

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BLACK RHINOS IN THE ZAMBEZI VALLEY - ZIMBABWE

"Pambere ne Chipembere" a local "Shona" phrase meaning "forward with the black rhino", is the slogan used by the Zimbabwean National Parks anti-poaching teams. All of Zimbabwe's indigenous populations of black rhino were located in large wildlife areas such as the Zambezi Valley, where low park personnel staffing and easy access from neighboring countries rendered them vulnerable to poaching. The black rhino populations underwent the most severe decline in the 1980's and early 1990's, and as a result much of the Zimbabwean National Parks effort has now gone into developing strategies for the maintenance of the species. Soon after poaching became a serious problem, the Zimbabwean Department of National Parks launched "Operation Stronghold" which was intended to maintain black rhino populations in all areas where they existed within the National Parks estate.

Earliest records show that black rhino, *Diceros bicornis*, existed in large numbers in the Zambezi Valley and the population was probably at its highest level in the early 1980's. Rhino numbers are extremely difficult to estimate but it is likely that there were fewer than 3,000 in the whole country at that time. In Zimbabwe, poaching was first detected at significant levels in the last three months of 1984 in the lower Zambezi Valley, spreading to all rhino populations in the country. By April 1992 and prior to dehorning operations, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management estimated the population of black rhino to be 1,500. By September 1993, the estimated population had dropped below 300.

Levels of illegal hunting have increased and during the past years Zimbabwean locals have become significantly involved in both poaching and trafficking of horn. Up until 1990 virtually all illegal hunting was carried out by nationals of neighboring countries. The rate of incursions carried out by neighboring nationals escalated from one a week to everyday in 1992. Today no fewer than 315 black rhino remain in Zimbabwe. The only future for wildlife conservation in Africa lies in the establishment of well managed sanctuaries.



NYANZOU COMMUNITY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Situated in the far north-eastern corner of Zimbabwe, three rural district councils share a natural resource management area of approximately 173,000 acres along the Mazowe River. This area of land occupies part of the Zambezi Valley ecosystem from which the black rhino disappeared approximately twenty years ago.

Nyanzou Community Wildlife Sanctuary is in agro-ecological region 5 which is unsuitable for agriculture, but is suitable for wildlife management. The communities adjoining the Wildlife area have few options for production or revenue generating activities. The majority of the people are poor, eking out a subsistence living, with limited agricultural production in this semi-arid area. The current low level of farm production is dependent on the ephemeral seasonal rains. The rains in the 1995/96 season were the first in four years. Production is limited to drought resistant

FROM THE CHAIR

Maria Pendergast

It is a great privilege to welcome interested supporters of the environment and African conservation to our first newsletter. We have been operating in the United States since 1992, but only recently have we found the resources and the opportunity to report some truly great undertakings on behalf of the campaign to preserve the endangered black rhinoceros. This is due in large measure to the arrival of Julie Anne Edwards, one of the original "Rhino Girls" of Zimbabwe and Founder of Environment 2000 in that country, who has joined us here to raise funds and awareness for the establishment of a wildlife sanctuary in northern Zimbabwe.

Julie will be touring the United States over the next 2 years in an effort to raise \$2 million, which will allow the creation of a wildlife refuge which will not only safeguard wild species, but promote economic viability for the local tribes and inhabitants. We welcome Julie and her efforts, and look forward to an interesting and successful fundraising tour, all of which will be documented within the pages of forthcoming newsletters. Thank you all for your support and continued interest.

Sanctuary (continued)

crops such as cotton, millet and sorghum. Maize is grown where there is small scale irrigation. (Goldpanning generates some income for the area, but this has led to serious degradation of the riverine vegetation and river banks.) 'Karamba' village, on the periphery of the sanctuary, has a population of 4,500 with a growth rate of 2.3%. Their main revenue is derived from cotton which supplies an income of less than ZW\$30,000 (\$3,000 U.S.) per annum for the entire village. It is in small, poverty stricken areas such as this that wildlife are being poached to extinction.

The survival of any indigenous species and habitat lies in large measure in the hands of the surrounding people - those individuals living side by side with the animals. Up until very recently rural communities did not receive any benefits from the wildlife and yet they

bore the brunt of living unsupported. More recently, Zimbabwe has been at the forefront of community participation efforts through the CAMPFIRE Program: 'Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources'. Africa Environment 2000 believes that rhino can survive to form viable populations and support rural people. The indigenous community in this case, through its local council has taken the initiative to select this area of land as their conservation project.

Development of the Nyanzou Community Sanctuary for conservation and tourism is the only way to realize the area's potential. Neither the local communities nor their councils have the resources or expertise to do the job alone. The people of Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe district have pledged their full support and acknowledgment for this project.



