

# DR. BOB'S AMAZING WORLD OF ANIMALS RHINOCEROSES



By Ruth Owen

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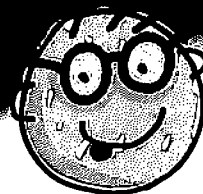
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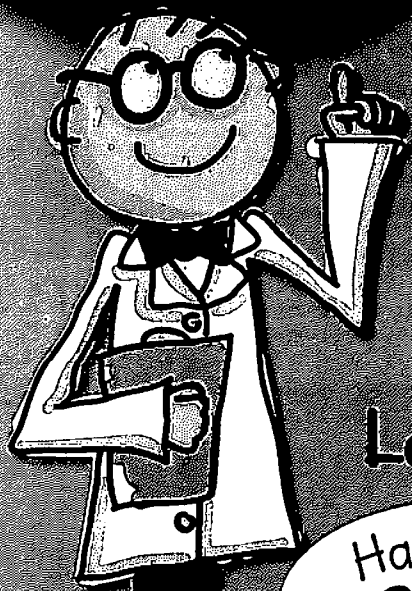
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# The Rhinoceros

Welcome to my amazing world of animals. Today, we will be finding out about an animal that has been on Earth for about 50 million years — the rhinoceros!



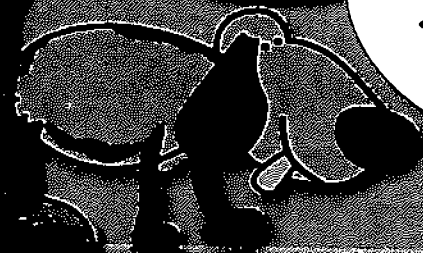
Black rhinos

Let's investigate...

Hank's  
**WOOF OF  
WISDOM!**

There are  
five types of rhino:

- White rhino
- Black rhino
- Greater one-horned rhino
- Sumatran rhino
- Javan rhino



Both white and black rhinos are actually gray!

White rhinos may  
have gotten their  
name by accident.



British visitors to Africa heard local people calling the rhinos "weidt." They thought the word meant "white." It actually means "wide." The local people were describing the rhino's wide upper lip!

# The African Rhino Files

White rhinos live in the white areas of Africa.  
Black rhinos live in the black areas of Africa.

## White Rhino

- Lives on grasslands.
- Height to shoulder: up to 6 feet (1.8 m)
- Weight (female): up to 2.2 tons (2 t)
- Weight (male): up to 2.8 tons (2.5 t)

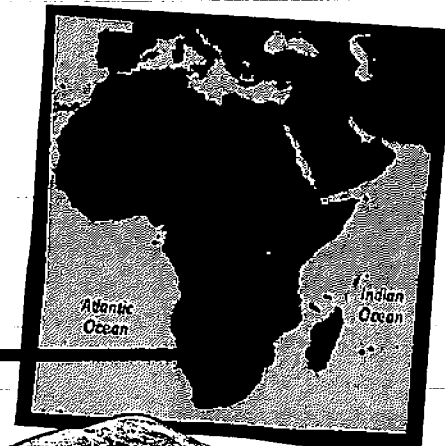


White rhinos live in the white areas.

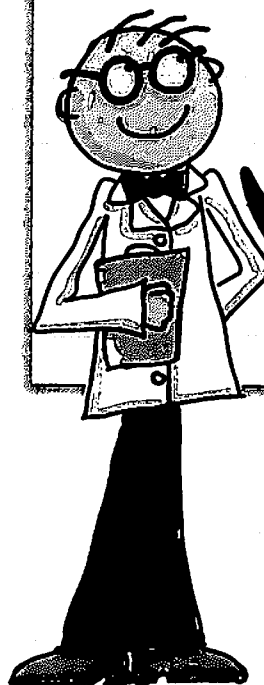


## Black Rhino

- Lives where there are trees and bushes to eat. It can be found on grasslands, in deserts, and in forests.
- Height to shoulder: up to 5.3 feet (1.6 m)
- Weight (female): up to 1 ton (1 t)
- Weight (male): up to 1.5 tons (1.4 t)



