

拯救犀牛 Saving the white rhinos

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil.

大家好。这里是 BBC 学习英语栏目的六分钟英语。我是内尔。

And I'm Sam.

我是萨姆。

In this programme, we'll be hearing a news story linked to the 'Nature versus Nurture' debate, not concerning a human, but a rhinoceros!

在本期节目中，我们将听到跟“先天对后天”辩论有关的新闻故事，不是跟人类有关，而是跟犀牛有关！

The extremely rare northern white rhino of East Africa was on the brink of extinction when the second-to-last living male, Suni, died in 2014, leaving behind two females, Najin and Fatu - the last living creatures of their species.

极其稀有的东非北方白犀牛在它的倒数第二个雄性犀牛 Suni 在 2014 年死亡的时候濒临灭绝，只留下了两只雌性犀牛，Najin 和 Fatu —— 这个物种最后的活体。

Conservationists started an artificial breeding programme, using eggs from the females and sperm from Suni to produce an embryo - an unborn animal in the very early stages of development.

自然环境保护主义者启动了一个人工养殖项目，使用雌性的卵子和 Suni 的精子来制造胚胎 —— 处于发育最初期阶段的未出生的动物。

Recently there's been a new development in the story, but before we hear more, it's time for my quiz question.

最近这个故事有了新的发展，但是在我们进一步了解之前，请回答我的问题。

The name, 'rhinoceros', comes from the ancient Greek, but what exactly does it mean?

犀牛这个名字来源于古希腊语，但是它到底是什么意思呢？

Is it a) thick skin, b) horned nose, or c) small eye?

是 A. 厚皮肤，B. 有角的鼻子，还是 C. 小眼睛？

That's a tricky one, because rhinos have all three!

这题很难啊，因为这三样东西犀牛都有！

OK, I'll guess a) thick skin.

好的，我要猜 A. 厚皮肤。

OK, Sam, we'll find out later.

好的，萨姆，我们稍后揭晓答案。

Now let's get back to the story of those precious northern rhino embryos.

现在我们说回这些珍贵的北方犀牛胚胎。

Well, the good news is that so far five embryos have been produced.

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嗯，好消息是目前已经制作出了五个胚胎。

They're being frozen until they can be implanted in southern rhinos - the northern species' more common cousin.

它们正在被冷冻着，直到能够被植入到南方犀牛 —— 北方犀牛的更为常见的近亲 —— 身体中。

Conservationist Thomas Hildebrandt runs the rhino breeding programme.

自然环境保护主义者托马斯·希尔德布兰特经营着这个犀牛养殖项目。

He spoke to BBC World Service's, Science in Action, who asked him whether the embryos were genetically from the northern species.

他对话了 BBC 世界服务节目《科学行动》，节目问他这些胚胎的基因是否来源于北方犀牛这个物种。

Absolutely right.

当然了。

They're not hybrids, they're pure northern white rhino embryos which were generated with the desired breeding partner, Suni, who died in 2014. So we have embryos which have a very high quality - there's no inbreeding effect on these embryos, And it's so important to make the next step, to transfer these embryos, because we can preserve life - biological material - in liquid nitrogen.

它们不是杂交种，它们是纯种的北方白犀牛胚胎，来源于理想的繁殖亲代，Suni，它死于 2014 年。所以我们的胚胎质量很高 —— 这些胚胎身上不会有近交效应。这对于下一步把这些胚胎转化来说非常重要，因为我们可以把生命体 —— 生物材料 —— 保存在液氮中。

But what we can't do - we can't preserve social knowledge.

但是我们无法做到的是保存社会知识。

Therefore we need desperately a calf on the ground so that these two existing northern white rhinos, can teach the new calf how to behave as a northern white rhino.

因此我们十分需要一只幼崽落地，这样这两只现存的北方白犀牛才能教会这只新生幼崽如何表现得像一只北方白犀牛。

Having genetically pure embryos prevents the birth of hybrids - animals that have been bred from two different species.

拥有纯种基因的胚胎能够防止杂交种 —— 两个不同的物种繁衍出来的动物 —— 的出生。

It's also important the embryos have no inbreeding - breeding of a young animal from two closely related parents, because this can cause disease.

这些胚胎没有近交 —— 近亲繁殖产出的幼崽 —— 也很重要，因为近亲繁殖会导致疾病。

Fortunately, Thomas and his team have preserved five healthy and genetically pure northern rhino embryos in liquid nitrogen.

幸运的是，托马斯和他的团队已经在液氮里保存了五个健康的，纯种基因北方白犀牛胚胎。

But while they can preserve 'nature', what Thomas's team can't provide is 'nurture' - the social knowledge that a young northern rhino, or calf, can only learn from other northern rhinos.

