



World Elephant Day

Why in News?

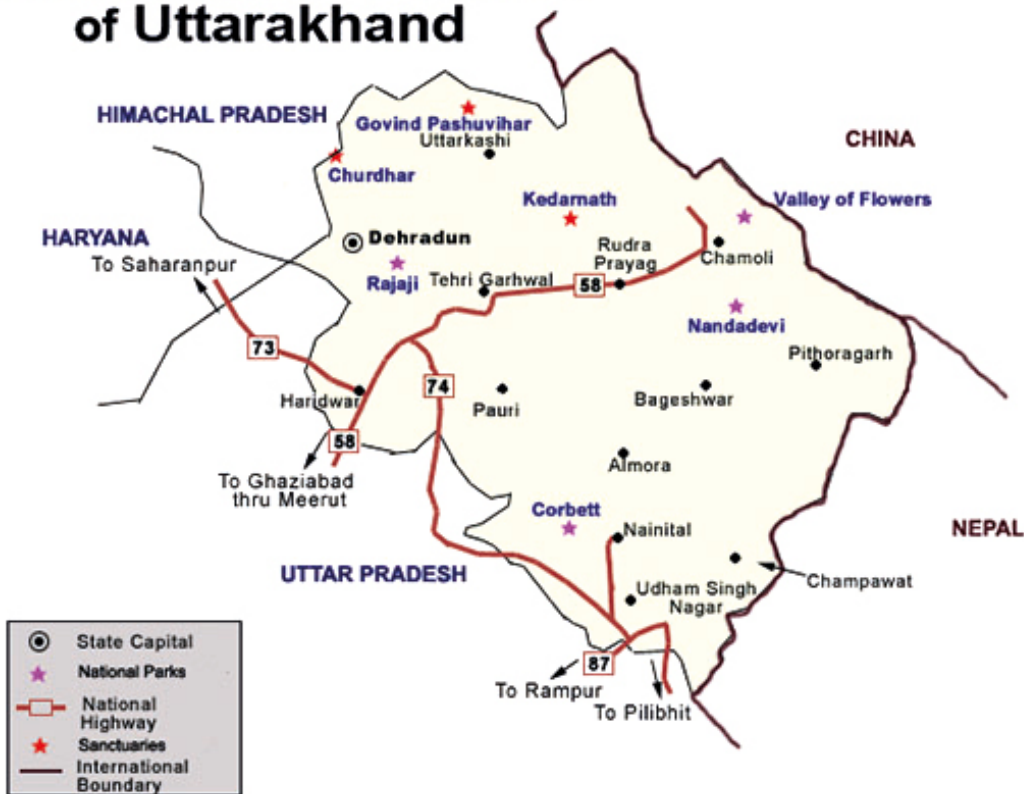
Recently, The [Corbett Tiger Reserve](#) in Uttarakhand ran an awareness campaign to celebrate [World Elephant Day](#).

Key Points

▪ Corbett Tiger Reserve

- It is located in **the Nainital district of Uttarakhand**. The [Project Tiger](#) was launched in 1973 in **Corbett National Park (first National Park of India)**, which is part of Corbett Tiger Reserve.
 - The national park was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park to protect the endangered Bengal tiger.
 - It is named after Jim Corbett who played a key role in its establishment.
- The core area forms the **Corbett National Park while the buffer contains reserve forests** as well as the Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The entire area of the reserve is mountainous and falls in the Shivalik and Outer Himalaya geological provinces.
- **Ramganga, Sonanadi, Mandal, Palain and Kosi** are the major rivers flowing through the Reserve.
- Sprawling over **500 square kilometres**, CTR is home to 230 tigers and has the world's highest tiger density at 14 tigers per hundred square kilometres.
- **Flora:**
 - Dense moist deciduous forests are found. According to the [botanical survey of India](#), Corbett has 600 species of plants - trees, shrubs, ferns, grass, climbers, herbs, and bamboo. Sal, Khair, and Sissoo are the most visible trees found in Corbett.
- **Fauna:**
 - Apart from tigers, Corbett also has leopards. Other mammals such as jungle cats, barking deer, spotted deer, sambar deer, sloth etc. are also found there.
- **Other Major Protected Areas of Uttarakhand:**
 - [Nanda Devi National Park](#).
 - Valley of Flowers National Park.
 - [Valley of Flowers National Park](#) and [Nanda Devi National Park](#) together are a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#).
 - [Rajaji National Park](#).
 - [Gangotri National Park](#).
 - Govind National Park

National Parks & Sanctuaries of Uttarakhand



World Elephant Day

- It is celebrated every year on the **12th August** to bring awareness to the status of Asian and African elephants in the wild.
- The theme for 2024 is **“Personifying prehistoric beauty, theological relevance, and environmental importance”**.
- India is home to about **60%** of the world's Asian elephant population, with an estimated 27,312 individuals as per the 2017 census and 138 identified [elephant corridors](#).
- Elephants have a **gestation period of about 22 months**, the longest of any land animal.
- Asian elephants (Indian) are classified as **Endangered** on the [IUCN Red List](#) due to habitat loss, human-elephant conflict, and poaching.

ELEPHANT



Drishti IAS

4 Main Species of Elephant

| Species | Found in | IUCN Red List Status | Habitat |
|----------------|----------|---|--|
| Indian | Asia | EN (CITES - Appendix I, WPA - Schedule I) | Subtropical broadleaf forest, tropical broadleaf moist forest, dry forest, grassland |
| Sumatran | Asia | CR | Broadleaf moist tropical forests |
| Savanna (Bush) | Africa | EN | All sub-Saharan Africa except for Central Africa's dense tropical forest |
| Forest | Africa | CR | Dense Tropical Forests |

Indian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*)

Largest Land Mammal on Asian Continent
National Heritage Animal of India

Top 5 Indian States by Maximum Elephant Population: (As per elephant census 2017)

- Karnataka > Assam > Kerala > Tamil Nadu > Odisha

Social Structure:

- Female elephants are more social than males; form herd (generally 5-7)
 - Led by the oldest female, the 'matriarch'
- Males usually live alone

Threats:

- Habitat Fragmentation
- Poaching for Ivory
- Human-Elephant Conflict
- Mistreatment in Captivity

Conservation Efforts:

- Gaj Sookhna App (2022)
- Gaj Yatra (2017)
- Hathi Mere Sathi campaign (2011)
- National Elephant Corridor project (2005)
- Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme (2003)
- Project Elephant (1992)