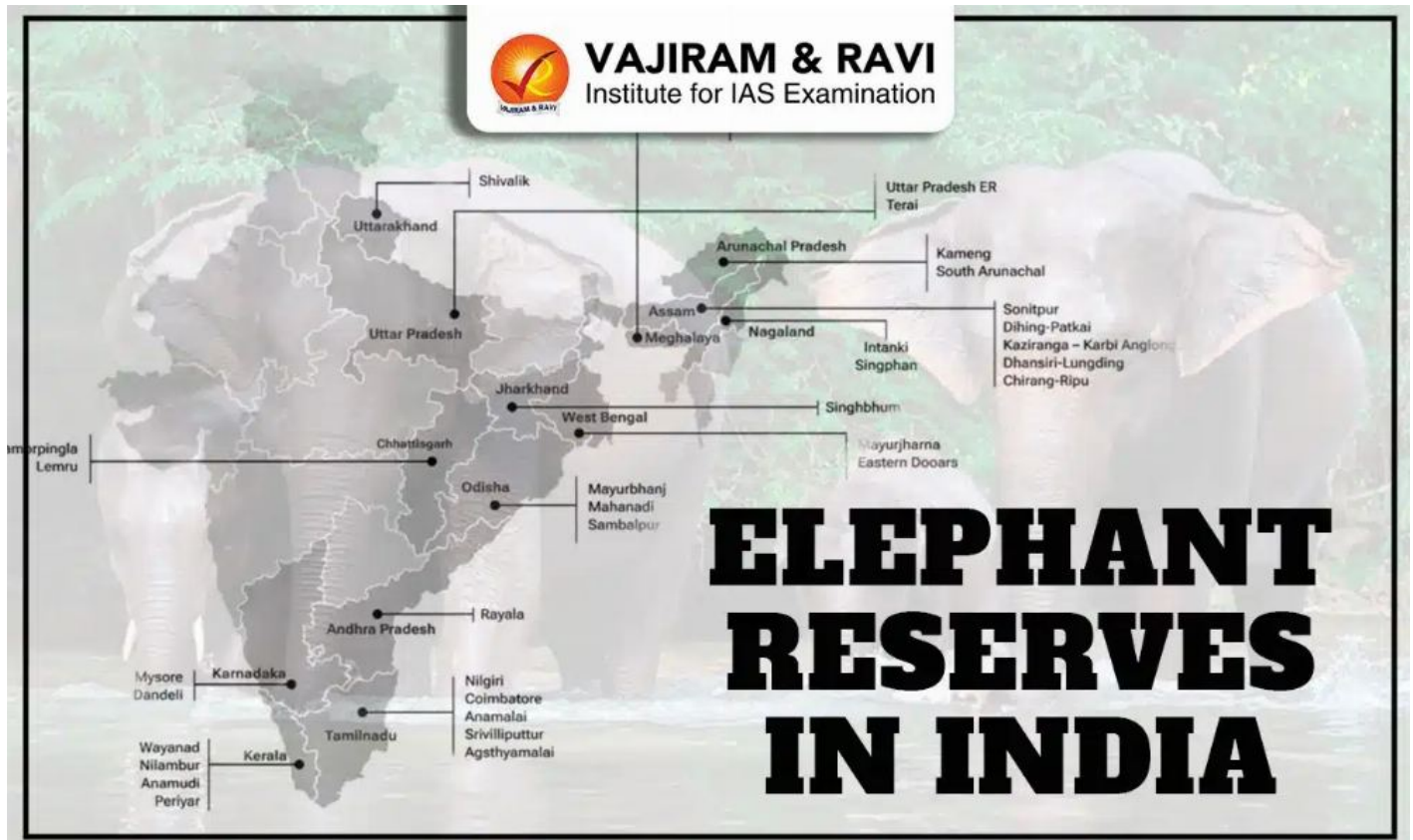


Elephant Reserves in India 2026, State Wise 33 List, Project Elephant

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Elephant Reserves in India are important sanctuaries dedicated to the protection and conservation of elephants. Elephants are considered to be the most majestic and intelligent creatures of the animal kingdom. These reserves have been established to safeguard the natural habitats of elephants and ensure their survival amid the growing threats such as habitat loss, human-wildlife conflicts and poaching. In this article, we are going to cover Elephant Reserves, their importance, structure and impact of these Elephant reserves in India.

