

ears

elephant asia rescue and survival foundation



Sambo's Story: Every journey begins with a single step...

**IT'S TIME TO
CELEBRATE!!!!!!!!!!**

**SAMBO IS PERMANENTLY
RETIRED!!!**

Sambo has arrived and is settling into her new home at the beautiful elephant sanctuary, Elephant Valley Project (EVP) in Mondulkiri, Cambodia.



Celebrating Sambo - a very special thank you to wildlife rescue photographer, Peter Yuen, for capturing Sambo so beautifully over the last few years

Our Special Edition EARS Newsletter: Sambo's Story - 'Every journey begins with a single step...' celebrates an iconic elephant's journey from the City to the Jungle.

Firstly, let's clear up the confusion over Sombo/Sambo's name! A few years ago Mr Sorn, Sambo's owner, changed her name to Sombo when a bull elephant named Sambo sadly passed away. People thought it was the passing of female Sambo, so Mr Sorn, changed her name to Sombo. EARS was working with Mr Sorn during this time so we called her SOMBO too, but now Sambo is permanently retired at EVP, her original name is being used, so Sambo is finally Sambo again!!!... And we will also use Sambo from now on too :)

Sambo's Story actually began during the Khmer Rouge Regime. She was one of Mr Sorn's fathers' five elephants. Four of which were sadly killed, but thankfully Sambo survived and was reunited with Mr Sorn: **'Cambodian's Reunion with Elephant'**.

Sambo was then brought to Phnom Penh and spent more than 20 yrs giving rides to tourists 7 days a week at Wat Phnom temple. In July 2011, when I first saw Sambo at Wat Phnom, she had the most horrendous crippled, abscessed feet. She was limping when she walked and I feared she would collapse and ultimately die. It was merely a dream that one day she would return to the forest.

EARS campaigned tirelessly for 7 long months for Sambo to stop working so we could provide the medical care she so desperately needed. Many people told me it was impossible to stop her working, and that it simply couldn't be done. Suggestions were even made for a Sambo Cafe to keep her in the city, another that I should buy land for the family and their elephant; both leaving Sambo alone for the rest of her life.

I am fortunate to have nearly 20 yrs experience living in Asia, working for other wildlife organisations, as well as being directly involved in business my entire life. Every decision I made was thoroughly researched and intentional, and always emotionally exhausting as an animal was involved. 3 years later, after lots of trials and tribulations, the campaign headed by EARS, and only EARS, changed the course of Sambo's life and she is finally back where elephants belong, in the forest. If I was asked today if dreams really do come true, I would say, yes, they do; this is the most beautiful dream we could wish for.

Sambo's Story (below): "Every Journey Begins with a Single Step..." takes a trip down memory lane to look back over the last 3 years of our successful campaign and intensive foot care program administered by Dr Paolo Martelli DVM (Liege), CertZooMed (RCVS), one of the best wildlife vets in the world. Her story is also here on our **Sombo/Sambo** page on the EARS website. It is a poignant reminder of the thousands of elephants suffering throughout Asia giving rides to tourists every single day; many with injuries, open wounds, and years of scars for their servitude to man.

This isn't just an amazing rescue story for EARS, but for every single one of you who followed our story throughout. You were our support network, our driving force, and you generously donated to Sambo's medical program. If it wasn't for everyone uniting together, from every corner of the world, Sambo would not be where she is now. Please be very proud that every letter you wrote, petition you signed, every dollar you donated, every like, share and comment you made on our **Facebook** page, achieved a new world for this gorgeous elephant.



Over the following week we will be 'Celebrating Sambo' on our Facebook page to mark this historic achievement, and to thank individuals who made Sambo's Story such a huge success. I have thousands of photos and look forward to going through them and sharing them with you.

And if dreams like this really do come true, we need to make many more. So, what's in store for the future?!! Well, we are quietly

working on a few new projects for our big grey friends, and we will update you very soon.

In the meantime, our immediate focus is **Kiri and Seila**. We are updating their facilities as I write, and I have confirmed an international renown behaviourist who is going to assist with a target training / positive reinforcement program so we can train these adorable elephants for any veterinary care they may need in the future.

