

# press release

date: 21 June 2006



## rhino days

Edinburgh Zoo is delighted to welcome its newest arrival Fanindra, a male greater one horned rhino, who came to Scotland from Belgium last week.

These rhinos are the second largest rhino and have folded skin which resembles an impressive suit of armour. Fanindra, who was born on 23 September 2004 is just under two years old, has the beginnings of an impressive horn on his head.

The Indian rhino's scientific name, *unicornis*, means one horn, and this species may be the origin of the 'unicorn' legend. This horn is made of keratin, the same material as hair and finger nails, and these rhinos have been under threat for years due to the myth that the horn has medicinal or magical properties. These rhinos are now only found wild in northern India and in Nepal.

They like to spend up to 60% of their time in water and bathing is good for their skin and for regulating their temperature.

Hoofstock Head Keeper Kathleen Standen "Here at the Zoo our enclosure has been adapted for Fanindra to include a heated pool so he can enjoy a 'tropical' bath and an outside mud wallow. After his journey he has settled in well, enjoying the recent warm spell."

Kathleen and her team worked closely with Fanindra's keeper from Plankendaal Zoo, who accompanied him on his journey to ensure a smooth introduction to Scotland. Fanindra will be joined by a second male rhino in September who is called Babuu. He will be joining us from Switzerland.

The Indian rhinos at Edinburgh Zoo are part of an internationally coordinated conservation breeding programme for this species.

## photocal

**WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE at 10.00am**

Please meet for coffee in the Mansion House at 9.30am.

## further info

Gwen Hamilton

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# Editor's notes

- The greater one horned rhinoceros is also known as the Indian rhinoceros.
- There are five different species of rhinoceros in the world, two African - white and black; and three Asian – Indian, Javan and Sumatran.
- Indian rhinos, like all rhinos, are vegetarian.
- Rhinos have been hunted for their horns for hundreds of years. The horn was thought to have magical or medicinal properties, and has also been used for decorative dagger handles in the Middle East.
- Today trade in rhino horn is banned under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). However poachers do still kill some rhinos and the horn can fetch high prices on the illegal market.
- Indian rhinos live in grassland and woodland with a plentiful supply of water.
- The rhino's natural habitat has increasingly been taken by people for agriculture and so the remaining animals have smaller and smaller areas of suitable land to live on. Due to the fragmentation of the habitat it is also more difficult for the rhinos to find suitable mates.
- EAZA (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria), of which Edinburgh Zoo is a member, have chosen the rhino as the focus of their fundraising and awareness campaign for 2006.