



WWF

ADOPTION

HK

Elephants

YOUR ADOPTION UPDATE



UP CLOSE WITH KIRUBA

ENJOY NEW AND EXCITING IMAGES OF YOUR ADOPTED
ASIAN ELEPHANT, AND FIND OUT WHAT WE'RE DOING NEXT

**ALSO
INSIDE**

KIRUBA MONITORING
HIGHLIGHTS

ELEPHANT
FACTS TO SHARE

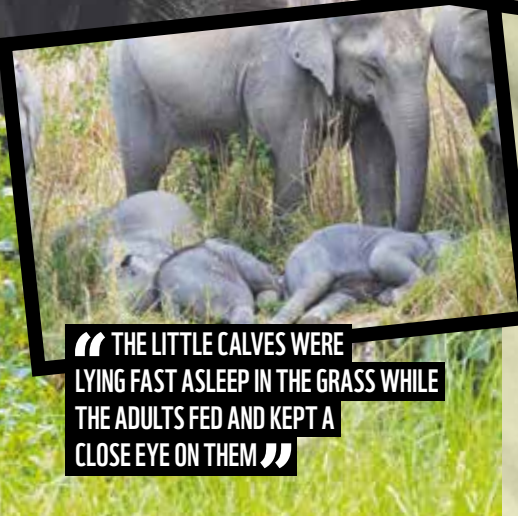
YOUR FIELD REPORT



COMPILED BY
CHRISTY WILLIAMS,
WWF'S ASIAN
ELEPHANT EXPERT



Main: Some of Kiruba's herd enjoy a feed
Inset centre: The calves enjoy their snooze
Inset top right: Mighty matriarch, Kiruba



“THE LITTLE CALVES WERE LYING FAST ASLEEP IN THE GRASS WHILE THE ADULTS FED AND KEPT A CLOSE EYE ON THEM”



MY TRIBUTE TO KIRUBA

I've loved monitoring this incredible elephant and her family, and sharing their stories with you. You can read some of my favourite memories on page 6.



MISSION MYANMAR

© MINZAVAR / WWF

Kiruba's herd is thriving and, with their home in safe hands, we're taking urgent action to help other Asian elephants

Every summer, your adopted Asian elephant leads her herd down from the Shivalik Hills to the grasslands of Corbett National Park, as part of their annual migration. The elephants feast on the lush vegetation and I try to find and photograph them, so you can see how well they're doing.

HIDDEN HERD

This time, locating Kiruba and her clan proved much trickier than usual because the grass was so long. In some places it was almost as tall as the elephants! Park staff used to burn some areas to help keep the grass under control, but a few years ago they stopped doing this in order to benefit all the grass-dependent species.

After searching for two days, I finally found the mighty matriarch. Very helpfully, she was standing in an open area of forest, with some of the herd members just

25MPH
WHEN CHARGING
OR SPRINTING,
ELEPHANTS
CAN RUN AT UP
TO 25MPH



beyond her. I asked my driver to move a little closer so I could get a good photo, and started snapping away. I'd only managed three shots when the driver suddenly reversed the vehicle and started driving us away. A group of elephants was charging towards us!

Having seen several elephants behind Kiruba I'd assumed the whole herd were with her, but in fact some were approaching from behind us. They'd been hidden by thick undergrowth and I hadn't noticed them. Now they were trying to cross the road to get to their leader and we were in the way! As we sped off, I quickly took a few more photos and thanked my lucky stars we'd escaped.

RARE SIGHT

I never tire of seeing Kiruba and the other magnificent Asian elephants out in the wild, and find their behaviour truly fascinating. This time I saw something extraordinary. Here's what happened.

It was morning and I drove down to the Ramganga river hoping to find Kiruba. I didn't spot her, but I did

see some female elephants with their calves. The little calves were lying fast asleep in the grass while the adults fed and kept a close eye on them. This was the first time I'd ever seen a whole group of calves sleeping at the same time. Then, things got even more interesting.

One by one, the adults lay down and fell asleep beside the youngsters, which is extremely unusual. In my many years of fieldwork, the only other time I've seen a herd of elephants asleep together was deep inside a forest, where there was little chance of them being disturbed. I think this shows how safe the elephants must feel inside Corbett National Park, and that's very reassuring.

Thanks to adopters like you, we've demonstrated that the Corbett elephant population is one of the healthiest in Asia, with more than 90% of the adult females breeding. Sadly though, not all Asian elephants have the same level of protection, which is why we've made a very important decision. Read on and I'll tell you more.

