

BOWLING FOR RHINOS

Striking Out Extinction One Pin at a Time



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DROPS IN THE BUCKET ADD UP

When there is a lot to be done, your personal conservation efforts can seem like just a tiny drop in the bucket. Changing human behavior one person at a time, particularly if it's an inconvenient change, can be a long process that requires patience and persistence. The same kind of determination comes into play when you're conducting a conservation fundraiser. However, the drops in the Bowling for Rhinos conservation fund bucket have really added up over the years. So much so that in 2014, National AAZK anticipates passing the 5 million dollars raised mark. (And we know a lot about buckets anyway- we're zoo keepers!)

The world had seen the black rhino population plummet from 65,000 in 1970 to only about 3,000 by 1987. Ever timely, the keepers at the Kansas City Zoo began working on a fundraiser to help in the conservation effort for this critically endangered species. By 1989, the AAZK board voted to make "Bowling for Rhinos" a nationally-sponsored annual event. Almost 25 years later we are still on a mission to "strike out extinction" through our professional organization's signature conservation project. To date, VOLUNTEERS from AAZK's ranks have raised \$4,821,986; less than \$200,000 shy of that \$5 million milestone. Amounts from a few hundred dollars to tens of thousands of dollars come in each year from approximately 75 of our 97 active Chapters. THESE DONATIONS CLEARLY ADD UP. Exactly \$3,750 could pay for one Indonesian Rhino Protection Unit's staffmember's salary for one year. A similar amount could fund radio collars or translocate a rhino to a new habitat. Just last year, 2% (\$3,426.22) of our 2012 grand BFR total went to Conservation Resource Fund recipient, "RhiNO Remedy" who made an educational video that could turn the tide on rhino horn use in traditional Asian medicine. Walk forward with pride, AAZK members. We don't just support conservation, we are SAVING A SPECIES.

MOVING FORWARD

There are a number of resources available to AAZK Chapters to help them set their Bowling for Rhinos events up for success. We are working on a few more, and we'd love to hear from you on what you need. But here are a few to start you out:

- BFR flyers, sponsorship forms, artwork, and videos are available for download in the Members Only section of the AAZK website. The newest addition is a **BFR PSA courtesy of Jack Hanna of the Columbus Zoo!** Also newly available is the 2014 winning T-shirt design featuring all five species of rhinos (pictured on P. 170).
- Patty Pearthree also maintains a website of expanded BFR resources at www.aazkbrf.org. Included is a very comprehensive report on Bowling for Rhinos from the 2011 National AAZK Conference. It is a must-read for any new coordinator.
- There is a Bowling for Rhinos discussion group on AAZK Online.
- There is also a BFR Yahoo Group you can join by e-mailing Barbie Wilson at rhinobarbie@hotmail.com.
- Our partners at Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Action for Cheetahs in Kenya and the International Rhino Foundation have additional resources on their websites and post regular updates on social media. Are you friends with Andatu Rhino on Facebook yet?
- Are you following the American Association of Zoo Keepers on Facebook and Twitter? Be sure to link your Chapter social media outlets with our upcoming Bowling for Rhinos Facebook page, too!
- Take the time to view the RhiNO Remedy video we helped to fund through the 2013 BFR Conservation Resource Fund- and share it! It's called, "Be Powerful!" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=mJOXSQTYtp8>



To purchase this t-shirt go to:
<https://www.aazk.org/shop/>



Rhino Champion Anna Merz passed away in 2013. If you ever had the opportunity to meet her, please send us your pictures and stories. We will be putting together a tribute at the Rhino Rally on September 9th at the 2014 National Conference.

BFR Conservation Resource Fund recipient, RhiNO Remedy has produced a video and a series of educational materials to stop poaching at it's source - the false belief in the medicinal properties of the horn. The translation from this image is "Be Powerful."

Poster: landscape




Special thanks to our Conservation Partner Bill Konstant from the International Rhino Foundation for providing these status updates for each of the five species of rhino. *Rhino letter image by Lauren Etkins, Philadelphia Zoo Keeper.*