RHINO GIRLS HONORED RIDE FOR RHINOS

Environment 2000 was Founded in Zimbabwe in 1990, by Julie Anne Edwards and Charlene Hewat (known as the "Rhino Girls") after they cycled 22000 kilometers from Scotland through Europe and Africa to publicize the plight of the endangered black rhinoceros. Their drive and determination is the same commitment behind Environment 2000. Now, six years later they are initiating the development of the Nyanzou Community Wildlife Sanctuary in Zimbabwe. Environment 2000 has initiated a number of successful projects in Zimbabwe, becoming a leading environmental organization in Africa. In 1996, E2000 was awarded the United Nations Environment Program Global 500 award for its contribution to environmental work in Africa.

AFRICA, ENVIRONMENT 2000,

the California non-profit organization which is an extension of Environment 2000 of Zimbabwe, has functioned to educate the public on the problems of the endangered black rhino, raising general awareness in the areas of environmental sustainability, education, and cultural ties between the United States and Africa. Since its formation in America in 1992, Africa, Environment 2000 has provided crucial medical equipment to Zimbabwe, particularly during the years of drought. The organization continues to work together with other non-profit organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area.



BABY BLACK RHINO BORN AT SAN FRANCISCO ZOO

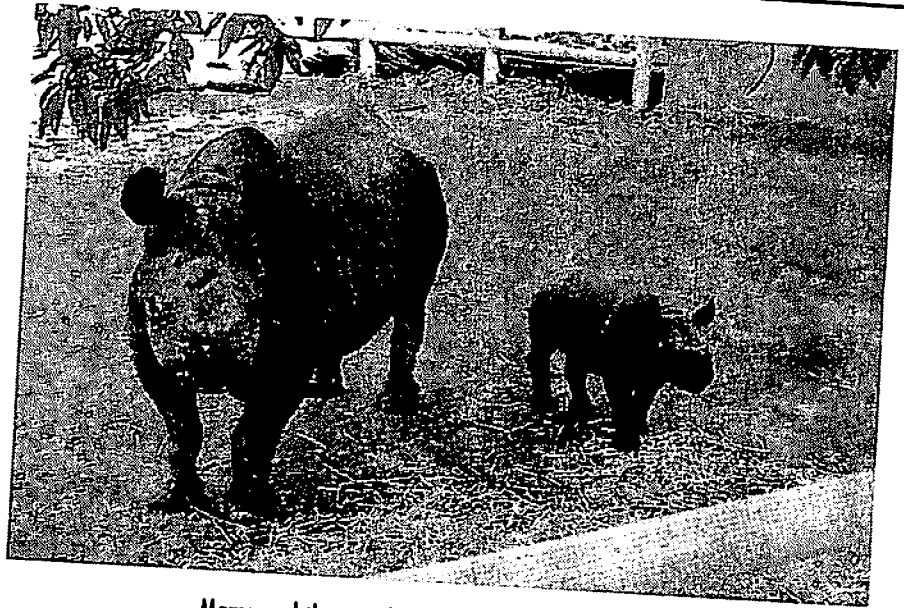
The San Francisco Zoo recently welcomed a new male black rhinoceros calf in the wee hours of January 16. The 60 pound infant is the eleventh born to 26 year old Ellie and the second by her nine year old mate, Gene. Prior to Gene's arrival in 1994, Ellie and her long-time mate, Stonewall, had nine offspring, making them the most prolific pair in captivity. Stonewall passed away in 1992 at the age of 37.

"The young male is nursing, gaining strength and looks pretty robust," said Steve Castillo,

Associate Curator of the Zoo. The

black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) is one of five

species of rhinoceros. The others are Indian, Javan, Samatran and White Rhino. Males can weigh up to 3000 pounds, growing to 12 feet in length, and up to six feet in height. They have two horns, with the anterior larger than the posterior protruding from its skull, and a hooked upper lip which protrudes beyond the lower lip and is prehensile.



Mama and the new baby at the San Francisco Zoo.



Julie Anne Edwards, Mario Pendergast, Joe Vaca visit the new family.

The black rhino is one of the world's most endangered animals. Only four or five are born in American zoos annually, and of the last 22 black rhinos born in zoos, 17 have been male. Currently, there are barely 3000 black rhinos left in the world, a decrease from the 1960's when they numbered 200,000. In Kenya alone, the black rhino population has fallen from 20,000 to fewer than 500 within just the past 20 years.

The San Francisco Zoo manages breeding under the American Zoo and Aquarium Association's Species Survival Plan for black rhinos, a cooperative effort among zoos nationwide that strives to ensure the long term survival of the species.



