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PERU IN THE PICTURE

Mario Testino puts his homeland into focus

CAPITAL COLLECTION

An insider's guide to the London Design Festival

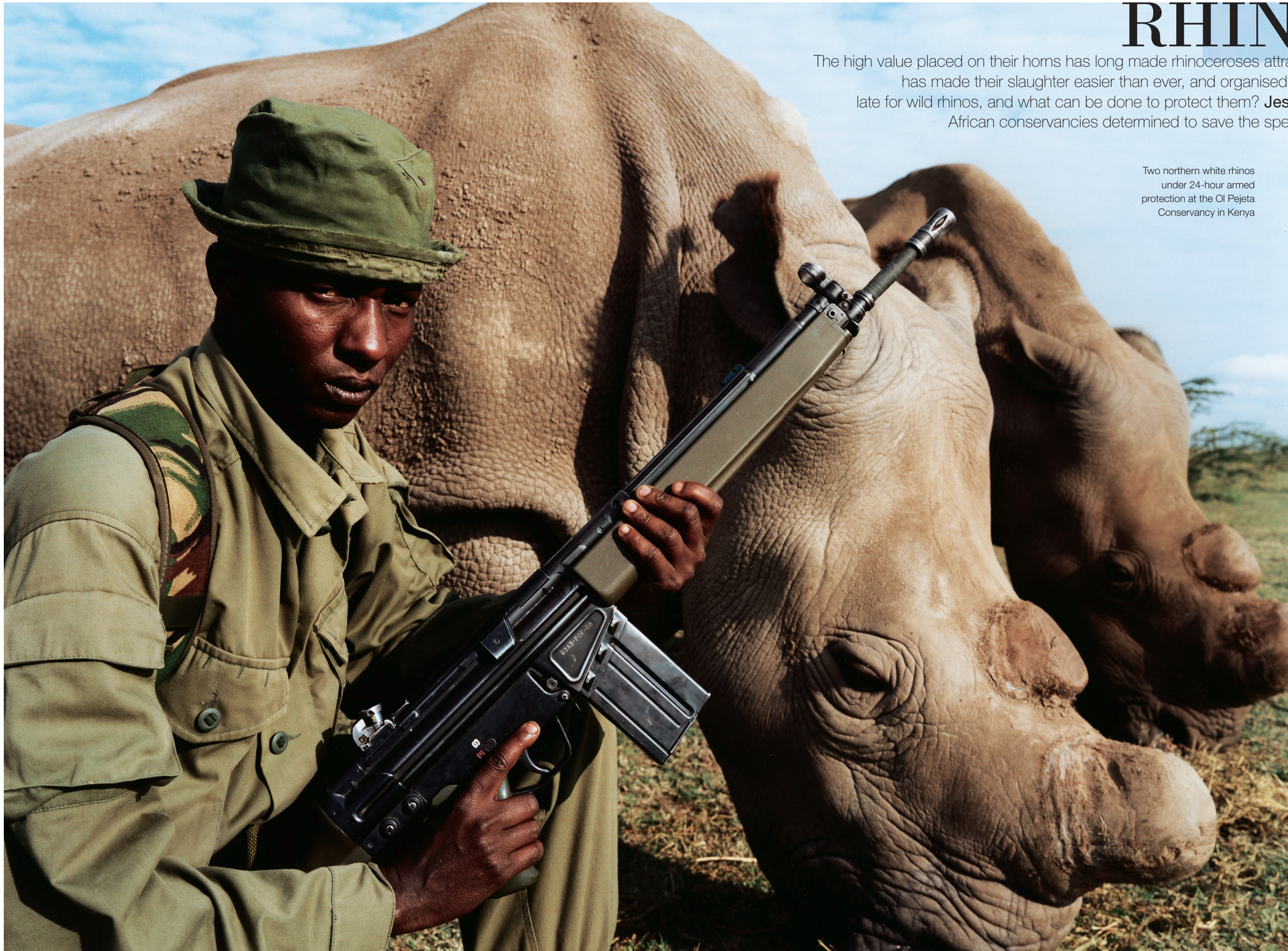
FLAVOURS FROM JERUSALEM

The food that Yotam Ottolenghi grew up with

GAME CHANGER

Why the rhino has a round-the-clock armed guard





RHINO WATCH

The high value placed on their horns has long made rhinoceroses attractive to poachers. Now new technology has made their slaughter easier than ever, and organised crime syndicates are cashing in. Is it too late for wild rhinos, and what can be done to protect them? **Jessamy Calkin** visits three pioneering east African conservancies determined to save the species. Photographs by **David Chancellor**

Two northern white rhinos under 24-hour armed protection at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya

Last year the Javan rhinoceros, the rarest large mammal in the world, was declared extinct in Vietnam. The last one was killed in October in Cat Tien National Park, found with a bullet in its leg and its horn sawn off.

