



**THE NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA LECTURE ON**  
**THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020**

**“SIGNALS, GESTURES AND BEHAVIOUR OF ELEPHANTS”**

**By Dr. Sumith Pilapitiya**

**The 124<sup>th</sup> Session of the Monthly Lecture Series of the National Trust - Sri Lanka will be held at the HNB Auditorium, 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor, HNB Towers, 479 T.B. Jayah Mawatha, Colombo 10 at 6.30p.m. on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020.**

Elephants have fascinated humans for millennia. Elephants are well known for their intelligence, close family ties and social complexity. Adult male and female elephants live in very different social worlds. Females live in family groups starting with mother-offspring units, closely associated with other related females and their calves, while males lead solitary lives. A complex network of bonds between individuals and families characterizes the lives of females and their offspring, while fluctuating sexual cycles distinguish the dynamic activities and relationships of males. Elephants are very communicative, and use a wide range of sensory channels to communicate with one another. In his presentation, Dr. Sumith Pilapitiya will take you on a journey that will give you an insight into the visual and tactile communications of elephants and social lives of free ranging elephants in the wild.



Sumith Pilapitiya obtained his university education in the US where he obtained his undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering from Texas A&M University and his Masters degree in Environmental Engineering and Ph.D in Environmental Sciences from Rutgers University, in New Jersey, USA. He served on the faculty of Oklahoma State University and Rutgers University for 2 years. He was in the World Bank for 23 years and was a Lead Environmental Specialist for the South Asia Region of the World Bank. He led Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation Projects in South Asian countries for the World Bank including a Regional Wildlife Project focusing on conservation of flagship species such as the tiger, elephant, snow leopard and one horned rhino in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. More recently, he was the Director General of Wildlife Conservation in Sri Lanka, a position from which he resigned in June 2016 on matters of principle. He has personal research interests in elephant conservation and addressing the human elephant conflict and is currently conducting research on elephant social behavior in Minneriya, Kaudulla and Yala National Parks.

**The National Trust – Sri Lanka conducts monthly lectures on the last Thursday of each month. The lectures are open to the members and the public at a nominal fee. The HNB Sustainability Foundation is the principal sponsor of the events of the National Trust – Sri Lanka.**

**Further information can be obtained from the Trust Office Tel 2682730 / 0778081214 at the Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology, 407 Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7.**