leashes we could find. Cycle Dog leashes and collars are handcrafted in the USA, and are made to last with durable yet soft material and secure metal hardware. Cycle Dog uses upcycled bicycle tire tubes as the backing, so not only are these leashes and collars sustainable and eco-friendly, they're waterproof and stink resistant!

Send us a photo of your dog wearing an IRF collar and/or leash and they may be featured on IRF's social media!



SHOP TODAY



Save the Date

World Rhino Day is right around the corner on September 22, 2022. It is a day to celebrate and create awareness for rhinos around the world. Please join IRF on social media and our website as we turn a spotlight on wildlife crime and share other rhino stories.

IRF will also publish the 2022 State of the Rhino in September, our annual publication detailing rhino population trends, major issues, and other rhino related news and developments.

Visit rhinos.org/world-rhino-day for more.

IRF's Annual Report

Our 2021 Annual Report is here! In 2021, IRF celebrated its 30th anniversary and in spite of global challenges, we expanded our programs to Nepal working with local communities to restore rhino habitats, rhinos returned to Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe, and critical activities to save the highly imperiled Sumatran rhino continued. Your generous donations kept rangers in the field, funded new technology in the fight against poaching, and helped local communities that have joined efforts to improve habitats for rhinos and other wildlife.

[Read IRF's 2021 Annual Report here.](#)

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International Rhino Foundation
201 Main Street, Suite 2600

Fort Worth, Texas 76102

(540) 465-9595

info@rhinos.org



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