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# Book Reviews

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## **RHINOS AS GAME ANIMALS: PROCEEDINGS OF A SYMPOSIUM ON RHINOS AS GAME RANCH ANIMALS**

Edited by J van Heerden and BL Penzhorn

Rhinos as Game Animals is an interesting and useful compilation of the papers presented at a symposium held at Onderstepoort, Republic of South Africa in 1994. The version reviewed here was reprinted in 1997, but there is no information on whether or not there has been any earlier versions or that there has been any attempt to update the contents since the symposium. If it is the case that this latest version is the first and only compilation of the symposium in print, some of the information may be dated, as it is three years after the actual symposium.

However, this compilation of 34 papers and a bibliographic list, available in soft cover, has a wealth of information both for the rhino specialist and the non-specialist who may just want to learn more about rhino ecology and 'husbandry'. The papers in the compilation cover a wide range of white and black rhino ecology, conservation and management as well as diseases and veterinary care. The wide coverage of topics means there is something for everyone.

The quality of the papers is variable. There are a few useful and carefully written papers, while many others could have benefited from closer editorial attention. The bibliography on African rhinos by du Toit et al., at the back of the compilation, does not only present a very

comprehensive reference list on rhinos but also offers an analysis of the literature in a tabular form. This is a gem. Anybody already in the 'rhino business' or planning to embark on any aspect of rhino research should be grateful to these authors for providing such a comprehensive list. This welcome analysis makes the targeting of areas needing more attention much easier.

Upon examination of this compilation of 'papers' which vary in style and quality, it is not easy to see the role of the editors. First, the format of this 242-page proceeding is very unusual. The page immediately after the title page has a table of contents that starts by listing the author(s) of the respective papers that is neither alphabetical nor logical. Secondly, there is no introduction or preface by the editors to explain the collection of papers neither to the reader nor to indicate how the compilation may be best used. Thirdly, in view of the diversity of topics covered, it would have been most useful to organise the papers into chapters which had groupings of similar papers by topic, eg. ecology, conservation and management, diseases and veterinary care etc., and with brief introductions to each chapter/section. Such an approach would have certainly have added value to the whole product. These editorial shortcomings notwithstanding, the compilation constitutes an important contribution to the growing literature on African rhinos.

Reviewed by Taye Teferi Programme Officer for Species, Africa & Madagascar Programme, WWF

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## **RHINO RANCHING**

by JG Du Toit

As Clive Walker correctly states in his introduction, much of the future of the rhinoceros in Africa will depend upon private landowners. As the human populations of Africa increase, more revenue is being channeled in the direction of education, housing and medical assistance and less in the direction of natural resource conservation, thus making it increasingly difficult for the official conservation bodies to look after

wildlife. Most prospective rhino owners are wealthy businessmen who know very little or nothing about rhino behaviour or requirements. I have seen many mistakes made, often with disastrous consequences, out of sheer ignorance and because the correct procedures and channels were not followed. It is thus high time that a manual like this has made its appearance. There are many experts in the various fields of rhino