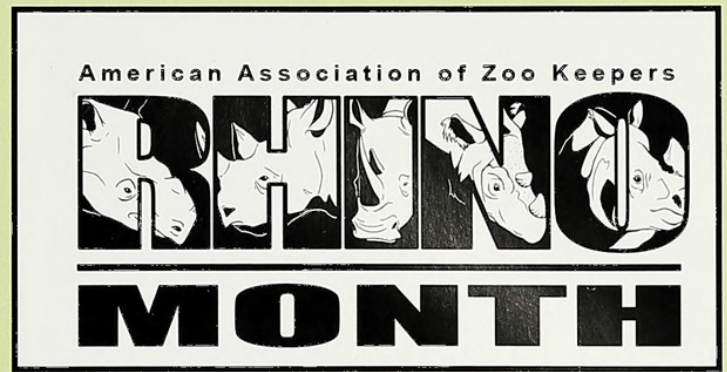
2014 RHINO RALLY AT THE NATIONAL AAZK CONFERENCE

There is a Bowling for Rhinos presentation session each year at the National AAZK Conference. However, in recent years we have also wanted a time to celebrate and promote our Chapter events - hence the annual "Rhino Rally." Last year at the North Carolina Conference we arranged a "swag exchange" where Chapters could exchange their leftover shirts/bags/etc for use in their own Chapter auctions. Thanks to all the participants, it was a great success. Whether you can attend or not, we would like to ask for your help to make this year's rally an even bigger success. Here's what we are thinking:

- We would like to compile all the "little" money-makers for events outside of what is charged for registration. Raffles, "RHINO" bingo, auctions - what do you do to bring in those extra bucks? **E-mail Patty and Wendy to tell us.** If you're going to the conference, we might ask you to run a mock fundraiser during the rally.
- **Wear** your Chapter Bowling for Rhinos shirt to the Rhino Rally if you are attending the conference. Show some spirit! We would love to do a group picture. The rally will be over lunch after the Bowling for Rhinos paper session on the first day.
- **Bring** your extra Bowling for Rhinos goodies to the Rhino Rally and participate in our swag swap.
- **Help** us honor the memory of Anna Merz. If you have any photos of her or specific stories/memories, please e-mail them to us. We will do a tribute at the Rhino Rally.
- **Celebrate** your success by sending us photos from your Bowling for Rhinos events. We are starting to archive them.
- **Recognize** your Chapter's unique identity. Send us your Chapter Bowling for Rhinos logo as a jpg attachment. (It doesn't have to be from your most current year - pick a favorite!) These logos will be made into a collage and the event photos will be incorporated into a slide show that will play at the Rhino Rally.

When the clock strikes midnight on January 1st, 2015 we will officially be in our 25th year of Bowling for Rhinos. Let's finish the first 24 years with a bang! Just keep doing what you are doing. Together we ARE making a difference. 

Please feel free to share any BFR ideas or strategies you have with Patty and Wendy via e-mail as AAZK prepares for the 25th Anniversary in 2015!



Javan Rhino (Critically Endangered)

The final stronghold for the Javan rhino is Indonesia's Ujung Kulon National Park, where there have been no reports of poaching this century. Data obtained from video camera-trap studies conducted in 2011 resulted in an estimate of 35-44 individuals. A similar study in 2013 seems to indicate an increase to perhaps 50 individuals or more, but the results remain to be verified by independent analysis.

Black Rhino (Critically Endangered)

Overall, black rhino numbers continue to increase, albeit modestly. Over the past 20 years, they have essentially doubled from about 2,500 to more than 5,000 throughout the species' range in sub-Saharan Africa.

White Rhino (Near Threatened)

Poaching statistics out of South Africa suggest that 2014 will be as devastating a year for rhinos as 2013 was - perhaps 1,000 or more killed for their horns. White rhinos comprise the bulk of those killed, but blacks are also represented in the tally. With a total wild population of about 20,000, the white rhino is barely holding its own, births still about equal to deaths each year, but biologists believe that won't last much longer. The population will begin declining if the poaching rate persists.

Sumatran Rhino (Critically Endangered)

The most recent estimate for wild Sumatran rhinos is approximately 100 animals but, the truth is, that's a very soft number. The species is represented by three potentially viable populations in Sumatra - Bukit Barisan Selatan NP, Gunung Leuser NP, and Way Kambas NP. What appears to be a non-viable population, possibly no more than a dozen animals, remains on the island of Borneo, handfuls each in Sabah (Malaysia) and Kalimantan (Indonesia). Little data is available from Gunung Leuser, but there have been no documented reports of poaching in Way Kambas NP since 2006 or in Bukit Barisan Selatan NP since 2002.

