

World Elephant Day

August 13, 2022

In news- World Elephant Day is celebrated every year on August 12 across the world with an aim to acknowledge Elephants' significance in our ecosystem.

History of World Elephant Day-

- World Elephant Day was co-founded on August 12, 2012, by Canadian Patricia Sims and the Elephant Reintroduction Foundation of Thailand.
- The day underlines the awareness of the threats that elephants face in their daily lives.
- Its vision of the “neutral” approach allows and facilitates all organizations and citizens to conduct campaigns under the auspices of World Elephant Day, permitting everyone to work together to support this critical global issue which demands cooperation across borders and political lines

About Elephants-

- Elephants are the largest land mammals on earth and have distinctly massive bodies, large ears, and long trunks.
- **Three living species are currently recognised:**
 - The African savanna/bush elephant.
 - The African forest elephant, and
 - The Asian elephant.
- They are considered to be **keystone species**, due to their impact on their environments.
- Elephants **have a fission–fusion society**, in which multiple family groups come together to socialise.
- **Females tend to live in family groups**, which can consist of one female with her calves or several related females with offspring.
- Elephants are generally constantly eating. They can spend up to 75 percent of the day just eating.

- There are around 4.15 lakh African elephants living in the wild.
- African elephants are larger than Asian elephants. Their ears are also larger and are shaped like the African continent.
- Wild elephants can live till 60-70 years of age.
- Elephants are expressive and are adept at showing emotions like empathy, grief, and compassion.
- Elephants pick up seismic vibrations by their feet to communicate with each other.
- The escalation of poaching, habitat loss, human-elephant conflict and mistreatment in captivity are just some of the threats to both African and Asian elephants.
- The **African savanna elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)** - Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
- **African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*)**– Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
- **Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*)** – Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

World Elephant Society-

- It was founded in November 2015 as the nonprofit public charitable organization to help support the annual World Elephant Day campaign.
- Patricia Sims is its President and Executive Director.

The Elephant Reintroduction Foundation-

- It is a charitable non-profit organization based in Thailand.
- It was founded in 2002 as a Royal initiative of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand.
- Its **mission is to reintroduce captive elephants into the wild**, restore natural habitat with indigenous plants and wildlife, research and educate others about Asian elephants, and **promote management of long-term survival of elephants in Thailand and around the world.**