What are Elephant Reserves?

Elephant Reserves are special areas created for the conservation and protection of elephants and their habitats. Their main goal is to make sure the long-term survival and well-being of the elephant population is maintained. These reserves protect the natural habitat, migration corridors and feeding ground important for elephant sustenance. They contribute to biodiversity conservation and foster coexistence between elephants and local communities.

India's wild elephant population is currently between 25,000 to 29,000 individuals. However, the conservation of male elephants known as tuskers is increasingly precarious with only 1,200 estimated in India.

How Many Elephant Reserves in India 2026?

As of 2026, there are total 33 Elephant Reserves in India. With the addition of Terai Elephant Reserve (TER) in Uttar Pradesh, India has increased its Total Elephant Reserves from 32 to 33 in 2022. They cover about 80,777.78 sq. km of area. These reserves support elephant conservation, reduce human-elephant conflict and safeguard wildlife corridors.

Elephant Reserves in India State Wise List 2026

At present, 33 Elephant Reserves are these spread across 14 major elephant states. These elephant reserves often overlap with Tiger Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Reserved Forests, all protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, and relevant state laws. The **State wise list of Elephant Reserves in India as of 2026** include:

1. Mayurjharna Elephant Reserve (West Bengal): Covers 414 sq. km. It is an important elephant habitat in West Bengal and supports elephant conservation through protected forests and connected wildlife landscapes.
2. Singhbhum Elephant Reserve (Jharkhand): Spread across 13,440 sq. km., it is the largest Elephant Reserve in India by area and plays a major role in conserving large elephant populations and migration routes.
3. Mayurbhanj Elephant Reserve (Odisha): Covers 3,214 sq. km. It protects elephant habitats in northern Odisha and supports safe movement through forested landscapes.
4. Mahanadi Elephant Reserve (Odisha): Spread over 1,038 sq. km., this reserve conserves elephant populations and strengthens habitat protection in the Mahanadi landscape.
5. Sambalpur Elephant Reserve (Odisha): Covers 427 sq. km. It provides protected habitat for elephants and contributes to wildlife conservation in western Odisha.
6. Badalkhol-Tamorpingla Elephant Reserve (Chhattisgarh): Spread across 1,143.34 sq. km., it safeguards elephant habitats and helps maintain ecological connectivity in central India.
7. Lemru Elephant Reserve (Chhattisgarh): Covers 1,995.48 sq. km. It is an important conservation landscape supporting elephant movement and reducing habitat fragmentation.
8. Kameng Elephant Reserve (Arunachal Pradesh): Spread over 1,892 sq. km., this reserve protects elephants within the rich forest ecosystems of eastern Himalayan landscapes.
9. Sonitpur Elephant Reserve (Assam): Covers 1,420 sq. km. It supports elephant conservation in Assam through protected forests and connected habitats.
10. Dihing-Patkai Elephant Reserve (Assam): Spread across 937 sq. km., it conserves elephants within one of India's important biodiversity-rich forest regions.
11. South Arunachal Elephant Reserve (Arunachal Pradesh): Covers 1,957.50 sq. km. It protects elephant habitats while supporting conservation across dense forest landscapes.
12. Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong Elephant Reserve (Assam): Spread over 3,270 sq. km., it connects important elephant habitats and strengthens wildlife movement between protected areas.

