

RHINO POACHING CRISIS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Strategic Protection of
Threatened Species



Awareness Campaign by
SPOTS and OMG
August 2012

South Africa is home to the Big Five. While all of them are at risk, on average two rhinos are killed every day through illegal and cruel poaching. The reason for the increasing slaughter is that the horn is sold into the Asian traditional medicine market. Rhino horns are composed largely of the protein keratin, also the main ingredient in hair, *fingernails*, and animal hooves.

In many cases the horn is hacked off while the animal is still alive. It is time to stop the animal cruelty and diminish the belief that the horn has any proven medicinal value.



Photo from www.krugerpark.com

Rhino horn has **NO** medicinal value

THE BIG FIVE

NOW

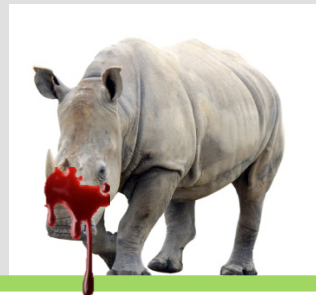
Elephant
Buffalo
Lion
Leopard
Rhino



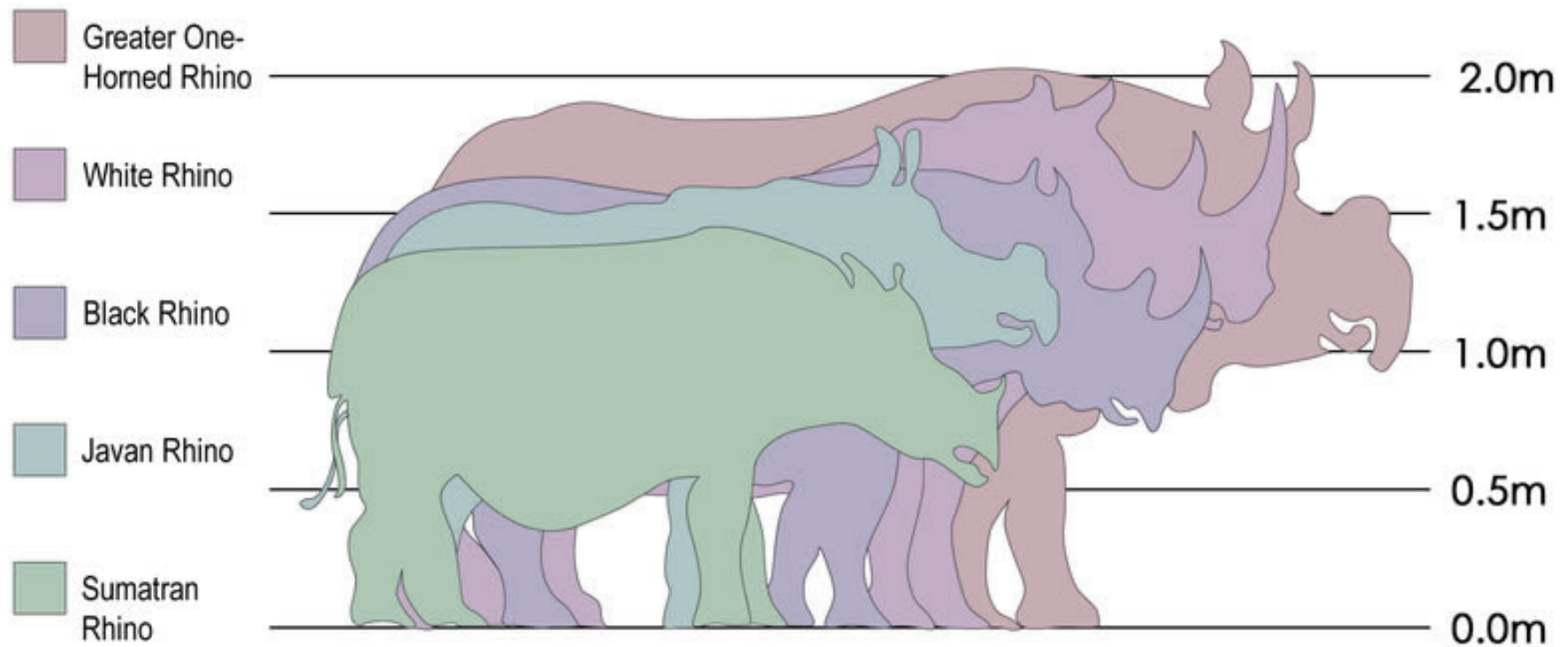
2022

Elephant
Buffalo
Lion
Leopard
~~Rhino~~

**Are you going
to allow it?**



Rhino Species



1 meter = 39.37 inches. For example, 2.0 meters = approximately 6.5 feet.

