

<https://colonizinganimals.blog/2017/07/25/seeing-shooting-saving-seeing/>

[ANIMALS](#), [RESEARCH](#), [RHINOS](#)

Seeing, Shooting, Saving, Seeing...

Posted by [JONATHANSAHA](#) on [JULY 25, 2017](#)

The preambles to colonial legislation designed to protect wildlife managed to be at once condemnatory and fatalistic. The blame was placed on the Burmese people for failing to recognize the value of wild animals. At the same time, the retreat of wildlife was presented as an inevitable consequence of modernity. So, as well as being pragmatic legislation aimed at mitigating the effects of human activity on the wildlife, the laws were intended to have an educational effect. They were to inculcate an understanding of the “commercial, scientific, aesthetic and sporting reasons” for preserving fauna.

These reasons were, in practice, often indistinguishable. In 1931 a colonial hunter called E.H. Peacock visited the Shwe-U-Daung sanctuary that had been established in the north of Burma and wrote about his fortnight’s trip in the [*Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society*](#).



THE SHWE-U-DAUNG GAME SANCTUARY.

Giving a brief account of the extent and population of the sanctuary, Peacock goes on to emphasize the importance of making the animals visible. He suggested getting the animals accustomed to humans so that they do not hide from visitors and constructing a path around the sanctuary.

While he was there he also shot a rhinoceros, a photograph of which he included in his short article. It was a two-horned rhino, *Rhinoceros sumatrensis*, and its skin and skeleton were preserved and sent to the British Museum to be mounted.



THE ASIATIC TWO-HORNED RHINOCEROS (*R. summatrensis*), SHOT IN THE SANCTUARY.

Around ten years later, the Government of Burma produced a leaflet in English and Burmese that informed readers of the colony's game laws. It drew attention to certain animals that were protected, including *thamin* (a brown-antlered deer), argus pheasant, and rhinoceros.

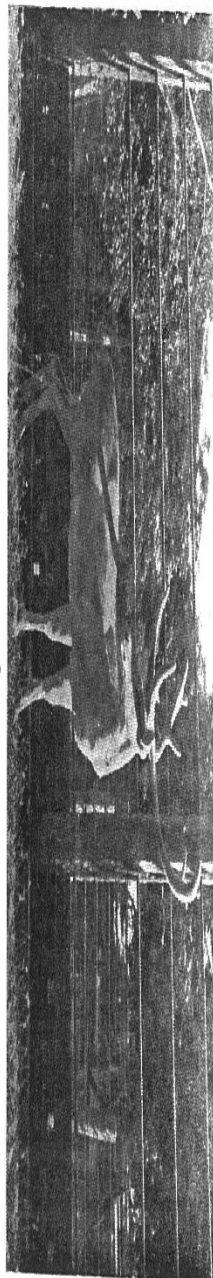
(43)

အသက် သက်တမ်းများ မျက်စိပြောင်းလဲနေရာ
 ကျောက်တန်းများကို ကောက်ယူနိုင်
 ကောက်ယူနိုင်

“ကောက်ယူသော တိရစ္ဆာန်များ”
 ဤ ဦးစွာ အသက် သက်တမ်း များ ကောက် ယူ
 (သတ္တဝါများကို ကောက်ယူသော အချိန်တွင် အသက် သက်တမ်း
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“ကောက်ယူသော တိရစ္ဆာန်များ”
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Brow-antlered Deer (*Panolia eldi* Thomas Thomas) Thamin



Arbus Pheasant (*Argusianus argus* Linn.) Arundane



BURMA'S WEALTH

WILD LIFE

Used wisely will last for ever

မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ၏ သဘာဝပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ကို ထိန်းသိမ်းခြင်း

မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ၏ သဘာဝပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ကို ထိန်းသိမ်းခြင်း

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Museum specimens of
 Sumatran Rhinoceros from Burma
 (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis* niger J.E. Gray)

WILD LIFE PROTECTION SERIES

No. 1 - Completely Protected Animals

CONSERVE

BURMA'S WILD LIFE

by

Strick authorities to and
 enforcement of the

GAME RULES

NORMA WILD LIFE PROTECTION

ACT, 1936 and RULES, 1941

COMPLETELY PROTECTED
 ANIMALS

are

RHINOCEROS, TAPIR,
 ARGUS PHEASANT, MASKED FINFOOT,
 THAMIN and PEAFOWL

(May not hunt or possess,
 sell or buy, alive or dead,
 any part or product of
 above - except under
 Special Licence for
 scientific purposes)