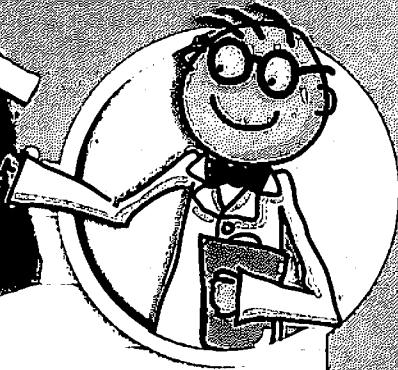
Black rhinos live in the black areas.



# The Asian Rhino Files

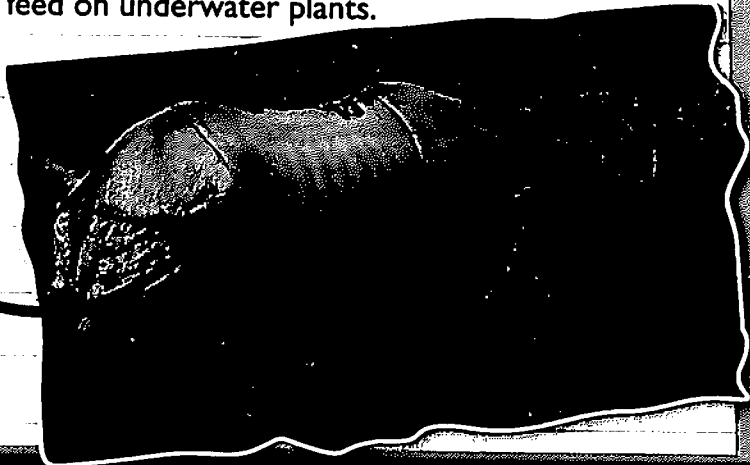
Three types of rhino live in Asia. They are all in danger of becoming **extinct**.

## Greater one-horned rhino



- Lives in protected parks in India and Nepal.
- Height to shoulder: up to 6.5 feet (2 m)
- Weight: up to 2 tons (1.8 t)
- These rhinos are good at swimming and diving. They sometimes feed on underwater plants.

Skin folds that look like armor



## Sumatran rhino

Hairy skin

- Lives in protected parks in **tropical** forests in Sumatra, Indonesia, and in Sabah, Malaysia.
- Height to shoulder: up to 4.8 feet (1.5 m)
- Weight: up to 1,763 pounds (800 kg)
- This rhino is the closest living relative to the woolly rhinoceros that lived until about 10,000 years ago.



## Javan rhino



- There are fewer than 50 Javan rhinos left. They live in just two protected areas in Java, Indonesia and in Vietnam.
- Height to shoulder: up to 5.6 feet (1.7 m)
- Weight: up to 2.5 tons (2.3 t)

# Rhino Horns

All rhinos have horns. Males use them to fight with other males over females.

The horns are made of thousands of hair-like strands of keratin pressed together. Keratin is the material that your fingernails are made of.

Hank's  
**WOOF OF  
WISDOM!**

A white rhino's front horn may grow to be 3 feet (1 m) long!

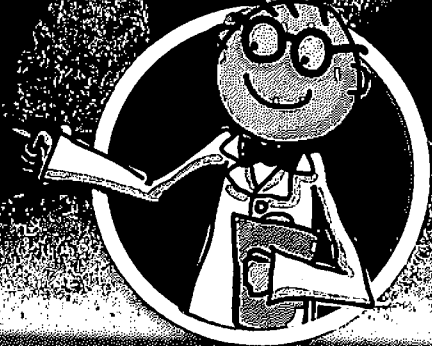
Mother rhinos use their horns to protect their young from enemies such as lions and crocodiles.



# Lip-Smacking Rhino Snacks

All rhinos are herbivores.  
That means they only eat plants.

White rhinos  
mostly eat  
grass.  
Their wide,  
square-looking  
upper lip  
munches  
through grass  
like a  
lawnmower!



Black rhinos eat  
trees and bushes.  
Black rhinos have  
a pointed upper lip.