As a species the rhino is at least 50 million years old, but if something is not done to curb the appetite for its horn, it may not last the century. In Africa the poaching trade in both rhino horn and ivory has moved to a new level and now operates in a way that is comparable to drug cartels or arms dealing. Penalties are often paltry in Africa, from where much of the horn originates, and poorly enforced in Asia, where it ends up. Some crime syndicates are expanding their existing operations into the ivory and horn trade – the risks are fewer and the profits can be greater.

Technology has helped poachers enormously. From 2008 until mid 2011, 776 rhinos were killed in South Africa, where poachers are using GPS,

‘THIS HUGE GREAT WONDER OF THE WORLD IS BEING DESTROYED, AND IT JUST NEEDS A LITTLE MANAGEMENT’

helicopters and semi-automatic weapons. In east Africa the technology is not yet so sophisticated, but illegal arms are readily available from Somalia, and the perpetrators, driven by poverty, are inventive. Night-vision goggles have been stolen from the Kenyan army, and chancers have been known to jump over fences by the light of a full moon and kill rhinos using guns fitted with silencers made from bicycle pumps. And it's not only rhinos: last year in southern Africa 14 armed poachers were killed in encounters with park rangers. In Kenya last Christmas a ranger was shot dead in a revenge attack by poachers.

The reason for all this slaughter is based on a deep-rooted, ancient belief that is nothing more than myth. Rhino horn is composed of keratin – gelatinous hair – with no beneficial medical properties; just hundreds of years of reputation and rumour. Chinese *materia medica* list it as a method of reducing fever and febrile convulsions. But even if it did work, one cannot help asking, when the rhino population of Africa has been reduced by 96 per cent in 50 years – why not take an aspirin?

White rhinos are grazers, and indigenous to South Africa; black rhinos are browsers, and indigenous to east Africa. The names are misleading because their colour is the same. It is thought that white was a mistranslation of the Afrikaans word for ‘wide’, denoting their big, square mouth. The



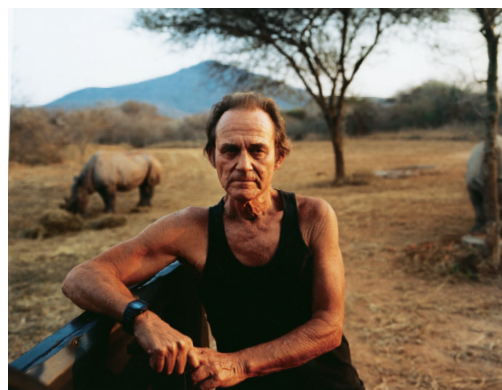
slightly smaller black rhino has a prehensile or hooked lip for plucking fruit and leaves. They differ in character, too – the whites are more passive.

In Tanzania there are 113 black rhinos, most of them in the Serengeti. In 1951 the government had established the Mkomazi Game Reserve in northern Tanzania but it suffered from years of neglect. In 1989 the conservationist Tony Fitzjohn was invited to work with the government on the rehabilitation of the reserve, and it was made a national park in 2008. Its 1,250 square miles of thick vegetation provide the perfect habitat for animals, but it is not so good for tourists coming to view them. So there are no luxury lodges, only a small tented camp popular with bird watchers. The cattle herders – formerly the park's biggest enemy because of the damage grazing causes and the threat to wildlife – have been cleared out since hefty fines were imposed by TaNaPa, which runs the Tanzanian national parks. In the 1960s there were about 200 black rhinos at Mkomazi; by the time Fitzjohn arrived none was left; nor were there any elephants. Now there are more than 1,000 elephants, and Fitzjohn has created a sanctuary for black rhinos, an area of 21 square miles with 8ft-high electric fences patrolled by an armed guards.