PROTECTED ANIMALS

are

ELEPHANT, BISON, SAING,
 SEROW and GORAL

(May hunt only with a license)

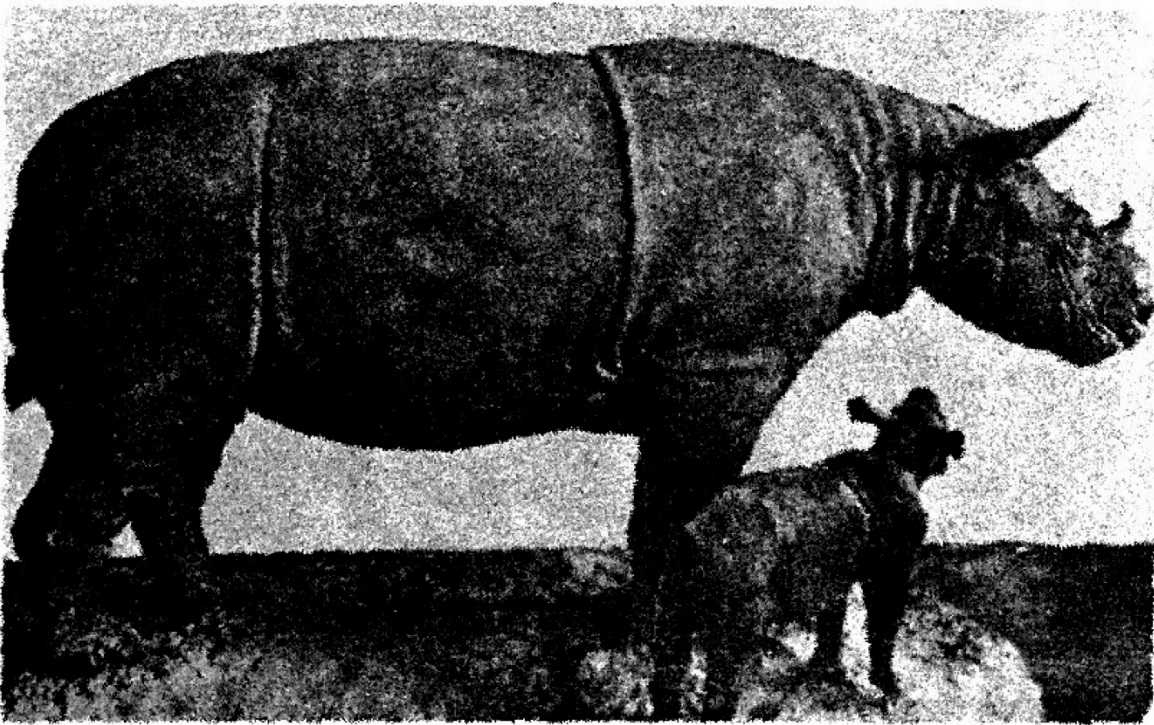
Printed for the Burma Forest Service Association
 by Asia Foundation at the Rangoon University Press

Photographs were shown on these leaflets, perhaps to help people spot endangered creatures or perhaps to make the leaflets more interesting. Prominently placed is a photograph of a rhinoceros, or rather, the remains of a rhinoceros.

ပြတိုက်တွင် သဘာဝဗေဒပညာ ပုံသွင်းထားသော မြန်မာပြည်ကြံ။

ကြံအနည်းငယ်သာ ရှိတော့သည်။

ကြံအရှင်များကို ကာကွယ်ထိမ်းသိမ်းကြစို့။



Museum specimens of
Sumatran Rhinoceros from Burma
(*Didermoceros sumatrensis niger* J.E. Gray)

National Archives of Myanmar, 1/15 (B), 715, 1929 File No. 5M-5: "Wild Animals".

This "museum specimen" was the same species as the rhino killed by Peacock a decade earlier. It's possible that it was even the same creature—although I have seen no documentation yet that confirms this.

Whether the same rhino or a another, there is a lethal logic at work. Conservation laws established sanctuaries to protect animals, like rhinos. They made it so that rhinos could be seen and (with the correct license) shot, in order to finance the sanctuaries. A rhino was then shot in a sanctuary and its remains shipped overseas. An image of a rhino once shot in the colony was then sent back to the colony, where it was used to support conservation laws, which were based on sanctuaries where rhinos could be seen and shot. While this is a particular case, it does highlight the circular way in which killing was embedded in colonial conservationism.