A black rhino  
can move its  
upper lip and use  
it like fingers!  
The rhino grabs  
leaves and  
branches with  
its lip and pulls  
them into its  
mouth.

Pointed lip

# Rhino Senses and Surprises

Rhinos cannot see very well. They can hear and smell well, though.

A rhino's ears can turn in different directions to pick up sounds.

A rhino can smell a person or another animal from about 1,300 feet (400 m) away.

Charging  
black  
rhino

Black rhinos have a reputation for charging people. This is probably because the rhinos and people meet up by accident in thick trees and bushes. The rhino charges because it is surprised!

A black rhino can run at 34 miles per hour (55 km/h)!



# Rhino Skin Care

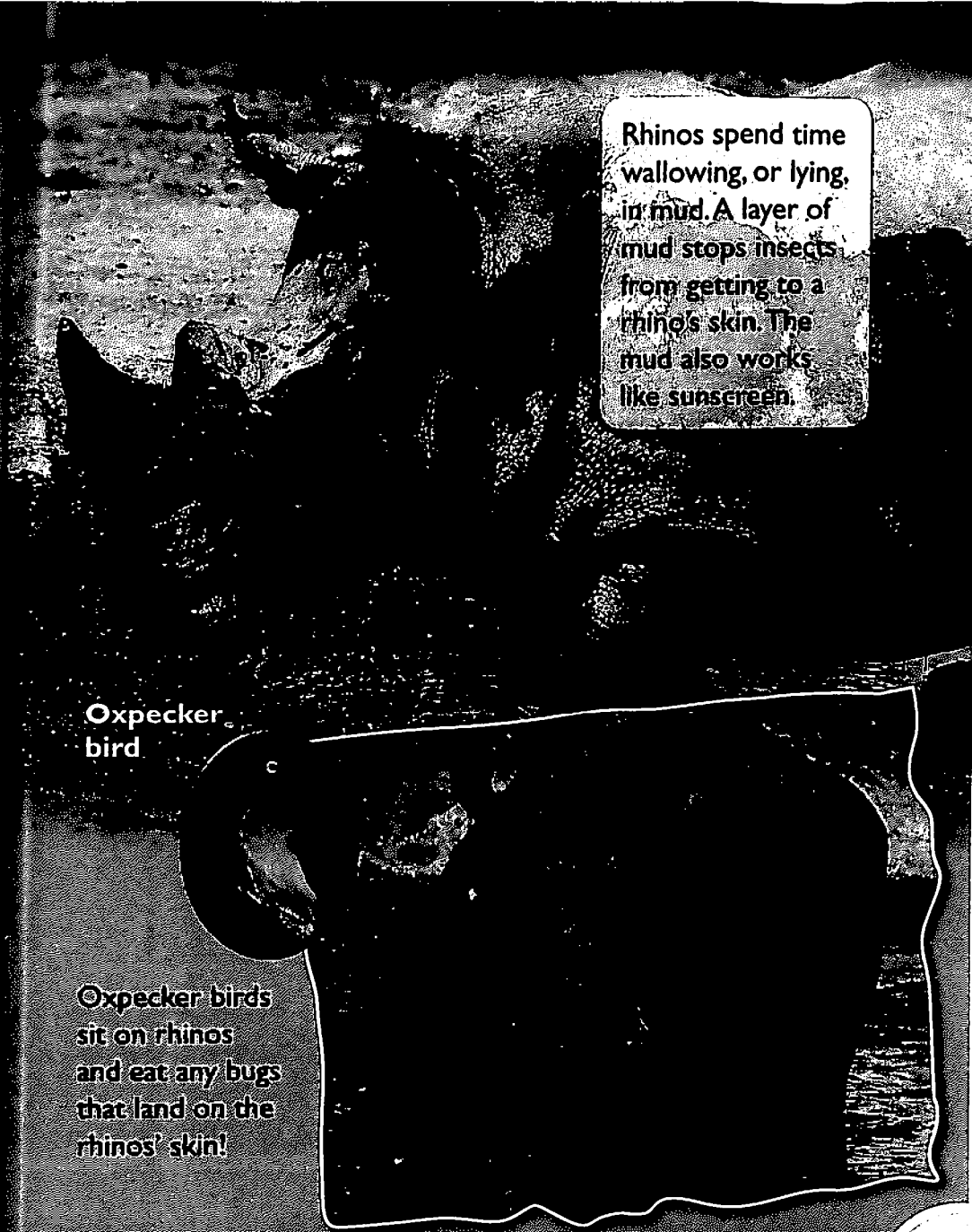
A rhino's skin looks like tough leather, but it can be harmed by the hot sun and insect bites.