I visited Mkomazi in April; Fitzjohn was there with his wife, Lucy, and their four children. There were 15 black rhinos in the sanctuary – the first few were bought from South Africa. When

THE IRONY OF EXPORTING THREE BLACK RHINOS FROM KENT TO AFRICA IS NOT LOST ON ANYONE

I arrived a plan was being discussed to import three black rhinos bred in Kent. They are a gift from Damian Aspinall, who has 16 black rhinos at the Port Lympne Wild Animal Park. (Reintroducing animals to their native countries is something in which Aspinall specialises.) The three new rhinos will diversify the genetic pool at Mkomazi. There is a lot of discussion about permits and logistics: DHL is providing a plane, and an expert vet has been lined up, along with



a rhino whisperer, Berry White, a former keeper.

The irony of exporting rhinos from Kent to Africa is not lost on anyone. But it is not new: in 2009 three rhinos were brought over from Dvur Králové Zoo in the Czech Republic, and they made the transition from zoo to wild with surprising ease. Despite their former diet having consisted mainly of baked goods, they took to the African vegetation with vigour. 'Their keeper arrived with all these pastries and vegetables,' Fitzjohn says. 'It was like the bloody Gordon Ramsay show. Our guys chopped off some grevia and euphorbia, chunked it in their boma [enclosure], and they just went for it and left the bread.'

It took a while for the Mkomazi rhinos to start breeding, but there have now been nine births (and a few deaths, though none from poaching). In 10 years' time Fitzjohn would like to have 25-30 rhinos that he could move into an area accessible to tourists.

Black rhinos – all rhinos – need any help they can get, although the story has not been only bad: the population of the southern white rhino was down to 30 at the beginning of the 20th century. It is now more than 20,000 (black rhinos number 4,880). Conservation measures were put into practice, and the population climbed steadily until two decades of heavy poaching in the 1970s and 1980s. But concerted efforts in conservation, combined with a decline in the Yemenese economy (where



Ian Craig with some of the 12-strong 9-1 Force established to protect the Northern Rangeland Trust conservancies. **Left** Zawadi, Monduli and Grumeti – three black rhinos from Port Lympne in Kent – are new arrivals at the Mkomazi National Park in Tanzania. **Below left** Tony Fitzjohn established the rhino reserve there. **Below** a rhino monitor at Lewa locating wildlife fitted with tracking devices

rhino horn is also in demand to make ornamental dagger handles), pushed the numbers up again, and in 2007 only 13 were poached in all of Africa. Then the price of rhino horn started to climb once more. The sheer numbers of Chinese workers in Africa today, combined with endemic local corruption, has facilitated the export of rhino horn and ivory, and the market has diversified: there is a surge of demand in Vietnam, where rhino horn is illegally but aggressively marketed as a cure for everything from hangovers to cancer.

As well as live rhinos being killed in Africa and Asia, there have even been cases of rhino horns and stuffed heads being wrenched unceremoniously off the walls of museums and auction houses across Europe. Many museums have removed their horns from view or replaced them with fakes.

'Have you ever seen one?' Fitzjohn asks, and disappears, returning a few minutes later bearing a rhino horn. (A horn can grow again, but it will never regain its sharp point.) It is dark grey – solid, smooth and gently curved. Suspiciously, a small bit has been pared off the base.

Did you try some? I ask. 'Yeah.' And? 'Didn't do anything.'

Fitzjohn removed this horn from one of his rhinos, James, as it was becoming increasingly aggressive and he worried it would harm the others. After it had been de-horned it underwent a character change, he says, and became calmer.

'RHINO CONSERVATION IS ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SURVEILLANCE. SO IT IS ALSO ABOUT MONEY'

He slaps the horn on to the table. 'Someone's got to change the thinking of the Chinese and Vietnamese; they have to appreciate that they are impoverishing other countries by believing this stuff.' He points out that the Chinese are hugely proud of their iconic species, the giant panda. Killing a giant panda incurs the death penalty. 'I had this great idea,' he growls. 'I want to put up billboards all over the world – with one of those awful pictures of a dead rhino with its horn cut



off, blood everywhere, and underneath it would say, STOP BUYING CHINESE OR THE PANDA GETS IT.

