

# OCCURRENCE OF FOOT DISORDERS IN ELEPHANTS

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## INTRODUCTION

Foot disorders are seen in more than 50 per cent of Captive Asian Elephants at some time or other in their lives and constitute the single most important ailment (Fowler, 2001). Studies on occurrence of foot problems of Indian elephants are limited and poorly documented. Hence the present study was undertaken to have a comprehensive view on foot disorders of Captive Asian Elephants.

## CASE HISTORY AND OBSERVATION

One hundred and sixty three animals belonging to seven different states of India with considerable captive elephant population were examined for the occurrence of foot disorders. Eighty seven cases were identified and studied in detail. The occurrence of foot disorders in relation to age, sex and limbs affected were recorded.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total number of 87 (33.37%) animals were found positive for one or other types of foot disorders. Among these 72.4 per cent were males and 27.6 per cent were females. The hind foot of male elephants usually comes in contact with urine during micturition and could be one of the reasons for higher occurrence of foot disorders in male elephants (Csutiet *al.*, 2001).

Age wise occurrence of foot disorders

revealed that captive Asian Elephants of India suffered more from the foot disease in their middle age 42.5 (21-40 years) when compared to less than 20 years (9.2 per cent).

Major foot disorders recorded in the present study were over grown nail (16.3%) (Fig1.), over grown cuticle (14.9%) (Fig2),



**Fig 1.** Overgrown nail



**Fig 2.** Overgrown cuticle



Fig 3. Pitted sole



Fig 4. Pitted sole

pitted sole (14.9%) (Fig 3), cracked sole (9.9%) (Fig4), split nail (8.3%), over worn sole (7.5%), cracked heel (4.8%), injury (4.8%), over grown sole (4.5%), pododermatitis (4.3%), ingrown nails (2.7%), abscess (2.7%), laminitis (2.4%), arthritis (1.9%).

## REFERENCES

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