Hank's  
**WOOF OF  
WISDOM!**

Rhino skin

A rhino's skin may be 2 inches (5 cm) thick in places.



Rhinos spend time wallowing or lying in mud. A layer of mud stops insects from getting to a rhino's skin. The mud also works like sunscreen.

Oxpecker  
bird

Oxpecker birds sit on rhinos and eat any bugs that land on the rhinos' skin!

# Rhino Babies

A female white rhino has her first baby, or calf, when she is around 5 to 7 years old. She is a good mother and protects her calf.

The mother rhino feeds her calf with milk from her body.

A newborn white rhino calf can stand up in less than an hour.

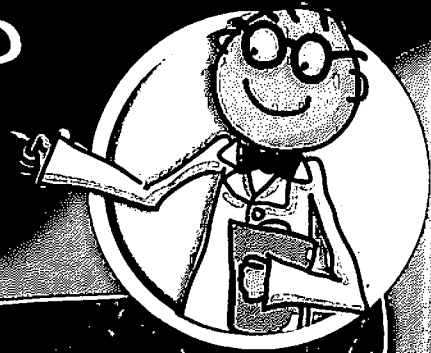
Calf drinking milk

Rhino calves start to eat grass and plants when they are about 2 months old.

A white rhino calf weighs up to 132 pounds (60 kg) when it is born!

# Growing Up

A rhino calf will stay with its mother for 3 or 4 years.