Thank you so much for being with us every single step of the way.

EARS has the BEST supporters.

With time, patience, and persistence, we have proved that anything and everything is possible!!

Love to you all,

Louise x

Founder

EARS

www.earsasia.org

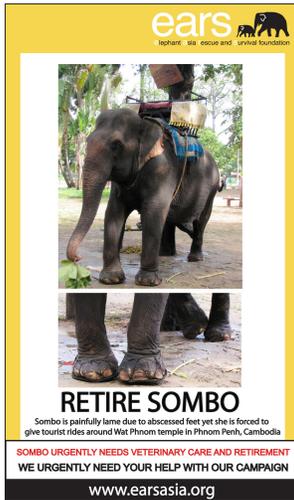
And here is a message to Sambo from us all:

We love you Sambo. You are in our hearts forever. Go and live the sunset years of your life in the magic of the jungle. With every breath you take, we are all with you, celebrating your new life as you roam free in the lush green forest, living the life all elephants should xx



Photo credit: Peter Yuen Photography

Sambo's Story: 2011 - 2014 EARS Campaign and medical program



*Our campaign flyer spread
Sambo's plight throughout the
world*



Walking Sambo out of the city with her family 30th January 2012



*Funds were generously
donated by our supporters to
provide a pool for her to bathe
as well as hydrotherapy to take
the weight off her feet*



*Final preparations to the pool.
With steps instead of a ramp so
she could cautiously step into
the pool as her front feet were
so painful*



Playtime in her pool :)



Constructing a foot bath for betadine soaks



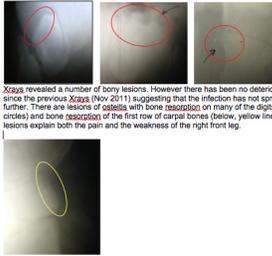
*Sambo enjoying a scrub
prior to her foot bath*



*Mr Sorn giving Sambo fruit
rewards whilst she takes
her 20 min foot bath*



Mr Sorn working closely with Dr Martelli on one of his numerous trips to Cambodia to implement Sambo's Medical Program



X-rays revealed a number of bony lesions. However there has been no deterioration since the previous Xrays (Nov 2011) suggesting that the infection has not spread further. There are lesions of ostia with bone resorption on many of the digits (red circles) and bone resorption of the first row of carpal bones (below, yellow line). These lesions explain both the pain and the weakness of the right front leg.

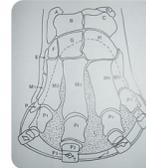


Diagram of bones of the front foot



left front foot Feb 2013

X-rays were taken over the two years to review the internal damage to her feet...

... and analysis of her gait which improved greatly



February 2012 - Deep black abscess in the sole of Sambo's right fore foot



July 2012 - showing great improvement with footbaths and paring of the sole



2014 - a visible difference to the deep crevice



2011 - Crippled feet whilst still giving rides at Wat Phnom



2014 - Great improvement after 2 yrs on the Medical Program



Celebrating Sambo's birthday!!! A special birthday for a very special elephant.



Enjoying her birthday cake!



Everyone loves balloons!



And finishing off with Sambo in her field - Posing for Peter!... Photo credit: Peter Yuen Photography



Photo credit: Peter Yuen Photography

Sambo's Story: Retirement to Elephant Valley Project

Over the last week, Sambo made the historic journey from the city of Phnom Penh to Elephant Valley Project (EVP) in Mondulkiri Province. After a ceremony in Phnom Penh to bless Sambo, her family, and the journey ahead of them, she then walked onto a converted cargo container and was hoisted by crane onto a truck to begin her journey to the jungle. Sambo and the EVP team arrived safe and well at their beautiful sanctuary on 3rd December 2014.



All of us here at EARS, are absolutely thrilled that EVP has given Sambo the home she truly deserves. Should Jack or his team at EVP need any support with Sambo's upkeep, medical care or her foot care in the future, they only need to contact EARS, and we will be more than happy to help.



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