



Department of Biological Sciences Seminar Announcement

Throughout Sri Lanka, human-elephant conflict appears to have replaced poaching as the major cause of elephant mortality in the wild. Last year, on average, three elephants were killed per week, and wild elephants killed about 50-60 people. The huge size and intemperate appetite of elephants prevent their co-existence with people in agricultural areas, unless resultant damage can be adequately and promptly compensated. The goodwill and tolerance of the local communities ultimately determine the number of elephants supported in a protected area and its surrounding region. Left unresolved this will accelerate the demise of the elephant in Sri Lanka.

The key to a long-term solution is two-fold: 1) to encourage national land-use strategies to minimize the occurrence of conflict situation, and 2) to ensure that in areas where humans and elephants do overlap, people derive tangible benefits from their presence. Conservation of elephant in Sri Lanka is inextricably linked to the welfare of the rural poor and the socially disadvantaged who are struggling to survive in areas frequented by potentially dangerous wildlife. Elephant conservation is not only about the survival of one of Sri Lanka's best loved animal; it is also about people's well-being, preservation of biodiversity, and human survival.

Conserving the Asian Elephant in Sri Lanka

Charles Santiapillai

Deputy Chairman, IUCN/SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group, Assoc. Prof., Department of Zoology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Date: 19 Feb 2003, Wednesday

Time: 4 - 5pm

Venue: LT 32

Host: A/P Peter Ng

All are welcome