Rhino conservation is an expensive business. Fitzjohn's solar-powered fence costs \$40,000 per mile to install, and it has to be maintained. He has 22 men in his security team, the core of which is ex-Tanzanian army. His operation – which includes educational outreach programmes and the breeding and releasing of African wild dogs – is funded by donors (principally Suzuki Rhino in Holland and, in Britain, the George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust and Tusk). This is the future for rhinos: electric fences and armed guards. Is there a limit on how much should be spent to protect a species?

'Do whatever you can, whatever it takes, whatever it costs,' Fitzjohn says. 'Otherwise we lose another species, and it happens to be a fairly big one, and a fairly old one. And it's as important as the seas and the chameleons and the grasslands and everything else – you have your flagship species for a reason. Take the elephants and the rhinos out of the eco system and you'll be left with a few billion gazelles running round – and suddenly this huge great wonder of the world will be destroyed in front of us.'

'And there's no need for it. There's plenty of room for animals, there's plenty of room for people, too, it just needs a bit of management and central government control. It certainly doesn't

need democracy. It's farming, y'know? It's management. I grew up in the days when all my old mates were the original Kenyan game wardens – David Sheldrick, Bill Woodley, George Adamson. They saved animals, they saved whole areas. Ian Craig leads the way in management now, at Lewa. And he's always keen to share his ideas. He's got more rhinos than anybody else. Ian Craig, Fitzjohn says meaningfully, 'is the only person I defer to.'

Lewa lies to the north of Mount Kenya. It is a wildlife conservancy of 90 square miles, and was previously a cattle ranch owned by the Craig family. In 1983 it became a rhino sanctuary, at a time when the rhino population had been devastated by poaching, and black rhino numbers in Kenya had dropped to about 300 (there are now estimated to be 623). Craig managed Lewa's wildlife and conservation operations until 1995, when the conservancy was established as a registered trust, partly funded by the Nature Conservancy. Craig lives on Lewa with his wife, Jane, and he retains the title 'strategic adviser'; he also sits on the board of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), an umbrella organisation for the individual conservancies around Lewa (there are 19 with 23 more waiting to join), spanning an area of about two million acres.

Both Lewa and the NRT are blueprints for community conservancy in Africa. Ian Craig set up the NRT, and it is a system that is revered. It works like this: each community is registered as a trust; with Lewa's help, a board is elected from elders of the community, and a conservancy manager is appointed. Scouts are employed locally (trained at the KWS training school), and communities can raise money through agreements with tour operators, in some cases building their own lodges (the award-winning Il Ngwesi lodge is a good example). A conservancy fee (say \$100 per night) is charged, and this becomes a source of revenue, the money going towards community projects and bursaries for schoolchildren. Wildlife conservation is the core of everything. The result is that the rangelands are improving: governance has improved; security has improved; the economy is more diversified. Benefits for the communities include micro-loans for women, irrigation and farming projects, livestock and forestry programmes, adult literacy initiatives, schools and clinics.

One of Lewa's fundamental objectives is to provide a protected habitat for wildlife. Its flagship species are the rare Grévy's zebra, and the black rhino. Lewa has 56 southern white rhinos and 74 black rhinos, along with elephants, cheetahs, lions, buffalo and countless other species.

The set-up at Lewa is beguiling. There are six tourist lodges, and the centre of operations is a compound of thatched offices built around a grassy courtyard, where more often than not a zebra called Ian is to be found keeping the grass trimmed (Ian appears to think he's a cow and likes to be penned up with the cattle). It's like something out of a William Boyd novel: men in very short safari shorts and ancient-looking filing cabinets and exotic birds. Lewa employs 340 staff, mostly Kenyan. Occasionally a friendly rhino called Elvis can be seen about the place; hand-reared by Craig,

Elvis, whose brother was killed by poachers, was hand-reared at Lewa



'A HAND-REARED RHINO CALLED ELVIS CAUSED HAVOC BY WANDERING INTO THE HOUSE AND CLIMBING ON THE BED'

he has learnt to turn on an outside tap near the offices when he is thirsty – although he has not yet learnt to turn it off. Last year Elvis wandered into Craig's house and caused havoc by climbing on the bed. Elvis's brother, Max, also hand-reared, was killed last year by poachers at nearby Ol Pejeta. (This prompted Prince William, who spent part of his gap year working at Lewa, to speak out about rhino poaching.)