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Rhino Species

African rhinos: black and white

Black rhinos and **white rhinos** are the same color—they're both brownish gray! How the white rhino came to be called "white" is uncertain. One account says that South Africa's early Boer settlers called it *wijde*, Dutch for "wide," which could refer to the wide lip or the size of the animal. The wide mouth of the white rhino is perfect for grazing on grasses, while the more narrow, prehensile lip of the black rhino is great for pulling leaves and shrubs into its mouth. Other names used for these two rhinos are "broad-lipped" and "hook-lipped." Guess which name belongs to which rhino!

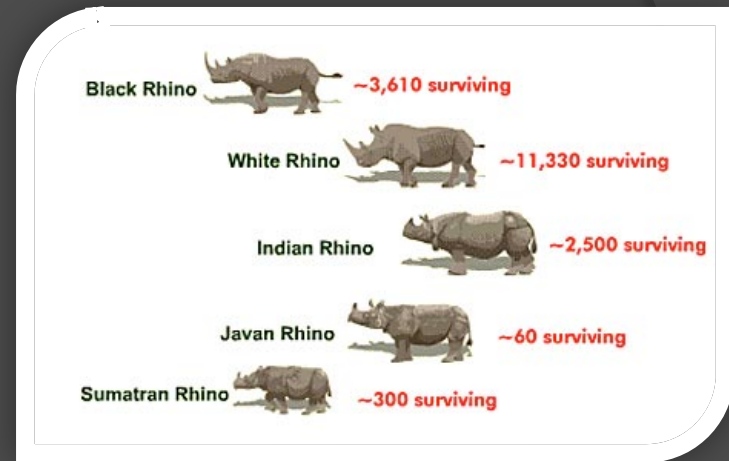
The Asian rhinos

Greater one-horned rhinoceros - The mouth of the greater one-horned rhino looks like a cross between broad-lipped and hook-lipped. Although it is fairly broad, it has a small prehensile lip. Many people describe these rhinos as armor-plated, but they are actually covered with a layer of skin that has many folds. They are native to swampy areas of Northeast India and Nepal.

Javan rhinoceros - Like the greater one-horned rhino, the Javan has a single horn. It is also called the lesser one-horned rhino. Javan rhinos are very rare in the heavily forested areas of Southeast Asia, and they are probably the rarest of the rhino species.

Sumatran rhinoceros - This is the smallest and hairiest of the rhinos. Like the Javan rhino, it is critically endangered, with around 300 animals left in the world. Very little of its native habitat is left on the island of Sumatra. There has been little success in breeding this species in zoos.

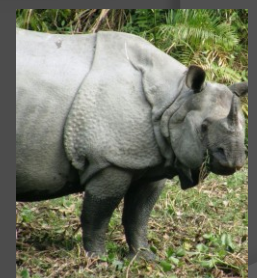
In 2011 the Javan rhino was declared *extinct* in mainland Asia, leaving just one small population in Indonesia. The Western black rhino in Africa also became extinct in 2011.



White Rhino



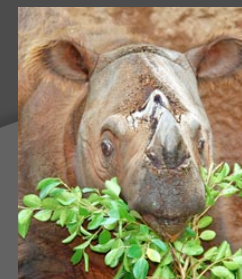
Black Rhino



Greater One-horned Rhino



Javan Rhino



Sumatran Rhino

Why do rhinos need their horns?



- Rhinos use their horns for self-defense
- Rhinos also use their horns for guiding younger rhinos, lifting them up, and showing them where to go. Think about how difficult it would be for a human mommy to work with her baby if she did not have arms
- They dig with their horns in the ground when they take a mud bath. They wallow in water or mud to keep themselves cool and to get rid of parasites
- The horn enables them to root for food
- A large horn is a sign of strength and plays an important role in crash* (group) dynamics

*** A crash of rhino is a congregation of more than one rhino**

Interesting facts about crash dynamics: The leader of a crash of rhino is the biggest and most mature. The horn is normally big and impressive and the crash, especially the juveniles seem to realize and respect that - it is a sign of power. Observation of crash dynamics have revealed that dehorned rhino seem to lose their aura of power. It's like the crash lose confidence in him and even juveniles seem prepared to test his authority. We believe very strongly that dehorning has a significant impact on crash dynamics.