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Joe Vaca, a California artist and sculptor, recently introduced to Africa Environment 2000, has embarked on a mission to aid in the protection of the Earth's vanishing wonders. After years of research and observation, he has brought together a collection of patinaed handcast bronze sculptures which strive to encapsulate the spirit, strength, nobility, tenderness, power and sentient nature of each animal and to honor the plight of endangered species. As life-long champions of the environment, 'Vaca Arte', pledges a percentage of the sale of each sculpture to assist in the

conservation of species. He continues to work with Africa Environment 2000, The Gorilla Foundation and RedWings Horse Sanctuary, non-profits based in California.

This year, in collaboration with Joe, an original exhibit entitled " Silent Thunder: Future for Sale" will be mounted. This will consist of the creation of an 'urban wildlife preserve' featuring a display of 300 cast rhinos, representing the population of Zimbabwe's nearly extinct black rhinos today. Among the rhinos will be planted 2700 silk flowers, each representing the life of

a single black rhino lost through poaching since 1960. This traveling exhibit will establish a metaphor between urban and rural survival; the interdependence of animal and human life in the sharing of natural resources and the encroachment of civilization upon the remaining wildlife refuges. The rhinos will be donated to elementary classrooms for educational awareness programs.



San Francisco Zoo Assistant Director/ General Curator, David Robinett with Joe Vaca and Julie Anne Edwards.

Events Calendar

Global Sanctuary Day
Red Wings Horse Sanctuary, Carmel, CA
Saturday, June 7th
408-624-8464

Project Updates

We plan to provide all our members with updated information on the progress we are making.

Acknowledgements

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**PURPOSE**

To support the establishment and development of Community based Wildlife Sanctuaries.

VISION

Africa, Environment 2000 is an inspiring, viable, powerful, international non-profit organization, specializing in advisory consultation and management for wildlife conservation and community based projects. Additionally we stimulate awareness and action about envi-

ronmental issues creating links between the first world and developing countries, utilizing modern technology, promoting sustainable utilization with sustainable development.

MISSION

To expand the awareness and infrastructure in order to provide tactical and financial support for the development of the Nyanzou Community Wildlife Sanctuary.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Maria C. Pendergast - Chairperson

Native of California and Founder of Africa, Environment 2000. Ms. Pendergast has been involved with various non-profit organizations since 1982, including those concentrating on economic development, homelessness and AIDS.

Marsha Berger - For the last twenty years has served on several Boards of Directors in the Bay Area, focused on Senior Centers and Program for Alzheimer's. Community Activist, nature lover and program developer for the aged. In 1992, presented with the 'Cable Car Award' for compassion and dedication to people with AIDS.

Louis Saroni II - Sales Representative for twenty five years with Fiberboard Crown Corporation, a subsidiary of the Zellerbach Company. Currently serves as a member of the Board for the Zellerbach Fund, and Director of the United Service Organization. His interests include hunting, fishing, and baseball.

Clare Munn - Native of Zimbabwe and first Executive Director of Africa, Environment 2000, it was through her early efforts that Environment 2000 was established in San Francisco. In addition to other business interests, she is a partner in a company which promotes awareness of endangered species among children.

Julie Anne Edwards - Founder and Member of the Board of Governors, Environment 2000, Zimbabwe; currently Executive Director, Africa Environment 2000.

GOALS

- To raise \$2 million by the year 2000, toward establishment of the Nyanzou Community Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Lecture Tour - USA. Julie Edwards and Joe Vaca will be promoting the Sanctuary and Africa, Environment 2000's other programs throughout approximately 200 venues in the U.S. The agenda is likely to include a fundraising dinner and a "wildlife art auction".
- Equipment Collections for Nyanzou Community Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The 'Silent Thunder Future for Sale' sculpture installation (see accompanying story) and the development of educational packages for elementary school children.
- Production of a quarterly newsletter
- Establishment of a membership network
- Create a website for Africa Environment 2000.
- Establish merchandising/ marketing links for Africa Environment 2000.

REQUEST LIST

Each quarterly issue of SANCTUARY will include a need list of equipment that someone out there may be wanting to find a home for. We ask you to kindly note the following:-

- Volunteers
- Vehicles
- Computers and office equipment.
- Educational books suitable for students for schools around the Nyanzou Community Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Medical supplies for clinics surrounding the Sanctuary.
- Anti Poaching equipment: e.g. communication radios; backpacks, etc.

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Africa Environment 2000 welcomes conservation information for publication. Although the focus will be primarily on project development updates and conservation of endangered species, we encourage legitimate conservation subjects. Articles must be 2000 words or less and we request that any editorial or controversial articles be based on verifiable facts.

Photographs and illustrations are welcome. Submitted articles and prints will not be returned. The staff have the final decision on publication and articles may be edited for brevity. Views of the contributing authors are not necessarily the views of Africa Environment 2000. Prior to utilizing articles in publications, we would be grateful if you informed us of your intent. Articles should be exact reprints and credited to SANCTUARY and the author.