Lewa is fenced, and there is an 'elephant gap', monitored constantly by camera, for the wildlife to come and go into neighbouring lands. (Wooden posts prevent the less agile rhinos from leaving, but they are largely territorial anyway.) Outside the property, an elephant underpass has been built beneath the motorway, on the way to their migration route to Mount Kenya, which they very quickly learnt to use – with one exception, a rogue male called Mountain Bull, who prefers to charge up the motorway.

There are 126 rangers and a 30-strong anti-poaching squad, split into units to patrol different parts of the reserve. (One member of the team is 39-year-old Nanyukie, formerly part of a poaching gang. Craig decided that it would be more helpful to have Nanyukie on his side; he is one of maybe a dozen who have been recruited in this way.) Tracker dogs are called in if human prints are found. In addition, three years ago, Craig set up a special force whose mandate was to protect wildlife across the NRT. The 12 members of the 9-1 Force were selected from different ethnic groups, some of whom were at war with one another. They are endorsed by the government, and work closely with KWS, but Craig is responsible for recruiting, and they answer to him. They are armed, highly trained, well-equipped and on call all the time.

They report everything to the police and to Lewa HQ, but they also have powers of arrest.

Ian Craig is a hard man to pin down. He is happiest when flying his plane – he has spent 6,500 hours in the sky, where he is occasionally shot at while tracking poachers. His official job title is special projects executive for the NRT, but in reality he does a bit of everything.

One day I accompanied him as he darted an injured Grévy's zebra, which had caught its leg in a wire snare. From a Land Rover he shot the dart – a finely tuned mixture of sedative and morphine – into the zebra, which careered frantically around for about seven minutes, then slumped on the ground. Craig treated it with a hefty dose of antibiotics, removed the snare and delivered an alarmingly fast-acting antidote to the sedative. Minutes later it was up and defending its territory.

Afterwards we found a peaceful spot by a swamp to talk, overlooked by crested cranes that perched in the trees. Craig is 59, with intense blue eyes and a soft voice. He is deeply concerned about the plight of the rhino, and even more so about the vast increase in incidents of elephant poaching, the heartbreaking consequences of which he has to deal with daily. He is quick to draw a distinction between rhino and elephant poaching, not least because the markets are so different – ivory is destined for the wealthy Asian middle class; the rhino horn market is the often uneducated and sometimes desperate advocate of traditional Chinese medicine. 'With ivory you're trying to inform educated and affluent people, whereas this belief that rhino horn saves lives – we'd all spend our last cent on saving a life, hence the difference.'

And their protection is a very different matter, too. 'I've come to the conclusion that rhino conservation is about law enforcement,' Craig says. 'It is about technology, good intelligence, good surveillance, clear intent, strong leadership – and you can keep rhinos alive. So it is also about money. And space – we're never going to have free-ranging rhino, and to run a rhino sanctuary for a 10-year

period, including all the capital set-up costs, is \$5 million. What community has \$5 million to throw into rhino conservation? Elephants are a whole different conundrum. An elephant standing here could be 40 miles away by tomorrow, so you're covering a vast area where you'd need an army to look after them – and no country's got the resources to look after a species that's moving across a landscape of this size. So to meet that challenge we've got to get a message to the developed world, which is leading the market for ivory, that buying ivory is not cool. It kills elephants, it fuels cartels. People are being killed, too, and it undermines the whole economy of the country.'

Craig is all too aware of how demoralising it is for his team when they finally catch a poacher. Even if they can make the charges stick, the penalties are risible: current sentences amount to six months in jail or a fine of about 4,000 Kenyan Shillings (£30). 'The penalties date back to 1973,' Craig says. 'But in 1973 Kenya would have had 10,000-15,000 rhinos, and now we have 600. It has come to the fore in the past two years what a weakness that is, and there will be new penalties through parliament shortly.'

Like Fitzjohn, Craig believes that there are no limits to the lengths to which we should go to protect the rhino. 'I'm not comfortable sitting and watching a species become extinct during our watch. We must be responsible – the world is changing but we're changing it.'