What rhinos mean to the ecosystem

- The rhino is what's called an umbrella species. Like an umbrella protects you from the rain, conservation of an umbrella species can indirectly protect many other species.
When you save a rhino, you save an ecosystem!
- Rhinos have a big impact on the ecosystem:
 - They break paths through dense brush and forest and make way for other animals
 - Did you know? *Rhinos are herbivores*. They generally eat leafy material, although their ability to ferment food in their hindgut allows them to subsist on more fibrous plant matter, if necessary
 - Rhinos prune bushes, small trees and shrubs as they eat, and when they poop, they disperse seeds which eventually germinate and grow. Their dung enriches soil nutrition and structure
 - They also dig to create wallows, establishing pools of water benefiting other species such as frogs and insects that need them to complete their lifecycles



Rhino horn has NO medicinal value



- Rhino horn is used in the traditional medicine systems of many Asian countries, from Malaysia and South Korea to India and China, to allegedly cure a variety of ailments
- In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the horn, which is shaved or ground into a powder and dissolved in boiling water, is used to treat fever, rheumatism, gout, and other disorders, but the medicinal value has never been proven
- Science is now stepping in to dispel some of the mystery and fiction surrounding the use of rhino horn. Rhino horns are composed largely of the protein keratin, also the main component in hair, fingernails, and animal hooves
- Unlike the horns of most animals, which have a bony core covered by a relatively thin layer of keratin, rhino horns are keratin all the way through



Rhino horn has NO medicinal value

Continued...

- Rhino horns are not made simply from a clump of compressed hair. Recent studies by researchers at Ohio University using CT scans, have shown that the horns are similar in structure to horses' hooves, turtle beaks, and cockatoo bills. The studies also revealed that the centers of the horns have dense mineral deposits of calcium and melanin.
- As the softer outer portion was worn away over time by the sun and typical rhino activities (bashing horns with other animals, or rubbing it on the ground), the inner core would be sharpened into a point (much like a wooden pencil)
- Source: www.pbs.com





How are rhinos killed?

- Syndicates use helicopters to shoot or dart a rhino with a tranquillizer gun to bring the animal down and then close in, hacking the horn off and then leaving the animal to bleed to death. However, Rhinos are more often shot with high powered hunting rifles than tranquilized with a dart gun. Often, if the cow has a calf, it is killed as well, both for the little bit of horn that it may have, but also to prevent it from interfering with the poachers as they hack the mothers horn out
- Sometimes poachers are highly skilled professional hunters, who operate at ground level in a highly organized manner, with logistical support in the form of vehicles and other back-up
- Less sophisticated poaching groups may consist of 4 to 6 individuals who are well armed and will infiltrate a community to get information on rhinos in the area. They will plan their kill, often shooting the animal in the knee to keep it from running away, or killing it outright. The animal is usually slaughtered and the horns are usually roughly removed with an axe or panga.

(Source: www.naturalnews.com)





Why say no to rhino horn trade?

- The most important question to ask: how can we give up and say we are not capable of protecting the animals, so we fix the problem by legalizing something that is currently illegal?
- What will the impact be on the ecosystem and the economy (tourist industry) if there is no rhino left?
- How can we legalize horn trade when we are not exactly sure how big the market is? Are there enough rhinos to satisfy the demand?
- If we legalize horn trade, we will be under severe pressure to legalize the trade in many other species e.g. lion bone, pangolin, porcupines, many different snakes, etc.
- Not enough has been done yet to protect them and we have to give ourselves a chance to do so. We do not want to legalize horn trade because we are desperate. We have to think of the animal's well being first
- **Remember: Rhino horn has no medicinal value**