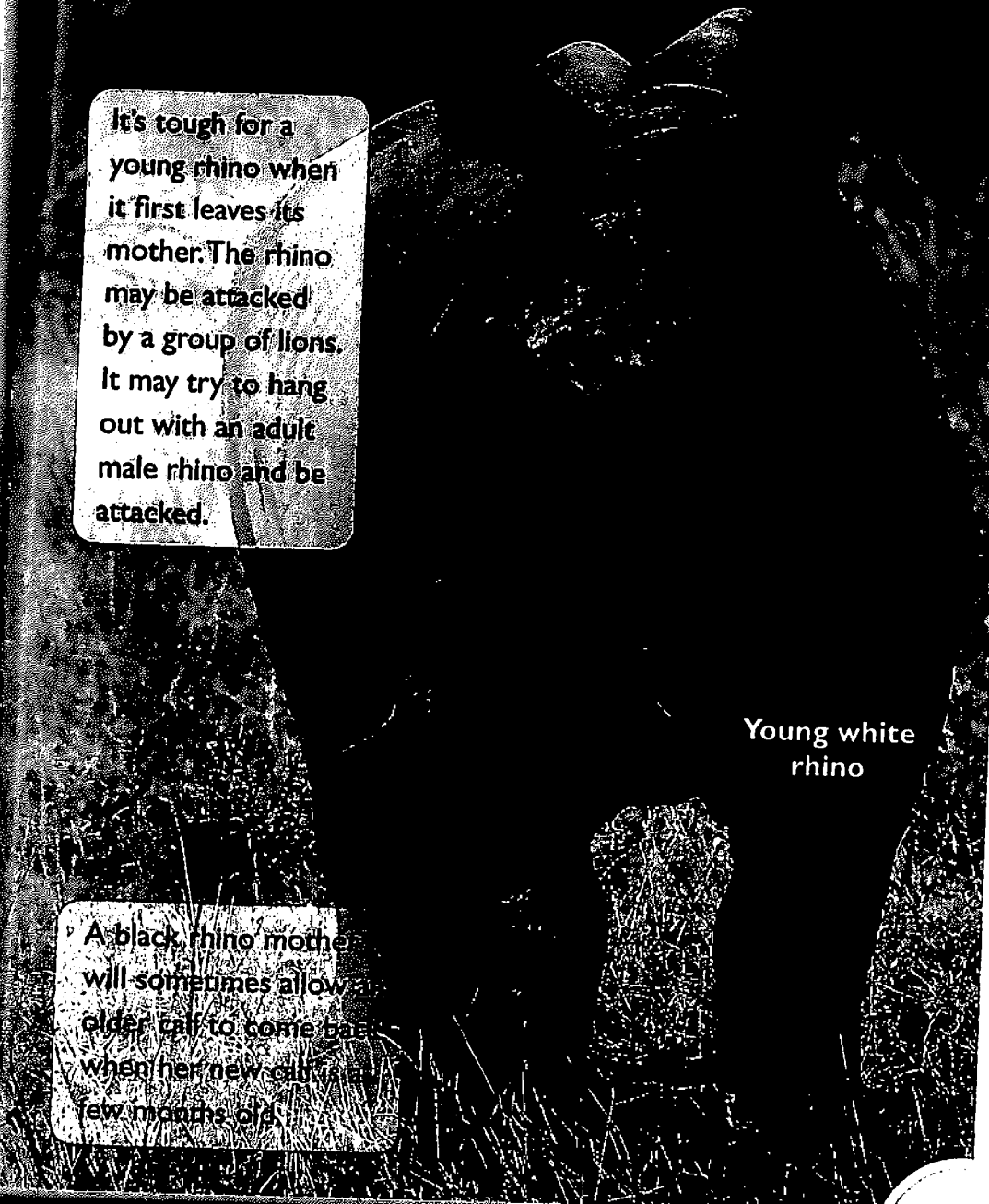


When it is time for the mother rhino to give birth to a new calf, she chases her older calf away.

It's tough for a young rhino when it first leaves its mother. The rhino may be attacked by a group of lions. It may try to hang out with an adult male rhino and be attacked.

A black rhino mother will sometimes allow an older calf to come back when her new calf is a few months old.

Young white rhino



# Rhino Life

Adult male rhinos, or bulls, live alone and have their own **territory**.



Bull rhino

A male rhino mates with the females in his territory.

An adult male rhino will allow other males to visit or live in his territory. If another adult male comes into his territory, however, there will be a fight!

Female white rhinos mostly live in pairs with their latest calf.



Female rhino (center) with her last two calves

Female black rhinos may live with their last two or three calves.

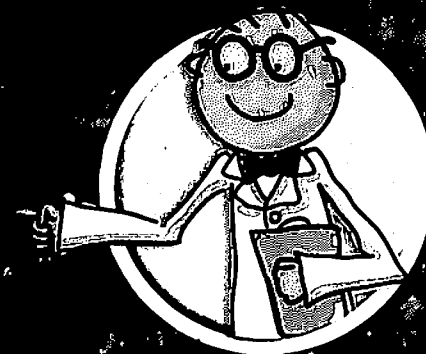


# Keep Out!

Rhinos don't have fences or signs to tell other rhinos where their territories begin and end.

Black and white male rhinos kick and scrape their dung along the edges of their territories. This tells other males to keep out!

Rhino dung



Male rhinos also spray the edges of their territories with their urine.

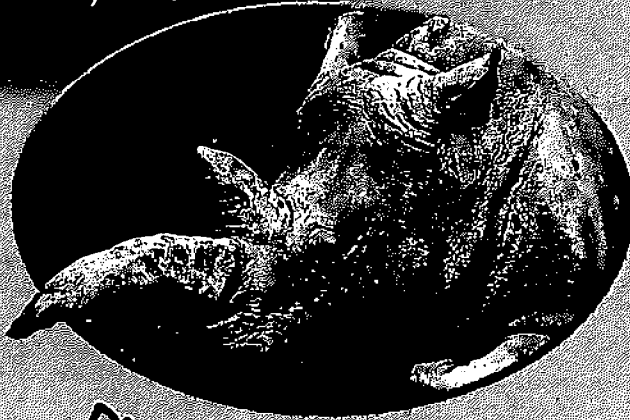
Hank's  
**WOOF OF WISDOM!**

Rhinos create huge piles of dung, called middens. Male and female rhinos can add to the dung piles. This is a way of sending messages to each other.