Born in Kenya but educated in England, Craig grew up on Lewa. When he left school he became a professional hunter, taking tourists shooting for sport. 'I did it for nine years, until there was a ban on hunting in Kenya, and I came back to the world that I live in now. I don't hunt now, and I wouldn't; I get my reward from working with wildlife. Times change. Of course I regret shooting elephants and rhinos, but it gave me a good foundation for what I'm doing now.'

Craig sits on the board of the KWS, which has a good reputation compared with many of its counterparts in other countries, and he says he finds his role 'massively rewarding'. At the entrance to Nairobi National Park KWS announces itself as 'a corruption-free organisation'. But corruption is a big problem in east Africa, on every level. When rangers are paid a couple of hundred dollars a month, and they are protecting something that's worth thousands, there is bound to be temptation. Craig believes that strong leadership is the best defence against corruption, and that what is needed is 'Well-paid, well-motivated, well-resourced, well-led protection of wildlife'.

Craig is happy at Lewa, which has pioneered a unique approach to conservation in east Africa. It is everything he wanted it to be. 'It is catalysing good things for Kenyans, and taking a leadership role in the country for the private sector,' he says.

More than 50 per cent of Kenya's black rhinos are on private land; unlike in Tanzania, or Uganda (where there are now no black rhinos left), the government in Kenya actively encourages the engagement of the private sector in black rhino conservation. There are other successful rhino conservancies in the Laikipia area of Kenya. Solio was the first, started



Cut horns do grow back, but without their sharp points

'WE'RE CHALLENGING THE MINDSET THAT CONSERVATION CAN ONLY HAPPEN IN THE ABSENCE OF HUMAN ACTIVITY'

in 1970 by Courtland Parfet, and now run by Mikey Carr-Hartley; it has 56 black rhinos (and 175 white). Near Lewa is Ol Pejeta Conservancy which has 89 black rhinos (and 17 whites). Unlike Lewa, which relies on donations, it is self-funding, deriving an income from cattle, wheat and tourism (of its 60,000 tourists a year, half are Kenyan).

Ol Pejeta was once a huge cattle ranch owned by the multi-millionaire arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi. In 1987 it was acquired by Lonrho Africa, and the 20,000-acre Sweetwaters Game Reserve was created, enclosed by a game fence for rhino conservation. A founder population of 18 black rhinos was brought in from various parts of the country. Richard Vigne, who became the reserve's general manager in 1996, developed a consortium that established Ol Pejeta as a conservancy in 2004, with 75,000 acres. There are corridors in the northern part of the reserve allowing the wildlife to come and go, with posts to stop the rhinos. It now has 106 rhinos among its varied wildlife population; it also has 7,000 head of cattle.

Significantly, Ol Pejeta has managed to integrate its wildlife and cattle operations, chiefly by the use of mobile predator-proof enclosures in which the cattle are kept at night. And because this sort of cattle management depends on human vigilance, they have created an incentive scheme for the herders to stay with their cattle. This has enabled the reserve to increase productivity, and it now employs 400 people which, Vigne says, 'in Kenyan terms, where 80 per cent of the population is unemployed, is pretty important, and helps to justify our continued existence occupying a large area of land.'

Ol Pejeta is a not-for-profit organisation – any surplus is re-invested – and a living example that

conservation doesn't always have to come at a cost. 'If it can be perceived as a sustainable form of profitable land use, then the chances are that more people might choose to become engaged in it,' Vigne says. The integration of wildlife and cattle has significant ramifications not only for Kenya, but for all of east Africa, 'because we're challenging the mindset that wildlife conservation can only happen in the absence of human activity. We're proving, with what is now the largest black rhino population in east Africa, and some of the highest densities of predators recorded in Kenya and good populations of other wildlife species, that the two can co-exist.'

Ol Pejeta has lost only two or three rhinos in the past six years to predation. However, it lost six last year to poaching. 'Wildlife crime is something that governments don't take particularly seriously; so what happens is some pretty well-organised crime syndicates turn to the illegal wildlife trade because it comes with the threat of lower sentencing and less risk. Our strategy is to increase the perceived risk by improving security,' Vigne says. The amount of money it spends on security has increased by 50 per cent in the past two years. 'We have a team of 32 people with Kenyan Police Reserve status able to carry automatic weapons, with powers of arrest, but employed by us. So we've developed a kind of paramilitary force to deal with the threat of poaching.'

