

## WORK PROGRESS IN GARAMBA NATIONAL PARK

At the very end of April we began the project in Garamba National Park to monitor the remaining northern white rhinos. The objectives of the preliminary work are to: (1) find out how many rhinos remain and of what sexes and ages; (2) evaluate the logistics of conserving them.

From ground and aerial survey work we can thus far identify 11 different individuals. The known individuals comprise: 4 adult males; 3 probably 4 adult females; 1 unsexed sub-adult; 1 male calf under 1 year old; 1 unsexed calf under 1 year old.

We do not know enough at this stage to draw any conclusions as to the exact number of rhinos remaining. Our immediate plans are to continue with intensive groundwork to verify further individuals and gather information on their behaviour and ecology, and to ensure that reliable guards are patrolling the rhino areas. Some further development of the monitoring programme will be carried out. The grass is roughly 1 to 1.5m tall at present.

We are extremely grateful to the many organisations and individuals who have made this preliminary and urgent work possible and effective. Acknowledgements will be made in the full report.

**Kes Hillman and Mankoto ma Oyisenzoo**

## SOME POSITIVE NEWS FROM KENYA

One woman's wish to save rhinos has led to the construction of a rhino sanctuary in northern Kenya. Anna Merz visited the Craigs' acacia-savanna ranch in 1982, and discussed with them the possibility of a rhino sanctuary. With the Craigs' provision of 5,000 acres on Lewa Downs, Anna Merz paid for a 20km long fence from the "Ehefence" company to enclose the area for rhinos. Preparations for the sanctuary took a year to complete. The fence now stands at 2.40m and has seven electric wires, each one carrying 5000 volts. The fence is to provide the dual function of keeping rhinos in and poachers out, and also there is strict guard security.

By February 1984, black rhino translocation to Lewa Downs was able to begin, with the full support throughout of Daniel Sindiyo, Director of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Department. Invaluable help and hard work continue from Peter Jenkins, Senior Warden (Planning North) in the Department, and Francis Dyer, Sanctuary Manager, as well as the Craigs themselves. First to be brought to the sanctuary was a male rhino, captured near Nairobi National Park by the Capture Unit. The second rhino was a female, found by Anna Merz, the last rhino in Shaba Reserve. For four months, four guards protected her in Shaba, but despite this, there was fear that bandits might kill her and she was moved, still wild and desperate, to the safety of Lewa Downs. In the holding boma Anna Merz calmed her by the unique expedient of reading aloud to her for three days. Another male arrived from the Nairobi Park Orphanage. Finally, two more males and one female were brought by the Department Capture Unit from the Prettejohns' ranch, near Mweiga into the sanctuary. So far, therefore, Lewa Downs rhino sanctuary protects four males and two females and mating has already been observed once. Anna Merz is hoping to bring in three more black rhino females.

There are not only black rhinos in the sanctuary. A southern white rhino from California was recently introduced to the tame group of southern whites in Meru National Park to provide new blood, and the non-breeding male at Meru was transferred to Lewa. Possibly, Anna Merz says, some more whites may be introduced to Lewa to breed with the solitary male.

The vegetation in the sanctuary has been surveyed by Hugh Lamprey, and any changes since the introduction of the rhinos will be monitored.

What plans for the future? The gestation period for black rhinos is 15-18 months, and if breeding proves successful, Anna Merz hopes that funds could be raised to enclose eventually the whole 45-48,000 acres of Lewa Downs. One day when the demand for the horn has been successfully curbed, Anna Merz wishes to open the fence to the largely uninhabited dry north and repopulate northern Kenya with black rhinos. Until that time, this "holding action" is the best safeguard for the rhinos.

L. Vigne

## Book Reviews

*Ivory Crisis*, by Ian Parker and Mohamed Amin (Chatto & Windus, London 1983) £14.95

I was delighted to be asked to review Ian Parker's book; having seen Nigel Sitwell's caustic review in the *IUCN Bulletin*, September 1983, (reprinted from *New Scientist* 30 June 1983). I was confident that I would be able to pan it and bring Parker down a peg or two. I therefore reached eagerly for the copy that had been roosting unread on my shelf; but as I read, my spirits fell. For one thing, Parker has resisted the tendency of his prose to become turgid and polemical and the book's style is clear and straightforward. For another the book is informative and, for most of the way, uncontentious.

The book falls into three main sections. The first, taking up about half the text, is Parker's account of his own involvement with wildlife, starting with his entry into the Kenya Game Department in 1956, and covering his participation in the Tsavo anti-poaching operation and his early contacts with the

Walian-gulu elephant hunters, his initiation of the Galana Game Management Scheme, the Uganda culling, the Tsavo controversy, the Rwanda elephant extermination, and his association with the ivory trade. This section establishes Parker's credentials as having been in on the ground floor of many of the key events of recent East African conservation history. It also documents his growing concern that much of the theory and practice of conservation in East Africa has been muddled, insincere and inappropriate. My only complaint about this section is that it is too short. I would have liked more of the anecdotal detail that, for me, made the account of the surreal 1973 Juba ivory auction the highpoint of the book.