# Rhinos in Danger!

About 200 years ago, there were 1 million rhinos on Earth. Today, there are fewer than 30,000.



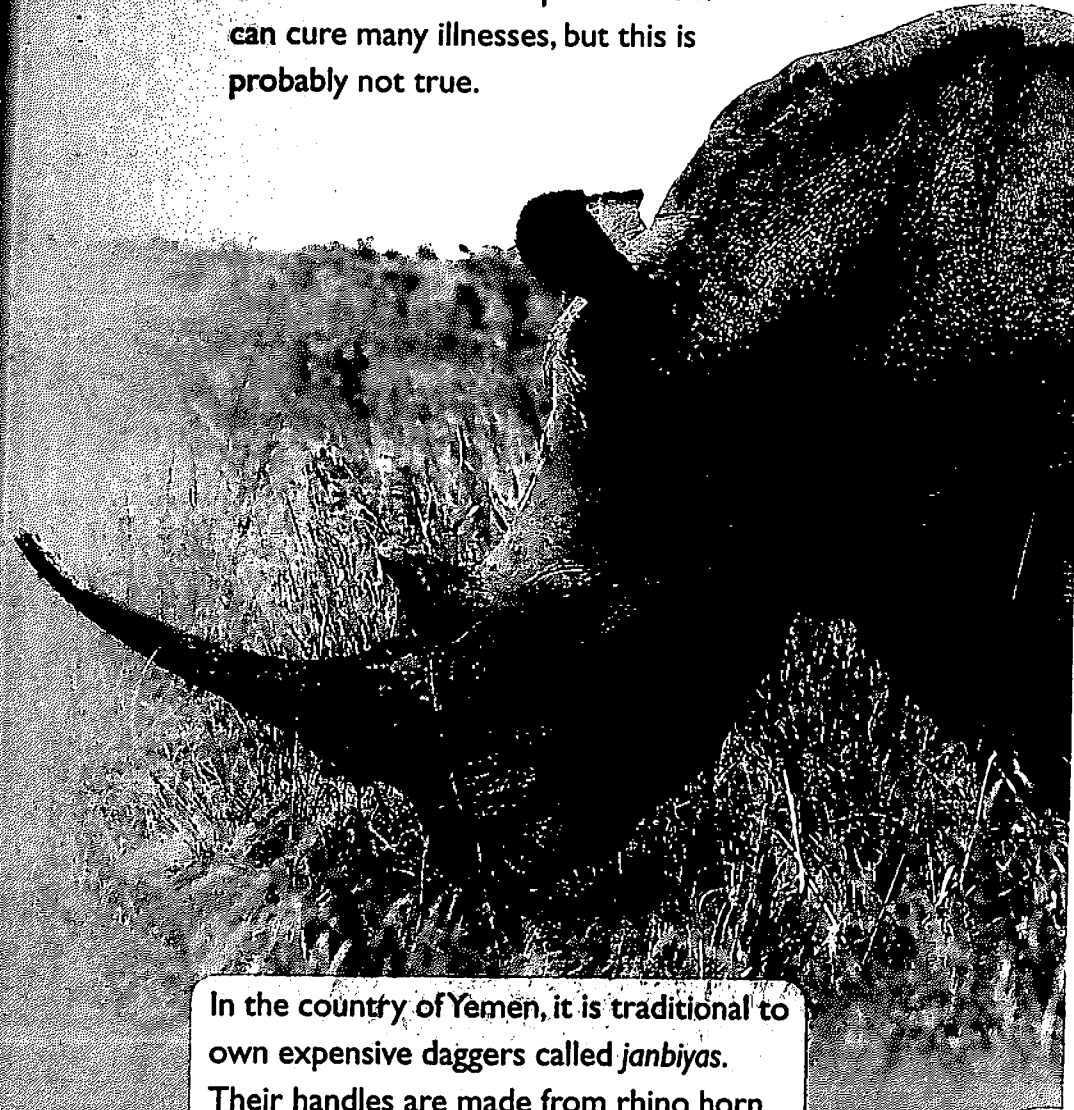
Rhinos are killed for their horns.