Ol Pejeta is famous for its four northern white rhinos. There are only seven of the northern white subspecies in the world, as far as we know (two are in a zoo in San Diego, another in the Czech Republic). In 2004 there were about 25 northern whites in the Democratic Republic of Congo, their native habitat. Because they were heavily poached by the rebel forces of the Lord's Resistance Army and the Janjaweed to fund their wars, the plan was to remove 10 and bring them to Ol Pejeta as a founder population with a view to reintroducing them to Garamba National Park in the DRC at some far off time when it would be safe. At the last

minute the whole thing unravelled, for political reasons. Three years later none was left. Then, through an organisation called Back to Africa, a plan was hatched to bring to Ol Pejeta the four rhinos of breeding age from the Czech zoo where Tony Fitzjohn's rhinos came from, in a last-ditch attempt to bring the species back from the brink of extinction. It was an expensive operation funded by an Australian donor, via Flora & Fauna International. Now the hope is that they will breed. They are in an enclosure of 600 acres, along with some female southern whites, so they might end up with a hybrid, but this is deemed better than nothing.

The northern whites don't look any different from the southern whites, except that their ears have a hairy fringe. But they are huge. I stood opposite Suni, possibly the biggest rhino in the world at just under three tons. There are two males – Suni, aged 31 and Sudan, 38, and two females – Najin, 22, and Fatu, 11. (In captivity, they can live to 48.) They have been de-horned to prevent injury. And they are under 24-hour armed guard. A sample of the faeces from each female is sent daily to a lab in Vienna for analysis, to check for pregnancy. The latest update, on the Ol Pejeta website includes some rather undignified photographs of Suni and Najin mating (Sudan is a bit old for that kind of thing and finds it rather taxing). We wait.

There are other pockets of hope for the future of the northern white. Back in London, I meet Matt Rice from Flora & Fauna International, who is here on a fundraising drive. He has been working in Africa for 25 years, and was involved in the original plan to extract the northern white from the DRC. Rice is trying to restructure the wildlife sector and rehabilitate the protected areas of South Sudan, where he is living. He has two staff. It is a huge job but it's a new country, and as such is a blank page. 'It's just wilderness, just unlimited habitat that is by and large intact. With a little effort you can see wildlife recovery there.'

Sightings of northern whites have been reported in parts of South Sudan, but none has been confirmed. And it is such a vast area that searching for rhinos there – even the biggest in the world – is like trying to find a needle in a haystack. Rice's plan is to use a helicopter when things are safer to do a proper survey of the area over a few months. But that alone will cost \$150,000, and it is hard to raise funds without concrete evidence – such as dung – of the rhinos' existence. If Rice finds any, he will then have another dilemma: what to do with them without alerting poachers to their whereabouts. The government is not likely to want to ship them to another part of the continent; the rhino is a symbolic animal in South Sudan. Ideally he would establish a sanctuary in Southern National Park in South Sudan, and perhaps lend a male to Ol Pejeta on a sort of exchange programme, in the interests of genetic diversity.

Clearly there are several people in Africa doing a lot of good things in rhino conservation, but the only real way to protect rhinos is to reduce the demand for its horn. Tom Milliken, of Traffic, the global wildlife trade monitoring network, says that their information shows that Vietnam is now the primary market. Though it is

'CRIME SYNDICATES TURN TO THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE BECAUSE THERE IS LOWER SENTENCING AND LESS RISK'

illegal to sell rhino horn in Vietnam, there is little enforcement of the law, and Milliken says there have been instances of government complicity in the trade. Then, a few years ago there was a rumour on the internet that a Vietnamese politician had cured his cancer by taking rhino horn. The origin of this rumour seems to be untraceable but it went viral, and the price of rhino horn shot up accordingly. There is speculation that the rumour was invented to push up the price.

In China, despite the illegality, rhino horn is traded fairly openly for traditional medicine, although many of the products sold as rhino horn are fake, derived from water buffalo or antelope. Special bowls with rough bases to grate the horn are widely available, too; it is hard to believe that until as recently as 2009 Chinese law demanded the death penalty for trade in rhino horn, although there is no evidence that it was ever enforced.

