

1-1-2000

Front Matter

Elephant Editors

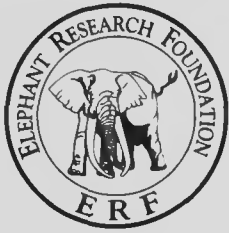
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Shoshani, J. (Ed.). (2000). Front Matter. *Elephant*, 2(4), i-iii. Doi: 10.22237/elephant/1521732161

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Ahmed remains the symbol...



This drawing of the legendary Ahmed is based on photographs taken at Marsabit, north Kenya, by Jeheskel (Hezy) Shoshani in June 1973 and incorporated with other reference material. The final layout of the front cover is by Jann S. Grimes and Gary H. Marchant.

Ahmed, Kenya's most celebrated elephant was, and still is, regarded as a national monument. His estimated height is 10 feet (3.05 meters). He had the largest tusks of any elephant seen in recent years; his right tusk was 9 feet 9 inches long (2.97 meters) and the left 9 feet 4 inches (2.85 meters). Each one of his tusks weighed about 148 pounds, approximately 67 kilograms. During Ahmed's life, the average elephant tusk weighed about 70 pounds, while 100 pounds was considered large. At present the average tusk weight is much less. A worldwide protest to save Ahmed's life was ignited by a report that two American hunters were after his huge ivory. This protest included more than 5,000 letters and cards delivered to the East African Wild Life Society. Thereafter, Ahmed was totally protected from human harassment:

- 1) by being in a protected park — Marsabit.
- 2) by a decree from the late president of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta.
- 3) by daily monitoring of his movements performed by two askaris (soldiers).
- 4) by "the close proximity of two younger bulls."

The last factor is perhaps more legend than observation.

In the Presidential Decree, the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta described Ahmed as "...this individual animal which captures the imagination and concern of all mankind." It was further stated in the Decree that "...under no circumstances may (Ahmed) be hunted or harassed by anyone."

Early in 1974 Ahmed died at about 55 years of age. The death was "natural"; that is, he was not the victim of the "Ivory Rush" as was initially feared. Ahmed's skeleton and replica are preserved in the National Museum of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya. The great elephant remains the symbol of conservation for this and future generations. Look for his image to mark the conclusion of articles or sections in this issue. For additional information, see Elephant, Volume 1, Number 2, page 35, Number 4, page 234, and Volume 2, Number 3, pages 7-32. 🐘

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Elephant⁺ is the official publication of the Elephant Research Foundation (ERF), an international non-profit organization established in June 1977 to promote interest in and collect and disseminate information needed for education, research and conservation of elephants. ERF works in collaboration with many conservation organizations worldwide. All support, financial and otherwise, is provided via contributions from individuals and institutions worldwide. Pertinent articles, information and news are contributed free by our readers. Elephant is distributed from its home base in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, USA.

⁺ The first two issues of Volume 1 were entitled Elephant Newsletter. Subsequently, the word "newsletter" was dropped from the title, and this publication is known simply as Elephant.

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A Title Page for Volume 2, for binding purposes, appears at the end of this issue.

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