Hank's  
**WOOF OF  
WISDOM!**

The numbers of rhinos left are:

- White rhinos: 17,000 to 18,000
- Black rhinos: 4,000 to 5,000
- Greater one-horned rhinos: fewer than 3,000
- Sumatran rhinos: around 200
- Javan rhinos: fewer than 50

Rhino horn is used in **traditional Chinese medicine**. People believe it can cure many illnesses, but this is probably not true.



In the country of Yemen, it is traditional to own expensive daggers called *janbiyas*. Their handles are made from rhino horn.



# Rhino Rangers

It is against the law to kill rhinos, but people still do it! These people are known as poachers.

Rhino rangers patrol the forests and grasslands looking for poachers.

Rangers get to know all the rhinos in an area. If a rhino is missing, they know poachers may have been in the area.

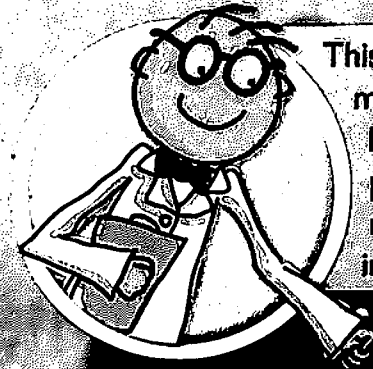


Rangers

Greater one-horned rhino

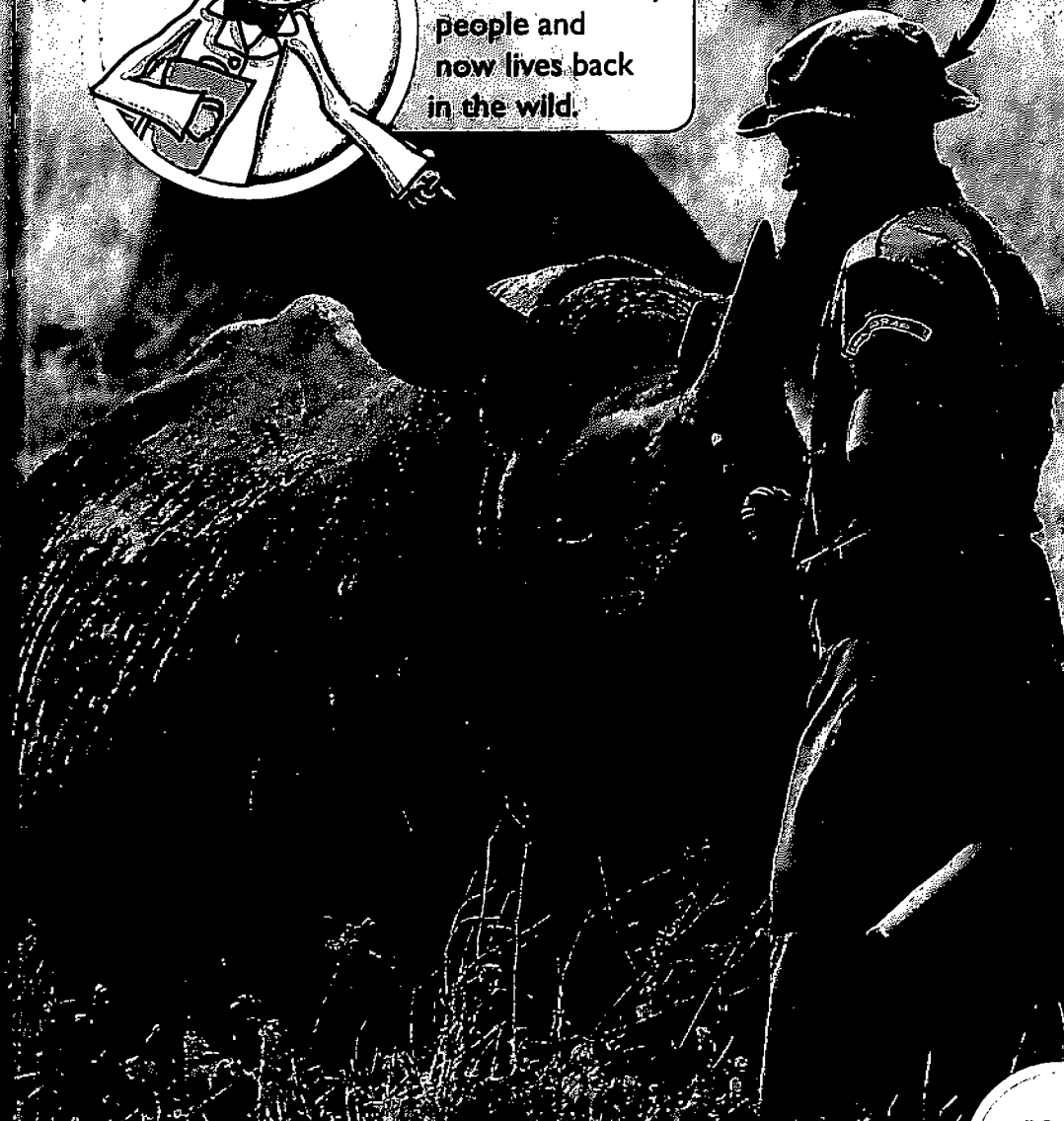
Hank's  
**WOOF OF  
WISDOM!**

Poachers are less likely to attack rhinos that are being protected by rangers.



This young rhino's mother was killed. He was raised by people and now lives back in the wild.

Ranger



# Glossary

**extinct** (ik-STINGKT)

No longer existing.

**grasslands** (GRAS-landz)

A hot habitat with lots of grass and few trees or bushes. Sometimes it is very dry, and at other times there is lots of rain.