13. Dhansiri-Lungding Elephant Reserve (Assam): Covers 2,740 sq. km. It plays a key role in maintaining elephant corridors and conserving northeastern forest ecosystems.
14. Intanki Elephant Reserve (Nagaland): Spread across 202 sq. km., this reserve provides secure habitat for elephants within Nagaland's protected forest region.
15. Singphan Elephant Reserve (Nagaland): Covering 23.57 sq. km., it is the smallest Elephant Reserve in India and contributes to local elephant habitat conservation.
16. Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve (Assam): Spread over 2,600 sq. km., it supports elephant conservation by protecting forests and improving habitat connectivity.
17. Eastern Dooars Elephant Reserve (West Bengal): Covers 978 sq. km. It is an important elephant landscape linking forests and migration corridors in northern West Bengal.
18. Garo Hills Elephant Reserve (Meghalaya): Spread across 3,500 sq. km., it conserves elephant habitats within the forested hills of Meghalaya.
19. Mysore Elephant Reserve (Karnataka): Covers 8,055.94 sq. km. It is one of India's largest elephant reserves and forms a major elephant conservation landscape in southern India.
20. Dandeli Elephant Reserve (Karnataka): Spread over 2,321.11 sq. km., it protects elephant habitats through extensive forests and connected wildlife areas.
21. Wayanad Elephant Reserve (Kerala): Covers 1,200 sq. km. It supports elephant conservation by maintaining continuous forest habitats in Kerala.
22. Nilgiri Elephant Reserve (Tamil Nadu): Spread across 4,663 sq. km., it is one of India's major elephant conservation landscapes with extensive forest connectivity.
23. Rayala Elephant Reserve (Andhra Pradesh): Covers 766 sq. km. It provides protected habitat for elephants within the forests of Andhra Pradesh.
24. Nilambur Elephant Reserve (Kerala): Spread over 1,419 sq. km., it conserves elephants through protected forests and habitat management.
25. Coimbatore Elephant Reserve (Tamil Nadu): Covers 566 sq. km. It protects elephant populations and supports movement across forest ecosystems.
26. Anamalai Elephant Reserve (Tamil Nadu): Spread across 1,457 sq. km., it provides an important habitat for elephants in the Western Ghats landscape.
27. Anamudi Elephant Reserve (Kerala): Covers 3,728 sq. km. It strengthens elephant conservation across extensive forest ecosystems in the southern Western Ghats.
28. Agasthyamalai Elephant Reserve (Tamil Nadu): Spread over 1,197.48 sq. km., it conserves elephants within one of India's ecologically significant mountain landscapes.
29. Periyar Elephant Reserve (Kerala): Covers 3,742 sq. km. It is a major elephant conservation area that protects forests, wildlife habitats and migration routes.
30. Srivilliputtur Elephant Reserve (Tamil Nadu): Spread across 1,249 sq. km., it supports elephant conservation through protected forests and connected habitats.
31. Shivalik Elephant Reserve (Uttarakhand): Covers 5,405 sq. km. It conserves elephants across the Shivalik landscape and protects important migration corridors in northern India.
32. Uttar Pradesh Elephant Reserve (Uttar Pradesh): Spread over 744 sq. km., it safeguards elephant habitats and supports conservation in the state's forest areas.

33. Terai Elephant Reserve (Uttar Pradesh): Covers 3,072.358 sq. km. It protects elephant habitats across the Terai landscape and strengthens long-term conservation and corridor connectivity.

Also Read: [National Parks in India 2026](#)

Elephant Reserves Significance

Elephant Reserves in India are important due to many reasons:

- **Habitat Preservation:** They maintain forests, grasslands, and water bodies vital for elephant survival.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Protecting elephant habitats benefits numerous other species, sustaining ecosystem health.
- **Migration Route Maintenance:** Reserves preserve migratory routes, preventing disruptions from human activity or infrastructure.
- **Genetic Diversity:** Safeguarding distinct populations helps maintain genetic diversity, ensuring healthier elephants.
- **Conservation of Endangered Species:** Overlapping habitats with other endangered species helps protect overall biodiversity.
- **Human-Elephant Conflict Mitigation:** Providing safe spaces reduces the likelihood of elephants entering human settlements.
- **Sustainable Resource Use:** Proper management ensures a balance between human needs and ecosystem conservation.
- **Promotion of Ecotourism:** Well-managed reserves offer eco-tourism opportunities, generating revenue for conservation efforts.

