

Editorial

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Gajah 46 presents three research articles and three short communications. Four papers are about elephants in Sri Lanka and the other two publications are from India. We also have four reports on meetings held in Indonesia, Myanmar, India and Thailand.

In *Research Articles*, A.M.D.B. Alahakoon and co-authors studied the feeding pattern of elephants in the Udawalawe National Park. They identified 63 elephant fodder plants in different habitats at different times of the year. Chandima Fernando *et al.* report on butterflies using elephant dung in Wasgamuwa. They found 26 different butterfly species puddling on dung piles with up to 15 species on the same dung pile. Kasun Abeysinghe and colleagues assessed gastrointestinal strongyle infections in 141 captive and wild elephants. All wild elephants had high numbers of strongyle larvae while captive elephants, being dewormed regularly, had less parasites.

In *Short Communications*, Sangita Mitra studied possible factors influencing elephant mortalities on railway tracks of northern West Bengal. In 40 years 82 elephants were killed in 56 train accidents. T.M.S.K. Piyadasa and co-authors used a GnRH vaccine on six captive elephant bulls to postpone musth. In the three elephants, which received all doses, the vaccine postponed musth by a few months. Arindam Kishore Pachoni *et al.* report on the treatment of a chronic abscess in a juvenile captive elephant. Two weeks after surgery the animal recovered fully.

In the *News and Briefs* section we hear from the “2nd Asian Elephant Range States Meeting”, held in Indonesia this year. The meeting concluded with the “Jakarta Declaration for the Asian Elephant Conservation” agreed upon by all 13 range states. In June 2016 a “Workshop on Addressing Human-Elephant Conflict in

Myanmar” was held, where different stakeholders discussed the national human-elephant conflict strategy under the national Myanmar Elephant Conservation Action Plan. The “Conservation Network of Asian Mahouts” keeps expanding with Indian mahouts from Karnataka joining force with mahouts from Indonesia. Awareness programs and exchange visits were held for mahouts to learn from each other. The “Elephant Conservation Group” held its fifth workshop in Kuiburi, Thailand. From nine countries 23 participants exchanged ideas and experiences and discussed collaboration on various projects.

A total of 63 abstracts of “Recent Publications on Asian Elephants” are provided in the abstract section and “News Briefs” presents 24 news clippings featuring elephants from across the range.

Vivek Menon, the chair of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group, provides information about his visits to Sabah and Sumatra and reports from the elephant range country meeting held in Jakarta. He further informs us about the 11 new working groups that have recently been set up and announces the next AsESG meeting to be held in April 2018 in Thailand.

A big thank you to all the authors who contributed articles about their work to this issue of *Gajah*. I would also like to thank the editorial team for their help with paper editing and working with the authors to improve their manuscripts. I would like to welcome Varun Goswami as a new editorial board member.

We are most grateful for the financial support from the Wildlife Reserves Singapore Group, enabling us to print this *Gajah* and mail it out free to its readers.