

## Book Reviews

**Udjung Kulon: the land of the last Javan rhinoceros, by A. Hoogerwerf.**  
Hurst, London, £11.25.

Despite its relatively limited area (c.30,000 ha), the Udjung Kulon Reserve on the western point of Java is one of the most valuable in Indonesia. This is not only because it is the last refuge in Asia of the last representatives of the Sunda Islands rhinoceros, once distributed over almost the whole of south-east Asia, but because, together with the Baluran reserve at the opposite end of Java, it is the last refuge for many other species of both fauna and flora driven out of other parts of the island by the densest human population in the world.

The author is certainly one of the men who are most familiar with Udjong Kulon. Before and after the last war he spent much time there, cataloguing and observing the fauna and flora with an admirable attention to detail, and for several years before independence he was Chief of Indonesia's Nature Protection Service. It is largely due to his activities that the wildlife of this sanctuary obtained a reprieve.

Monographs of this significance dedicated to a single reserve are rare, and the book is an exhaustive focussing of the author's own observations and of both old and recent data scattered in the literature. Moreover he goes far beyond the narrow frame he set himself and, for our greater profit, paints a complete picture of the evolution of Javan wildlife since the colonisation of the island.

The first part of the work traces the history of the Udjung Kulon and describes, with numerous photographs, the various habitats. Sections are then devoted to the large mammals – rhinoceros, banteng, tiger, sambar and muntjac deer, boar, chevrotain, wild dog, panther – and the small ones – birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and various invertebrates. For all the larger species he assembles a mass of data of his own or drawn from an abundant bibliography on taxonomy, morphology, past and present habitat, behaviour in the wild and, of course, problems of conservation inside as well as outside the reserve. All this is most valuable and interesting. Less praiseworthy is his way of dealing with the work of colleagues, of whom I was one, who find that our writings were often interpreted with a very different meaning from that which we gave them, and he makes a mountain of the slightest errors (or what he considers such) in striking contrast to the discretion which he displays towards all former observations which agree with his own. This, fortunately, does not seriously detract from the book's interest, for it is well documented, rich in observations, very well illustrated and excellently presented. The author's experience in the field of nature protection in Indonesia cannot be equalled and we can only approve his conclusions, particularly since he warns against any attempt at 'management' in Udjong Kulon in the hope of increasing the numbers of the last Javan rhinoceros. Our observations between 1956 and 1964 showed that the habitat had not changed unfavourably for the rhinos, the only threat was poaching. Only when effective protection allows the species to regain a normal density will it be possible to consider how to help it to expand both inside and outside the reserve. For the moment, apart from strict patrolling, intervention must be limited to maintaining the existing pastures which alone can assure the survival of other herbivores, notably bantengs and deer, for which Udjong Kulon represents just as much a last refuge against extinction.

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IN UDJUNG KULON: Javan rhinos in a wallow; a banteng bull, and a Javan tiger, in Indonesia's premier nature reserve. Photographs by A. Hoogerwerf, author of the book reviewed opposite