Also Read: [Wildlife Sanctuaries in India 2026](#)

Elephant Reserves Functions

Elephant Reserves are responsible for a number of functions. These functions are:

- **Habitat Protection:** Dedicated areas safeguard forests, grasslands, and water bodies for elephant well-being.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Conserving ecosystems benefits numerous plant and animal species.
- **Migration Route Maintenance:** Reserves maintain traditional migratory paths, preventing human-induced disruptions.
- **Genetic Diversity Conservation:** Protecting distinct populations sustains genetic variety within elephants.
- **Human-Elephant Conflict Mitigation:** Safe reserves reduce encounters with human settlements.
- **Sustainable Resource Use:** Proper management balances ecological and human needs for long-term viability.

Asian Elephant Protection

Elephant Reserves are important for the conservation of Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*), an endangered species of iconic significance. They safeguard habitats and make sure that the overall well-being of elephants is

maintained.

- **Habitat Protection:** Elephant Reserves provide protection from poaching, habitat loss, and human-elephant conflicts.
- **Elephant Corridors:** Elephant Reserves facilitate migration and movement across states while supporting research, education, and community involvement.

Also Read: [Biosphere Reserves in India 2026](#)

Project Elephant

Project Elephant was launched in February 1992, and is a Central Government initiative aimed at the conservation and management of elephants in states with wild populations. The goal of launching Project Elephant were:

- Protect habitats and corridors to ensure wild elephant survival.
- It covers 16 states, including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.
- Provide technical and financial support to participating states for censuses, training, and conflict mitigation.

Project Elephant Objectives:

The objectives of launching Project Elephant are:

- Promote scientific management and anti-poaching measures.
- Prevent unnatural causes of elephant mortality.
- Restore ecological habitats and migration routes.
- Mitigate human-elephant conflicts.
- Reduce livestock grazing pressures in critical habitats.
- Support scientific research, public awareness, veterinary care, and eco-development initiatives.

Also Read: [Project Tiger](#)

MIKE Program

The MIKE (Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants) Program, launched in South Asia in 2003 under CITES, provides essential data to manage and protect elephant populations effectively, analyzing poaching trends and contributing factors.

Campaign Haathi Mere Saathi

The Campaign Haathi Mere Saathi was launched on May 24, 2011, in collaboration with the Wildlife Trust of India, to raise public awareness about elephant welfare and conservation, fostering stronger bonds between humans and elephants in India.

Difference Between Asian and African Elephant

Elephants are the largest land mammals divided mainly into two species: Asian Elephants and African Elephants. While both Elephants share some similarities, there are also many differences between them when it comes to physical features, behaviours and habitat.

The differences in between Asian and African Elephants are:

Difference Between Asian and African Elephant		
Aspect	Asian Elephant	African Elephant
Scientific Name	Elephas maximus	Loxodonta africana
Size	Smaller, with a shoulder height of 2-3.5 meters	Larger, with a shoulder height of 3-4 meters
Ears	Smaller, rounded ears	Larger, fan-shaped ears
Forehead	Twin-domed forehead with a deep groove in the centre	Sloped, smooth forehead
Tusks	Only males usually have tusks, and some may lack them entirely	Both males and females have tusks
Skin Texture	Smoother skin	Wrinkled skin
Trunk Structure	One finger-like projection at the tip of the trunk	Two finger-like projections at the tip of the trunk
Habitat	Found in forests and grasslands across Asia	Inhabit savannas, forests, and deserts of Africa
Social Structure	Smaller herds led by a matriarch	Larger herds with more complex social structures
Diet	Primarily grazers with occasional browsing	Both grazers and browsers
Population Status	Endangered due to habitat loss and human conflict	Vulnerable due to poaching and habitat

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