



World Elephant Day

Source: Mint

World Elephant Day 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.

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 Soochna 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)

Read More: [World Elephant Day](#), [Elephant Corridors](#)