

## Project Update: January 2014

I am towards attaining my research objectives which I have stated a couple of years ago. I have completed the data collection of four seasons feeding observations of domesticated elephants as well as one season on wild elephant feeding signs and vegetation survey inside the park. I completed 300 household questionnaires survey on human-elephant conflict around Parsa Wildlife reserve and Chitwan National Park. The work on chemical analysis of the food plants of the domesticated elephants is anticipated to be completed within a couple of months. I am utilising the time since I returned from my last field visit in September 2013 in reviewing literature on elephant ecology focussing more on diet and nutrition. This has helped me to prepare two review papers on elephant movement and nutritional aspect of diet of elephant which I hope to publish soon. My sincere acknowledgement would go to Rufford Foundation in these forthcoming publications.



Left to right – 1. An infant baby elephant rescued from forest. 2. Elephant feeding sign survey. 3. Rolando.

I have also initiated diet and nutritional analysis of an Asian elephant at Auckland Zoo. In this way my research objectives will enable me to make a direct comparison between the nutrient content and patterns of nutrient regulation in the diets of the wild and domesticated elephants in Nepal on the one hand and an Asian elephant housed in a New Zealand Zoo. The comparison of nutrient content information will help to inform elephant husbandry practices in Nepal as well as in New Zealand and the pattern of nutrient regulation will give an indication of how this can also be correlated with the body condition, health and sex ratio of the offsprings of the domesticated elephants in Nepal where a substantial number of elephants are infected with tuberculosis.



Left-Elephant feeding sign survey. Right-Elephant feeding sign survey. All photos taken by Raj Koirala