

# Sumatran Rhino: *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*. Population: 200

Critically endangered Sumatran rhinos have suffered a 50% population decline over the last 15 years, due to illegal killing for their small horns. Their habitat is also being destroyed by development, palm oil production, and the invasion of human settlers.

The Sumatran rhino's precipitous population decline is a direct result of the species' proximity to China, where unfortunate superstitions attributing medicinal properties to rhino horn are still in existence.

## Three Subspecies of Sumatran Rhino

- Western Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis sumatrensis*)
- Eastern Sumatran rhino, a.k.a. Borneo rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis harrissoni*) - fewer than 50.
- Northern Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis lasiotis*) - declared extinct.

## Sumatran Rhino Distribution

Just a handful of fragmented Sumatran rhino populations remain in a few protected areas of Indonesia and Malaysia.

## Distinguishing Characteristics

The Sumatran rhino is covered with hair! It becomes shaggy in captivity, since the rhino is not in contact with rough vegetation as in the wild, which rubs the hair down.

Sumatran rhinos have two horns comprised of keratin - just hair and fingernail material. The front horn is 10" - 31" in length, while the second horn is quite small, often less than 3 inches long.

Sumatran rhinos have a prehensile upper lip used for grasping leaves, twigs, and juicy plant tips. They are also fond of fruits.

Like all rhinos, the Sumatran rhino is an odd-toed ungulate, having three toes. Also in common with other rhinos is a superb sense of hearing and keen sense of smell - but relatively poor eyesight.

## Size of the Sumatran Rhino

The Sumatran rhino is the smallest of all the rhino species, standing only 3 - 5 feet high at the shoulder. Their weight ranges from 1,300 - 2,000 pounds, and they are typically 6.5 - 9.5 feet in length.

## Activity

The agile Sumatran rhino can run 30 mph. Sumatran rhinos create tunnels in the forest using their horns and cartilage on their heads.

Sumatran rhinos visit salt-licks formed by mineral seepages, and like all rhinos, enjoy mud wallows. They are generally solitary in the wild, except when seeking a mate.



International Rhino Foundation/rhinos-irf.org

## Life Span

- Sumatran rhinos can live 30 - 45 years.

## Scientific Name and Origin

### *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*

- *Dicerorhinus*: from the Greek di, meaning "two"; cero, meaning "horn" and rhinus, meaning "nose"
- *sumatrensis*: referring to Sumatra (with the Latin -ensis, meaning locality)

Sources: Asian Rhino Project, International Rhino Foundation, Save the Rhino International & Rhino Resource Center

