

## PRESS RELEASE

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# Herd of Red Deer welcome 13 Elephants to St James's Park



A herd of spectacular life size topiary elephants stampeded into St James's Park today to meet a herd of majestic Royal Parks Deer. The animal sculptures, which number 20 in total, were specially commissioned by London-based charities, *elephant family*, The Royal Parks Foundation and The World Land Trust. In a conservation initiative of epic proportions, the two herds will migrate later in the month to Regent's Park to build support for vital habitat protection projects in London and India .....

..... Hemmed in on all sides by a busy city, London's Royal Parks vividly represent the wild Asian elephant's shrinking habitat and the need to safeguard green corridors as secure passages for all wildlife, large and small, in the modern world.

The Survival Tour is the brainchild of conservation charities, Elephant Family and The Royal Parks Foundation. Mark Shand of *elephant family*, explains; *"The Asian elephant is one of nature's most charismatic and loved animals. However, little is known about its incredibly endangered status. By bringing our life-size herds to London's Royal Parks we hope to harness this affection and use it to help raise awareness about the importance of green spaces in London and India. In doing this we will secure a safe future for UK wildlife and save the magnificent Asian elephant from extinction in the wild."*

India's forests are disappearing at a terrifying rate, leaving elephants, tigers and other endangered animals on the brink of extinction. Buying land is the only solution and all funds raised by The Survival Tour elephants will go

directly towards the purchase of a crucial 6.5k x 1.5k section of habitat in Kerala, India. This small section of land connects two key pockets of forest. Once secured, it will provide a safe migratory route for up to 3,000 Asian elephants.

Sara Lom, Chief Executive of The Royal Parks Foundation, comments on the Royal Parks involvement in the project; "*Corridors of reedbed were once widespread in London, providing much needed shelter, food and nesting sites for hosts of birds, invertebrates, fish and mammals. Over the years many of these city reedbeds have been destroyed. Funds raised through the Survival Tour will help recreate an important wetland corridor at Bushy Park, to encourage colonies of dragonflies and other insects to settle in the vicinity and to welcome important new visitors, such as kingfishers and water voles, which have not been seen locally for some time.*"

The elephant and deer herds will continue to migrate for a further three months. They will move together to Regent's Park before going their separate ways. The elephants will visit Selfridges Department Store in August and Brighton Royal Pavilion in September. The deer will feature at Whole Foods Market in Kensington throughout August, before an October appearance at Frieze Art Fair and Christmas at a secret venue, yet to be announced. The herds are lovingly transported between locations by 'Eco Logistics' (of Dragon's Den fame), an environmentally-friendly haulage company.

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