

chapter discusses the controversial black leopard and Cape lion. An extensive 15-page bibliography and an index provide many opportunities to reconstruct his sources and gain additional insights.

Skead would certainly have been the first to accept that there was still much to be learned and new documents to be discovered. He overlooked the article on the animals of the Eastern Cape published in 1857 by Henry Hall, who worked in the Royal Engineers Department and visited many parts of the Eastern Cape in the 1840s and 1850s. For a species like the black rhinoceros, Hall was able to record many occurrences that otherwise would have been lost. It would be advisable one day also to reprint Hall's zoological summaries with the addition of a historical commentary. Conversely, Skead was able to include a large amount of information from local newspapers and magazines, which otherwise would have been forgotten.

In conservation, in an age in which animals are easily transported from one region to another, it is a generally accepted fundamental rule that species should remain within their historical ranges. For instance, in recent guidelines on conservation strategies for the rhinoceros in southern Africa, it is clearly stated that 'the founder animals should of course be of a "subspecies" that occurred within the area prior to extinction or is the same as any surviving rhinos in that area' (du Toit 2006:51). Unfortunately, in reality this tenet is followed only when pragmatically or

economically viable, with the borders of the ranges of subspecies adjusted according to particular needs. It is certainly true that the historical range or classification of a particular species is rarely studied or documented in any detail before wide-ranging conservation actions are taken. I would argue that investigations on the historical distribution of mammals should be extended to the entirety of the African continent. Skead has done the work for the Cape region, it is for us to follow his example—to learn about the environment as it used to be and to understand how best to allow species to evolve naturally even if it must be in a managed environment.

The editors of this second volume of Skead's book must be congratulated on their undertaking. The book is priced at a very reasonable R490 (+VAT & PP); all proceeds will be added to a fund to produce the first volume of the original work. Enquiries should be directed to Dr André Boshoff, email: andre.boshoff@nmmu.ac.za.

References

- du Toit R. 2006. Guidelines for implementing SADC rhino conservation strategies. SADC Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation, Harare.
- Hall H. 1857. Notes on animal life in South Africa. *Cape Monthly Magazine* 1(1):3–11.

LETTER

Dear Samuel,
I have just been reading your interesting paper on in- and outbreeding of African rhinos published in *Pachyderm* no. 42 [Krummenacher and Zschokke, Inbreeding and outbreeding in African rhinoceros species: p. 108–115].

The lack of data or size of datasets is always a problem with animals like rhinos, which don't breed very quickly.

I was somewhat surprised that you, on the basis of Rookmaaker (1998) [author name misspelled], considered that I thought that there were 6 subspecies of the black rhino. In fact, I believe that the species needs a proper revision and until such time the latest revision by Groves should be fol-

lowed. See also my paper in IZN 2005: http://www.rhinoresourcecenter.com/index.php?s=1&act=refs&CODE=ref_detail&id=1165245183.

The recognition of conservation units, at present 4, is a valid exercise, but does not necessarily coincide with the actual subspecies, hence the use of scientific names for these units should be discouraged—but it doesn't seem that anybody heeds that message. Also, there seems to be no money for a proper taxonomic revision, and while this is pending, conservation decisions are taken on the basis of convenience rather than science.

Otherwise an enjoyable paper. Are you planning any further on the subject. There is an 'in press' in the text, but not mentioned in the references.

All the best, Kees [Rookmaaker]