The Chinese have, however, recently made considerable efforts to combat trade in endangered species: the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Cites) gave China an award for a huge wildlife law enforcement operation that took place in May, organised by the General Administration of Customs in which 130,000 caged animals were seized, along with 147 animal skins and 2,000 wildlife products, including well over a ton of ivory; 7,155 illegal wildlife stalls and shops were shut down and 13 people were arrested.

Steve Trent, who is the founder of WildAid and the executive director of the Environmental Investigation Agency, has made 118 trips to China in his quest to turn the Chinese political and public machinery towards the idea of conservation. Rhino horn and ivory, he concedes, are big challenges. 'As long as there is high demand and relatively high profits to be made you can compare it broadly to the international trade in narcotics – all the enforcement in the world is not going to stop it.' In 2004 WildAid set up an office in China with Chinese staff. Trent describes himself as a salesman, selling a concept. 'It's hard to comprehend the pace and depth of change in China over the past 10 years,' he says. 'I have meetings with chief executives who have achieved great things and are now looking for other areas of interest, of which philanthropy is one – whether it's in education, health or environment. So my job is to engage them and nurture that relationship and lead it into a productive output.' The WildAid ambassador and former NBA basketball star, China's most celebrated sporting star, recently toured Kenya – visiting the northern whites at Ol Pejeta – to promote wildlife conservation to the Chinese. In 1993, because of its obligation to Cites, China banned

'LEGAL SALES WILL REINVIGORATE THE MARKET, WHICH WILL MEAN THE END OF THE RHINO IN THE WILD'

rhino horn for medicinal purposes. But according to an investigation by *Time* magazine in June 2011, a multi-million dollar Chinese operation is breeding rhinos for their horns. Between 2006 and 2009 121 rhinos were, the report states, imported from South Africa, ostensibly to populate a new safari park. The park has not yet opened, and its parent company is an arms manufacturer that also 'dabbles' in Chinese medicine through a subsidiary whose website at the time openly stated, 'To provide our pharmaceutical raw materials, the company has built an endangered animals breeding station.' Its online business plan confirmed that the company intended to manufacture rhino-horn products. South Africa has now tightened restrictions on exporting live animals.

Some South African 'conservationists' also advocate farming rhinos for their horns, claiming that if they produced enough to meet the demand (a live rhino can supply a little more than two pounds of horn annually) it would help prevent poaching. But producing it legally would be endorsing it. 'If you reinvigorate the market with active, legal sales you will encourage poaching on an unsustainable scale,' Trent says. 'It will be the end of the rhino in the wild. Full stop.'

On June 16 this year the three black rhinos from Port Lympne – Zawadi, Monduli and Grumeti – were loaded on to a converted DHL Boeing 757 at Manston in Kent and flown to Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The rhinos, which had been crate-trained for the 11-hour flight, followed by a six-hour drive to Mkomazi, needed little sedation. At Mkomazi the large welcoming committee included the British high commissioner and the director general of Tanzania National Parks. Lunch was held on the airstrip. Speeches were made. The BBC filmed. The crates were opened and the rhinos wandered cautiously but without hesitation into their new bomas. They were given water and immediately started munching the local 'browse'. It was a textbook translocation.

Three months later they have all settled in well. 'Grumeti is confident,' Lucy Fitzjohn says, 'Zawadi is cautious, and Monduli's time is still to come. He has to wait for the females to establish themselves and then he will follow, because of their different temperaments and their existing relationships at Port Lympne.' In time, they will be introduced to the other Mkomazi rhinos, and the hope is that they will breed.

And there we have it. When people refer to 'wild rhinos' today, it means rhinos not kept in zoos. A rhino in a game reserve or a sanctuary or a national park is considered a wild rhino. 'Wild' once meant roaming the land at will, not behind electric fences and protected by armed security guards. In that sense, there have been no wild rhinos for a long time, and there will never be wild rhinos again.

Jessamy Calkin travelled as a guest of the Africa specialist The Ultimate Travel Company (020-7386 4646; theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk), whose charity initiative supports the work of Tusk (tusk.org), Lewa (lewa.org) and GAWPT (georgeadamson.org). Ian Craig and Steve Trent will be giving the American Express Conservation Lecture at the Royal Geographic Society, London, on November 15. Tickets from tusk.org