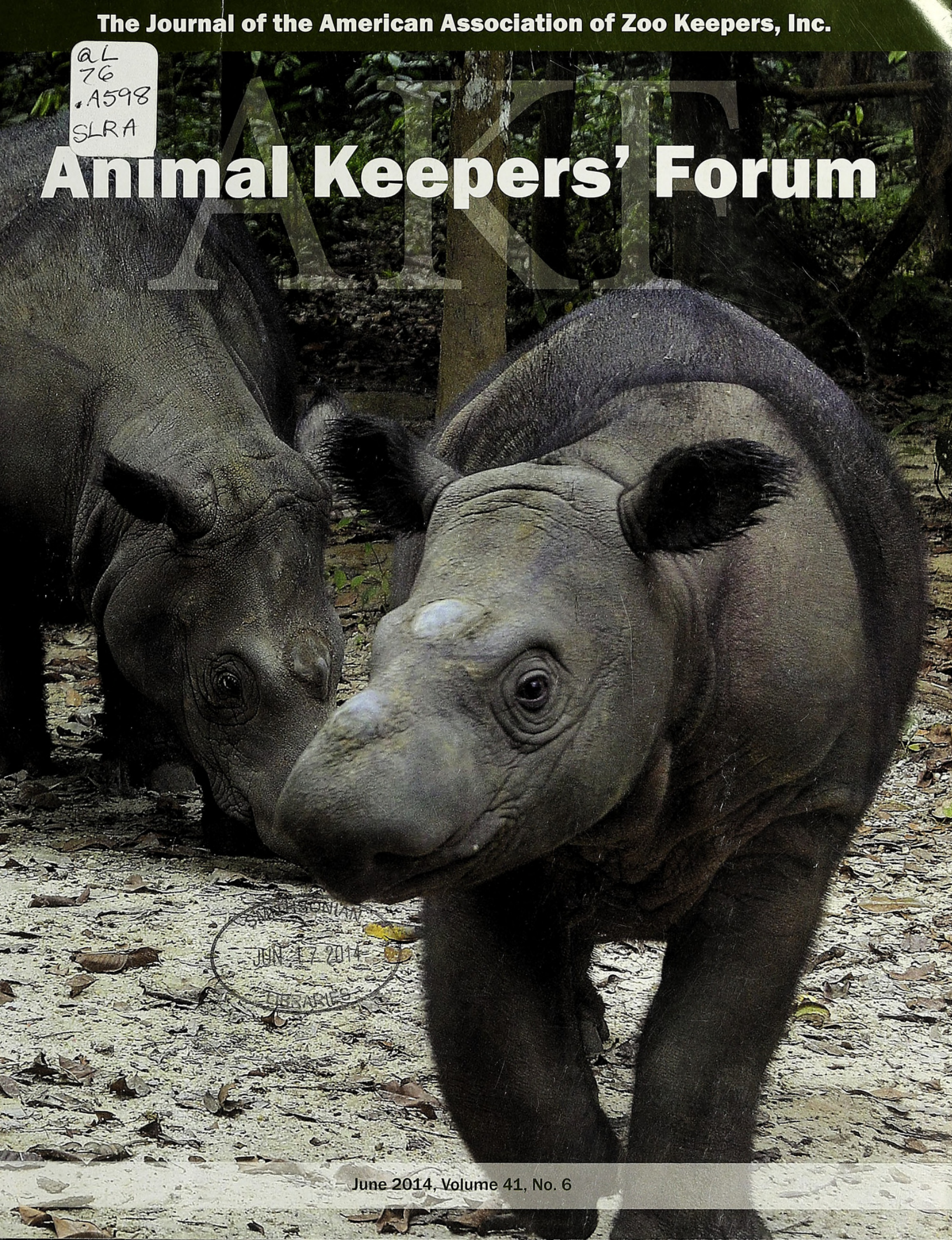
Greater One-Horned Rhino (Vulnerable)

Greater one-horned rhino numbers continue to increase slowly despite poaching. Current estimates are more than 3,300 individuals in India and Nepal, with close to zero poaching in Nepal for the last few years and an average annual loss of a few dozen animals in the northeastern Indian states in which the species still occurs. Under the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 program, nearly two dozen animals have been returned to Manas National Park, 11 young have been born since the reintroductions began a few years ago, and six animals have been killed by poachers in Manas in the past two years. Plans are to begin reintroductions to the Burachapori Wildlife Sanctuary before the end of this year by translocating rhinos from Kaziranga National Park.

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About the Cover

This month's cover photo comes to us from Bill Konstant of the International Rhino Foundation. Andatu (in the foreground) is the first Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) ever born at a managed breeding center in Indonesia. He is just under one-year of age in this photo. In 2011, his mother Ratu (in the background), a wild-caught female, mated with Andalas, who was born at the Cincinnati Zoo ten years earlier and was eventually sent to Indonesia's Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary, located in Way Kambas National Park. Andatu was born just a few minutes past midnight on June 23, 2012, following a 16-month gestation period. He weighed approximately 60 pounds at birth. On his first birthday, he tipped the scales at 800 pounds!

In addition to Andatu, Ratu and Andalas, the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary is home to Bina and Rosa, two other wild-caught females. Although they have yet to produce calves, efforts to pair both females with Andalas will continue, as will attempts at assisted reproduction, which include semen collection and artificial insemination.

International Rhino Foundation is one of AAZK's three main partners in our flagship conservation program Bowling for Rhinos (the others are Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and Action for Cheetahs in Kenya). Together we are saving countless numbers of endangered species that share rhino habitat, so please join us as we look to surpass 5 million dollars in total funds raised during this 2014 BFR campaign!

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