**herbivore** (ER-buh-vor)

An animal that eats only plants.

**mate** (MAYT)

When a male and a female animal get together to produce young, or the word for an animal's partner.

**territory** (TER-uh-tor-ee)

An area that an animal protects because it is where it lives and finds food and mates.

**traditional** (truh-DIH-shuh-nul)

Something that a group of people have done for many years and have passed on to the people who came after them.

**tropical** (TRAH-puh-kul)

Having to do with the warmer parts of Earth that are near the equator.



## Dr. Bob's Fast Fact Board

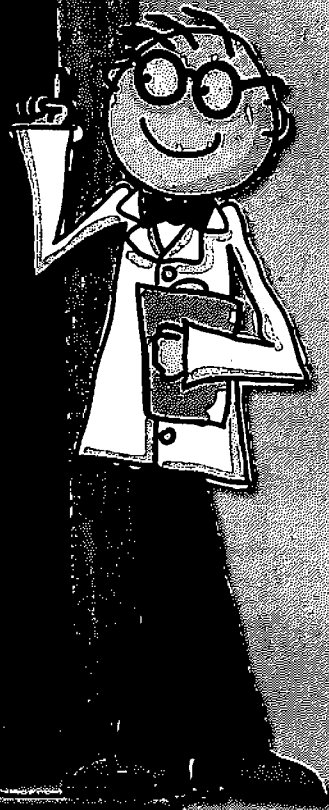
The word "rhinoceros" comes from the Greek words "rhino" and "ceros." The word "rhino" means "nose," and "ceros" means "horn."

A white rhino can live for up to 50 years.

The white rhino is the second-largest land animal on Earth. Only the elephant is larger.

The longest white rhino horn ever recorded measured 62 inches (1.6 m) long.

Greater one-horned rhinos have long, pointed lower teeth. Males use them in fights, and they can grow to be 3 inches (8 cm) long.



## Web Sites

[www.windmillbooks.com/weblinks](http://www.windmillbooks.com/weblinks)

# Read More

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