但是尽管我们可以保留住“自然”，托马斯的团队也无法提供“自然” —— 幼年北方犀牛，或者说幼崽只能从其他北方犀牛身上学会的社会知识。

And since Najin and Fatu, the last remaining northern rhinos on Earth, are getting old, the race is on to breed a young rhino calf before they die.

而且因为地球上现存的最后两只北方犀牛 Najin 和 Fatu 正在衰老，所以要快马加鞭地在它们去世之前繁殖出犀牛幼崽。

The good news for the survival of the northern white rhino is that experiments to implant the delicate embryos in southern rhinos have been successful.

跟北方白犀牛生存有关的好消息是那个把脆弱的胚胎移植到南方犀牛体内的实验非常成功。

Here's Thomas Hildebrandt again talking about these recent experiments with BBC World Service programme, Science in Action.

以下是托马斯·希尔德布兰特再次跟 BBC 世界服务节目《科学行动》谈论这些近期实验。

We will, for sure, not wait until this pregnancy is completed because it takes 16 months for a full pregnancy in a rhinoceros.

我们当然不会等到孕期结束，因为犀牛的完整孕期是 16 个月。

So if this embryo implants - and we can see that on ultrasound...and - forms a nice placenta, that is the goal for us to proceed with the next step on the Northern White rhino embryos.

所以如果这个胚胎移植了 —— 我们通过超声波看到它.....并且 —— 形成了一个很好的胎盘，这就是我们要进行的针对北方白犀牛胚胎的下一步的目标。

Normally it takes 16 months for a female rhino to complete her pregnancy - the state in which a woman or female animal has a baby developing inside her.

一般来说，一只雌性犀牛需要 16 个月的时间来完成孕育过程 —— 女性或雌性动物体内有后代在发育的状态。

But in the case of the northern rhino, the race is on to birth calves who can learn the rhino rules of social behaviour from Aunty Najin and Granny Fatu while they're still alive...

但是针对北方犀牛的情况，要快马加鞭地产出幼崽去跟 Najin 阿姨和 Fatu 奶奶学习犀牛的社会行为规范，趁着它们还在世的时候.....

...which is why conservationists are monitoring the pregnancy using ultrasound - a procedure using sound waves to create images of internal body parts, or in this case, growing rhino babies.

.....这就是为什么自然环境保护主义者用超声波 —— 使用声波来形成内部身体部位的图像的过程，这里指的是正在生长的犀牛宝宝 —— 监控的原因。

It's an unusual episode in the ongoing 'Nature versus Nurture' debate.

这是正在进行的“自然对自然”辩论中的不同寻常的一期。

And hopefully a big step towards restoring the northern white rhino population so that future generations get to see these magnificent creatures with their thick skin, horned nose and...

而且很有可能是迈向恢复北方白犀牛数量的一大步，这样我们的后代就能够看到这些巨大生物的厚皮肤、长角的鼻子以及.....

...and small eyes, Neil?

.....以及小眼睛，内尔？

So what was the answer to your quiz question?

所以你问题的答案是什么？

Yes, I asked you what the name 'rhinoceros' meant.

是的，我之前问你“犀牛”这个名字是什么意思。

What did you say, Sam?

你说的是什么，萨姆？

I guessed it was a) thick skin.

我猜的是 A. 厚皮肤。

Was I right?

我答对了吗？

Well, rhinos certainly do have thick skin, but their name actually comes from the Greek meaning, 'horned nose'.

嗯，犀牛当然有厚皮肤了，但是它们的名字来源于希腊语中的“长角的鼻子”。

Well, luckily I've got a thick skin too, so I won't take it personally!

嗯，还好我脸皮也很厚，所以我不会往心里去！

Let's have another look at the vocabulary we've learned, starting with embryo - an unborn animal or human still inside its mother's womb.

我们再来看看我们学到的单词吧，从胚胎开始 —— 仍然在母亲子宫里的未出生的动物或人类。

A hybrid is an animal or plant that has been bred from two different species.

杂交种指的是用两个不同的物种繁殖出来的的动物或植物。

Inbreeding is when a young animal is born from closely related parents.

近交指的是两个近亲亲代生出的幼崽。

A calf is the name for the young of several large mammals including cows, elephants and whales, as well as rhinos.

幼崽指的是一些大型哺乳动物的孩子，包括牛、大象和鲸鱼，以及犀牛。

Pregnancy means being pregnant or growing a baby inside you.

孕期指的是怀孕，或者在你体内养育宝宝。

And finally, ultrasound is used to see internal organs or a baby developing inside a woman.

最后，超声波被用来查看内部器官或母亲体内正在生长的宝宝。

And that's all from this species-saving edition of 6 Minute English.

这就是本期关于拯救物种的六分钟英语的所有内容。

Goodbye!

再见！

Bye bye!

再见！

