



Pulling Together to Rescue 11 Asian Elephants

The rescue of 11 Asian Elephants (*Elephas maximus*) from a mud hole inside the Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, Mondulkiri Province on 24th March 2017 avoided a tragedy for wildlife conservation in Cambodia.

'If the community had not got together with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), ELIE and the Department of Environment to rescue these 11 Asian Elephants, this would have been a tragedy" said Tan Setha, WCS Technical Advisor to the protected area. "This herd, representing roughly 10% of the elephant population at Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, consisted of three adult females and eight juveniles of various ages, including a male that had almost reached maturity. These elephants represent an important part of the breeding population in Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, and their loss would have been a major blow for conservation", added Tan Setha.

The mud hole where the elephants were trapped was a bomb crater left over from the Vietnam War that had been enlarged by farmers to store water. When local farmers discovered the elephants they notified the Department of Environment, who in turn notified WCS who were able to mobilize a rescue. [Watch Video](#)



Giant Ibis Nests located early in the Northern Plains

Three nests of the Critically Endangered Giant Ibis (*Thaumatibis gigantea*) have already been located in Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary (KPWS) this year. The Giant Ibis typically nests in the wet season to avoid competition with another Critically Endangered species, the closely related White-shouldered Ibis (*Pseudibis davisoni*), that also nests in the Northern Plains. It is highly unusual for both species to nest simultaneously.



Female Giant Ibis on the nest in Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary. © Rours Vann / WCS

The Giant Ibis is Cambodia's national bird and breeds in undisturbed deciduous dipterocarp forest in Northern and Eastern Cambodia, making Kulen Promtep and Chhep Wildlife sanctuaries critical to the long-term survival of the world's largest Ibis. [Read full story](#)



Nearly Two Hundred Lesser Adjutant chicks protected in the Northern Plains

After being guarded by local community members for almost three months, 172 Lesser Adjutant (*Leptoptilos javanicus*) chicks have been successfully protected in the Northern Plains of Cambodia, this nesting season.



Lesser Adjutant chicks on the nest in Kulen Promtep Wildlife Sanctuary. © Rours Vann / WCS

WCS has employed local community members to protect nesting colonies threatened by egg collection, predation and loss of habitat. In the Northern Plains nest protection is sustainably financed by revenue from the eco-tourism partner of WCS, Sam Veasna Centre, who offer guided bird watching tours in the Northern Plains. Additional support from our donors, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), and Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, also supports the conservation of these threatened species. [Read full story](#)



WCS Conservation Hero: Tun Sarorn

WCS has recognized the hard work and commitment of Tun Sarorn who has cared for 206 Royal Turtles, over the past ten years at the Reptile Conservation Centre in Koh Kong. The Royal Turtle (*Batagur affinis*) is Cambodia's national reptile and, due to loss of nesting habitat from sand dredging and hunting it is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.



Tun Sarorn (left) holding an adult Royal Turtle at the new Koh Kong Reptile Conservation Centre. © Eleanor Briggs / WCS

Sarorn is very experienced in caring for this species of turtle. She checks their health conditions regularly to quickly identify whether the animals are healthy or not. Whenever the turtles are sick, she feeds and cares for them until they are fully recovered.

"I love the work I do to take care of those turtles. I miss them whenever I go away because I think of them as if they are my children. I hope that they can live well, and will not go extinct," said Sarorn.

[Read full story](#)



Nest of Asian Giant Softshell Turtle fails in Sre Ambel

The Sre Ambel conservation team consisting of local people, the Fisheries Administration, WCS, and Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) has discovered that a nest of the Globally Endangered Asian Giant Softshell Turtle (*Pelochelys cantorii*), has failed.



The team checks the eggs of the Globally Endangered Asian Giant Softshell Turtle. © WCS

The team makes regular routine checks of all turtle nests to ensure their health. On inspection, they found that most of the eggs were rotten, and the rest were infertile. This is the fifth nest of this species that has been found in the Sre Ambel River system, Koh Kong Province since 2011. However, none of them have hatched. The team suspects that there may only be one female Asian Giant Softshell Turtle remaining in the river, and her eggs were not fertilized because of a lack of a mate.



Stakeholders Demarcate Wildlife Sanctuary Boundary

Stakeholders from the Department of Environment, district and commune authorities, police, and local community members, in collaboration with WCS have installed 20 concrete poles to demarcate the newly established Preah Roka Wildlife Sanctuary in Preah Vihear Province.



Local communities, authorities, and government officials mark protected area boundary. © Uy Sitha / WCS

With support from the Rainforest Trust, WCS is holding a series of awareness raising meetings and boundary demarcation events that will significantly enhance the protection of this landscape and its globally threatened wildlife, whilst supporting the livelihoods of many families dependent on its ecosystem services. [Read full story](#)



Camera Trap Confirms Birds Using Feeding Stations

Pictures from camera traps have confirmed that Bar-bellied Pitta (*Hydrornis elliotii*; popular with tourists), Siamese Fireback (*Lophura diardi*), Red Jungle Fowl (*Gallus gallus*), and Emerald Dove (*Chalcophaps indica*) are using the bird feeding stations in the forest surrounding Jahoo Gibbon Camp. Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus Bengalensis*) and Northern Pig-tailed Macaque (*Macaca leonina*) were also spotted nearby. These results show that the bird feeding stations are successfully attracting birds and also demonstrate the importance of the forest for mammals.



Female Bar-bellied Pitta, popular with tourists, was photographed by the camera trap. © WCS

The bird feeding stations will hopefully provide reliable bird viewing for tourists, encouraging more people to visit this lovely area of forest and contribute to its conservation.



Sambar hit by car at Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary

A female Sambar (*Rusa unicolor*) was hit by a car while crossing the road near Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary (KSWS) headquarters, in Mondulkiri Province. The KSWS team moved the Sambar to a safe location and contacted Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre (PTWRC) for their assistance.



The female sambar was transported to Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre for rehabilitation. © Tan Setha / WCS

The PTWRC team arrived at the KSWS yesterday afternoon after rushing from several hundred kilometers away. The team immobilised the deer, and provided emergency care, before carefully loading her onto a vehicle and transporting her back to PTWRC to provide specialised care and rehabilitation.



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