

Elephant calf rescued and reunited



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Subhamoy Bhattacharjee 17 December 2014 7839 views

In a successful rescue and rehabilitation operation by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)-[Wildlife](#) Trust of India (WTI) run [Mobile](#) Veterinary Service (MVS) team, a one and half-year-old elephant calf was reunited with its wild elephant herd at Borbhogia village, Kaliabor block, Nagaon district in Assam. The village is 85 kilometers away from Centre for [Wildlife](#) Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC), the wildlife care centre at the [Kaziranga National](#) Park in Assam.

Early morning on December 15, 2014, the MVS team was informed that an elephant calf was [found](#) alone surrounded by dogs in a swampy wetland. Scared of the dogs, the calf confined himself to a water body near the village. Soon after the information was relayed, the IFAW-WTI MVS (Central Assam) team rushed to the spot.

With support of the Assam Forest Department (AFD), locals and Green Guard -- a conservation NGO -- the calf was [rescued](#) and taken to a safer place at the Jakhalabonda forest beat office for observation. Thereafter, the team, consisting of IFAW-WTI vets, examined the abandoned calf. Dr. Biswajit Boruah, who led the IFAW-WTI MVS team, informed, "The calf was healthy with no visible external injury. We decided to stabilize the calf first and at the same time planned a reunion attempt in the evening when the herd was expected to pass through the nearby corridor."

The villagers informed the MVS team that a wild elephant herd was seen nearby and thereafter a reunion attempt was planned in accordance with scientific protocols. To ensure that the calf is reunited with the herd in the evening, the team waited at the nearby forest. Meanwhile, the team of IFAW-WTI vets tended to the calf and ensured that he was stabilized.

In the evening, the MVS team along with the AFD staff, locals and members of Green Guard went to the nearby elephant corridor in Kellyden Tea Estate with the calf. A spot with high chances of reunion was chosen to ensure that both the calf and the herd could meet.

"Around 9.30 pm, a herd of elephants came and thereafter the calf started to make loud noises on hearing him, the herd stopped and approached the calf. Suddenly, the calf ran towards the herd. Initially, the herd looked at the calf and then slowly disappeared into the dense forest with the calf," said Dr. Biswajit Boruah of IFAW-WTI MVS team.

The team was elated with the successful reunion. Since the reunion, there has been no news of any abandoned elephant calf in the vicinity which means that the reunion went off successfully. However, the Assam FD and the locals are keeping a watch on the area to ensure that no case of abandoned calf is reported.

Anup Baruah, the FD driver who did a sensible job of saving the elephant calf from the dogs, informed that the FD team is constantly checking whether the calf is stuck or abandoned somewhere by the herd. "We have not received any such news which is heartwarming," added the FD driver of Salna Forest Range today (17th December 2014).

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BY SUBHAMOY BHATTACHARJEE

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