RHINO ORPHANS

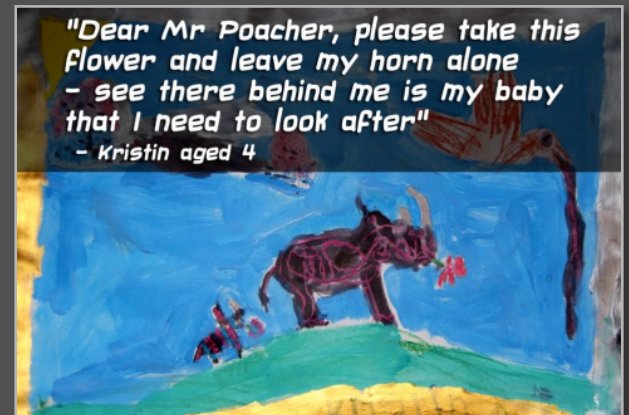
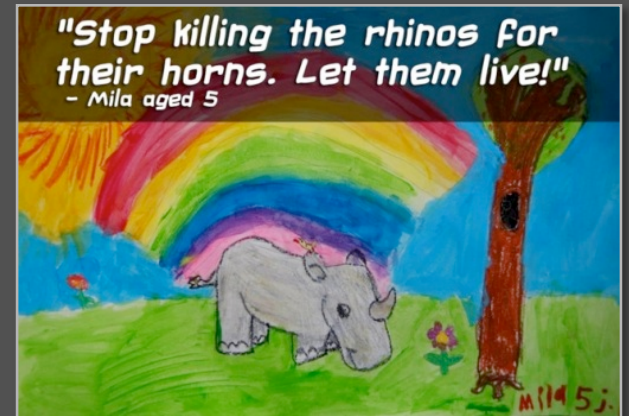
The closest rhino relationship is between a female and her calf. They stay together for up to 4 years.

Rhino mothers are killed by poachers and sometimes their babies are just a few months old. It is very traumatic to the little one and it will call for its deceased mother for months particularly at sunrise and sunset - it is a call which cannot be described and once heard, it will haunt your memory forever.

Human intervention is necessary to ensure the survival of the orphan rhinos, however, it decreases their chance to go back into the wild. They will never see their family again.



PLEASE DO NOT KILL MY MOMMY





Why you should get involved

- Rhinos belong to **ALL** the citizens in the world. We are all they have got and they are depending on us to help them
- Survival of many other species depend on us successfully fighting for the rhino's survival. If the iconic rhino can't be saved, what chance do the lesser known endangered species have?
- Your involvement in playing a role in conservation will be showcased on the OMG and SPOTS websites
- Make this part of your resume one day. It is something to be very proud of – you did not wait for someone else to take action and solve the problem. **You stood up for what's right** and made your voice heard
- The OMG and SPOTS letter campaign is not only about asking questions, it is also about bringing awareness to the plight of this defenseless animal
- Letters will be delivered to the South African government and the media will be invited. By getting the media involved, a larger audience can be reached



Example of Letter to President Zuma

PO Box 2085
Pawleys Island, SC 29585,
USA
July 1st 2012

Dear President Zuma,

I am writing to ask you what plans you are
poaching of the beloved rhino in South Africa
I have visited South Africa on several occa
greatest thrills that I experienced was se
majestic rhinoceros. Today, the poachir
horns is really deplorable and with the to
creature threatened so will go the tot
SA greatly depends.

On behalf of the children of One M
you to take the necessary precauti
and outright cruelty of these belc

With sincere thanks,

Yours,

Goffinet McLaren

Dear President Zuma, M

My name is Carter, I
one of the founders of
More Generation. I a
writing this letter beca
of rhino poaching. Rhino p
is something that people
to know about, and with
power, we could make
But if we don't get
out, who will make a
who will know about it
Rhinos can become
our life time, instead
big five it could be
big four. That is w
your help and pow
this.

We can
Rhino Olivia Ries

Anybody c
if we can you can
Olivia Ries

Best Regards from the on
OMG Team Carter

Dear, President Zuma, Blesses
Make poacher's stop chopping off
my horn, I have to lift chop off
falls it to get to up my baby
get it in a hole air, and if my baby
Hands, and I need my baby
so I can have a fight of males
from Jamba the Rhino



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Please write a letter to the President of South Africa. Ask him what he is going to do to save the rhino from extinction. Ask your family and friends to write letters too. Make your pleas heard – be a voice for the rhino and become part of stopping the senseless killing of this innocent animal. Mail your letter and/or picture to OMG and it will be forwarded to President Jacob Zuma in South Africa.

USA



South
Africa


say **NO!**
to rhino horn

You must be the change you want to see
in the world. Protect it. It is your future.

Strategic Protection of
Threatened Species



www.spots.org.za



Mail your letter and/or picture to:

One More Generation
P.O. Box 143627
Fayetteville, GA 30214