The second section consists of a historical review of the ivory trade from pre-classical times to the present. Here Parker has distilled a mass of diffuse documentation and dovetailed it with his own detailed studies of the current trade to produce an intriguing and readable account. It is easy to forget that before Parker pioneered the study of the ivory trade in the 1970s, this

vital area was virtually a closed book to conservationists. Parker's object in this section (which includes two earlier chapters on the Wahiangu elephant hunters), is to make the point that ivory has an aesthetic appeal to the human mind analogous to that of gold. This appeal has generated a complex web of activities, hunting, trading and crafting, spread over three continents since the dawn of history, most of which, when examined in detail, turn out to be skilled, artistic and admirable. The sympathetic approach to African hunters is one of the most significant aspects of the book. Parker does not ignore the dark side of the ivory trade, however, particularly its long and intimate association with the shave trade. Again, I was sorry that this section is so short and lacks a bibliography.

From the first two sections, Parker concludes that Africa's elephant population is still very large (probably over a million animals), that its range is very extensive and that a significant proportion of the population and range is protected in conservation areas. He argues that the African elephant is not endangered, that the present flow of ivory out of Africa does not exceed the sustainable yield and that the demands of the ivory trade are not the primary stimulus for killing elephants. He contends that elephants are at risk in conditions of political upheaval and breakdown of law and order, and more fundamentally, their numbers are progressively eroded as the expanding human population colonizes their range.

Parker now unmasks his batteries in the final short section of the book and proceeds to assault the conservation establishment, personified particularly by the kind of people who compile and read this *Newsletter*, IUCN/WWF, the specialist groups, the CITES administration and graduate zoologists in general. This is, of course, the part which has attracted most attention and controversy. He asserts that the conservation establishment has little knowledge or understanding of the interactions of wildlife and human populations in Africa; that its emphasis on poaching and the ivory trade as the primary threat is misplaced; that its insistence on the existence of a crisis in wildlife conservation in Africa is insincere and self-serving, and that its combination of ignorance, incompetence and dishonesty is damaging to the interests of conservation. As Parker says in the introduction: "I hope to show that there is no ivory crisis, but a very real crisis in conservation philosophy".

This is fighting talk; is it justified? While I would argue with certain aspects of Parker's case (a task that *Newsletter* readers will know is not to be undertaken lightly), I agree that the broad outline is sound and needs to be answered. I would contend, therefore, that *Ivory Crisis* should be required reading for anyone seriously concerned with African conservation, that the conservation establishment should re-evaluate very carefully its role in the contemporary scene and that, specifically, we should re-examine our ideas about the use of wildlife resources by local people in and around conservation areas. Perhaps legalised "poaching" as envisaged in the original Galana Scheme concept will be the trend of the future. Perhaps it will be purist conservation, or a mixture of both. Parker's book raises many such questions which are basic to the future of conservation in Africa. Luckily, with a million elephants and nearly 4% of the sub-continent designated as protected area, we have a certain amount of leeway in which to find the solutions.

*Rhino Exploitation: The Trade in Rhino Products in India, Indonesia Malaysia, Burma, Japan and South Korea* by Esmond

Bradley Martin. Preface by Lee Talbot. Introduction by Elspeth Huxley. (WWF, Hong Kong, 1983) \$ 7.50

Many of those reading this review will be familiar with the thoroughness of Dr Bradley Martin's extensive research and reporting on the international trade in rhino products. This book is no exception, and its quantitative content is nicely leavened with a wealth of interesting information on traditional uses of rhino products.

Particularly intriguing is China's continuing role as a major recipient, but not consumer, of rhino horn. Arriving mostly as shavings originating from North Yemen, it is virtually all then incorporated into manufactured pills and potions and exported to trusting recipients in other Asian countries. The horn, being no longer "recognizable" in this form, thus evades CITES regulations.

This book was conceived by WWF/IUCN for the dual purposes of raising money for WWF Hong Kong (the author receives no royalties), and more important, in the words of Elspeth Huxley in her introduction, to help "stir into vigorous action governments, societies, and individuals who really want to see the rhino preserved."

With these objectives in mind the author has, in the authoritativeness and readability of the text provided, done all that could be expected of him. The concern of this reviewer centres, firstly, on whether WWF could not have exploited Bradley Martin's work more effectively, and (be that as it may) secondly, on whether the present book is being used to full advantage.

It is clear that the book has great potential for fulfilling one of its own priority recommendations - namely to intensify publicity on the plight of rhinoceroses in Africa and Asia and its causes, in order to cut down demand for rhino products. In that Asia provides the main market for these, it is (as WWF intended) particularly appropriate that this book was published there, although Hong Kong was not, curiously, given a section of its own.

As it stands, the book has some other notable omissions. The set of recommendations for practical conservation action in each country covered mentioned in Lee Talbot's Preface are not to be found in the text, again reducing the book's effectiveness at the local level. While the author has evidently made vigorous and sometimes successful attempts to persuade pharmacists to promote substitutes for rhino horn, it appears from the lack of mention of the subject that neither he nor anyone else is yet armed with conclusive evidence that rhino horn is pharmacologically inert, whether as ferrufuge or aphrodisiac. Whatever happened to the WWF-sponsored research by Hoffman-LaRoche into this matter?

While local authorities will not appreciate the inaccurate implication made in the Introduction that Javan and Sumatran rhino conservation are lost causes, this well-researched and well-written book can still make a valuable contribution, and it is to be hoped that steps have been taken to ensure that WWF National Appeals and other suitable organisations are promoting its distribution in the six countries mentioned in the title, in addition to Hong Kong where we know it to be available. In particular, the book should also be distributed (free of charge?) to selected pharmaceutical traders to encourage more of them to promote substitutes for rhino horn amongst their clientele.

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