

A-01 First reported case of elephant (*Elephas maximus maximus*) rabies in Sri Lanka

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Rabies is primarily a disease of animals. The main animal reservoir in Sri Lanka is the dog. However cats, cattle, goats, buffaloes, monkeys, bandicoots, jackals and horses also have been reported in this country. We present the first reported case of elephant rabies in Sri Lanka. An 84 year old elephant was brought for tiredness and lethargy having a normal appetite. The following day she was unsteady and became aggressive and restless a few days later. She started to fall suddenly and this happened 4 times during the illness. She also developed increased secretions from the temporal glands for the first time in her life and rapidly went down with the disease and died on the ninth day.

A postmortem was performed and the brain smears examined in the MRI by the direct fluorescent antibody test was proved positive for rabies antigen. Serum rabies antibody titre performed in the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre in Bangkok was 0.68 IU/ml (Antibody titre in normal elephant serum was less than 0.04 IU/ml).

This is the first reported case of rabies in a Sri Lankan elephant and to our knowledge this is the first reported case in the world. Therefore, the possibility of rabies should be considered in the differential diagnosis of elephants presenting with abnormal neurological features.