

A Comprehensive Study on Ecological Aspect, Feeding Behaviour and Pugmark Analysis of Elephants in the Bordering Areas of Northern Chhattisgarh

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ABSTRACT The study attempted to examine the ecological aspect, feeding behaviour with food preferences and pugmark analysis in four blocks viz, Kunkuri, Duldula, Bagicha and Farsababar of northern Chhattisgarh. The field study was conducted through well structured questionnaires in the affected villages/forest areas where migrated elephants were encountered. Among the different pressing issues related to farming in the study area the major obstacle was wildlife especially the elephants (55%). The most commonly consumed species belong to family Poaceae and Fabaceae (17.65%) followed by Moraceae (14.71%). Elephants extensively feed on *Artocarpus heterophyllus*, *Syzygium cumini*, *Acacia nilotica*, *A. catechu*, *Dalbergia sissoo*, *Zizyphus mauritiana*, *Aegle marmelos* and *Ficus species*, besides various grasses and shrubs. Analysis of pugmarks revealed that the circumference varied from 51.55cm to 165cm. Therefore, it is needful to carry out detailed assessment of feeding behaviour, habitat suitability and dispersal corridor for elephants in the area for better understanding, planning, conservation and management of wildlife.