IMAGES © CHRISTY WILLIAMS / WWF

Asian elephants are protected and thriving in Corbett National Park. But in Myanmar, they're under serious threat

Poaching is rife in Myanmar, and around one wild elephant each week is being killed for the illegal wildlife trade. This has to stop, so we're taking urgent action. We're now focusing our expertise and efforts to protect Asian elephants in Myanmar, and I'm proud to be part of WWF's team there.

We'll bring you more news in your next update. Meanwhile, I hope you'll continue your adoption and help support this crucial work, because by adopting an elephant you aren't just helping one animal. You're paving the way for a safer, brighter future for all elephants – Asian and African. With adopters like you beside us, we can focus our efforts where they're needed most, and together we can make a massive difference. Thank you.

Christy



MAGNIFICENT MATRIARCH

CHRISTY HAS MONITORED KIRUBA AND HER HERD FOR 16 YEARS. HERE, HE SHARES SOME OF HIS MOST CHERISHED MEMORIES WITH YOU

My favourite memory of Kiruba was when her eldest son was still a calf, and I accidentally got too close for comfort.

The herd was crossing a road in the forest near to where I'd parked and Kiruba didn't see me at first. When she did, she reacted instinctively to protect her young one. She rolled up her trunk, flared her ears and charged right at me. As you can imagine, I drove away pretty quickly!

LOVING MOTHER

My other lasting memory is of seeing Kiruba with her newborn female calf, Tula, way back in 2005. I'd suspected that Kiruba was pregnant, and to see her with her healthy calf made me really proud – even though I had nothing to do with it. Over the years, I've watched Tula grow up and become a young adult. She'll probably have her own calf quite soon, and do her bit to help increase the thriving Asian elephant population in Corbett National Park.

As I mentioned in your field report, lots of adult female elephants in the park are breeding. In fact, more than 90% of them have a young calf of less than five years old. This shows that the population is healthy, with enough males to breed with all the females. And you've enabled us to create a unique and important record of the park's male elephant population – a truly mammoth achievement!

Supported by adopters like you, we've compiled the first-ever adult male elephant (tusk) identification manual for staff at Corbett National

Park. In it, we describe each tusk seen in the Dhikala grasslands – an important summer feeding area.

Being able to monitor both genders is really important. Over time it helps us determine the ratio of males to females, and we can identify any males that are at risk from poaching or coming into conflict with local people. The manual will make it easier for park staff to recognise each individual tusk, so they can record its movements and behaviour.

LOOKING AHEAD

Reassuringly, Kiruba's home is much better protected than when I first started working there in 1994. You should be proud of the part you've played in this by supporting our monitoring and conservation efforts. I'm confident that Kiruba's family will continue to thrive and I really can't thank you enough for helping to protect them. Through your adoption, you aren't just helping one elephant, you're adopting a better future for wild elephants around the world – and it's something to be immensely proud of. 🐘

DID YOU KNOW?

TUSKERS ARE HARDER TO MONITOR, BECAUSE THEY TEND TO TRAVEL ALONE RATHER THAN IN HERDS LIKE FEMALES



Main: Kiruba and her eldest male calf
Inset: And with female calf, Tula



FAMILIAR FEMALE

I started monitoring Kiruba in 2003, when she was 30 to 35 years old. That makes her between 46 and 51 now, which is a good age for a wild elephant (they can live for up to 60 years). I've seen Kiruba raise four calves and become the matriarch of the herd, making all the decisions about when to move and where to feed and water. She's also fiercely protective, as I've seen for myself!

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As well as helping to safeguard elephants, you support our other vital work to help protect our beautiful planet and its wildlife. Thank you.



SUPPLE SCHNOZZLE

ELEPHANTS HAVE
AROUND 150,000 MUSCLES
IN THEIR TRUNK



MAMMOTH MEMORY

AN ELEPHANT'S
TEMPORAL LOBE
(ASSOCIATED WITH MEMORY)
IS LARGER AND DENSER
THAN THAT OF HUMANS -
HENCE THE SAYING
'ELEPHANTS
NEVER FORGET'



SOUND SENSE

ELEPHANTS CAN
RECOGNISE WELL OVER
100 INDIVIDUALS FROM
THEIR CALLS ALONE,
AND CAN HEAR OTHERS
CALL FROM OVER
4KM AWAY

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