

this in fact merely demonstrates the need for it, because not only is it desirable to preserve a wide variety of good genetic material of threatened forms for use in future investigations, but one day it might also be possible to use this material to reconstitute interesting lost organisms.

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Lake Nakuru Black Rhinoceros Sanctuary

The letter on the Lake Nakuru Black Rhinoceros Sanctuary (*Oryx*, 26, 174–177) states, ‘This sanctuary was always intended as a sanctuary for both black and white rhinos...’ Why? The white rhinoceros is not indigenous to Kenya, and those imported have been the southern subspecies, *Ceratotherium simum simum*, which is not endangered. There might be something to be said for Kenya trying to help conserve the seriously endangered northern subspecies, *Ceratotherium simum cottoni*, even though it too is not indigenous. But it seems misguided to expend what are no doubt limited resources on the southern form.

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As the author of the article, Lake Nakuru Black Rhinoceros Sanctuary (*Oryx*, 24, 90–94), may I please be allowed to comment on some of the points raised by Mr R. T. Elliott in his letter (*Oryx*, 26, 174–175)? I write as a patron of the Rhino Rescue Charitable Appeal Trust since its inception in 1985, and as a trustee from 1986 to 1991.

1. Mr Elliott says that ‘this sanctuary was always intended as a sanctuary for both black and white rhinos ... this point should have been mentioned’. This is not so. Rhino Rescue’s brochure clearly states that the Trust was set up specifically to try to halt the decline in numbers of the black rhino, and does not mention the white rhino at all; the later introduction to Nakuru of a few of the latter was purely incidental.

2. Mr Elliott says that ‘it was, indeed, due to excess numbers of both species that the Rhino Rescue started’. This, too, is incorrect. The Rhino Rescue Trust was, as stated above, formed solely to try to protect the diminishing population of black rhinos. The only place in Kenya where there was an excess of numbers was on the privately owned Solio ranch – an excess that the transference of animals from Solio to Nakuru helped to alleviate.

3. Mr Elliott says that ‘Peter Jenkins and I decided to ... set up rhino sanctuaries elsewhere’, implying that he had a hand in the formation of the Lake Nakuru sanctuary. He had no part in it whatsoever.

4. Mr Elliott claims that my statement that ‘a further 11 females are due to be added to the park shortly’ is ‘pure speculation’. This was the figure given to Count Coreth, the founder of Rhino Rescue, by Dr Richard Leakey and Dr Rob Brett of the Kenya Wildlife Service.

5. Mr Elliott is correct in saying that the voltage aimed at for the electric fencing is 7000 and not 700 as stated; this was a misprint.

6. Mr Elliott says that rhinos introduced to Nakuru were released directly into the sanctuary, and that only injured animals were first acclimatized in the holding pens; in general this is correct.

7. Mr Elliott claims that my statement that ‘the founding stock was deliberately kept low to encourage the animals to breed more freely’ was ‘never true for black rhinos’. I am afraid that Mr Elliott has clearly not read my article very carefully, or he would have realized that I was referring to the founding stock of black rhinos at Nakuru, and not to that at Solio where he was Warden.

Mr Elliott concludes by saying that I was ‘given false information by other people and that (I) did not check my facts with those directly involved with the operations’. As my article made clear, it was written after a visit to Nakuru, where I was able to see the Rhino Rescue Trust operating at first hand, and after discussing at length the work of the Trust with Count Coreth and the Trust’s Administrator in the sanctuary, Mr Jock Dawson.

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