



WORLD DISCOVERY  
— HISTORY CULTURE WILDLIFE —

# The Elephant Gathering

Private journey – 8 days/7 nights



**The Gathering of Elephants:**  
Biggest seasonally recurring congregation in the world

Meals: 7 breakfasts

Negombo	Jetwing Beach	1 night
Sigiriya	Jetwing Vil Uyana	3 nights
Puttalam	Bethany 101	2 nights
Negombo	Jetwing Beach	1 night

## DAY 1 – Arrive Colombo. By road to Negombo.

On arrival in Colombo you will be met by a representative of World Discovery outside immigration and customs. You will then be taken by private car direct to your hotel in Negombo on the shores of the Indian Ocean. The rest of the day is at leisure.

## DAY 2 - Drive to Sigiriya via Pinnawela. Minneriya National Park.

After breakfast head off into the island's interior. On your way to your hotel in Sigiriya visit the **Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage**. There are more than 60

elephants at Pinnawela; this unique project has proved the salvation of these threatened animals, but it has also resulted in their domestication. Check in at your hotel. Later you will proceed to **Minneriya National Park**. It has an extent of 8,889 hectares and is reputed for its large population of elephants in herds of 100 to 150 roaming in the jungle and seen in the catchment area of the lake. Other wildlife that can be sighted include wild buffaloes, wild boar, spotted deer, sloth bear, sambhur, leopards, crocodiles, jackals, nine species of amphibians, 25 kinds of reptiles, 160 species of birds, 26 varieties of fish and 78 varieties of butterflies.

**Meals included: Breakfast.**

## DAY 3 - Sigiriya. Minneriya National Park.

In the early morning set off to climb the spectacular **rock fortress of Sigiriya, the 'Lion Rock'** to see the delightful frescoes depicting beautiful women, usually known as the 'Sigiriya damsels'. After viewing the frescoes there is the option for the stout-hearted of continuing to the summit via the narrow stairway clinging to the rock's sheer face. Little remains of King Kasyapa's 5th century fortress that once graced the summit (for some 18 years this was the royal citadel, impractical as it may seem), but the view over the surrounding plains is magnificent. In the late afternoon return to Minneriya National Park to view the elephants.

**Meals included: Breakfast.**

## DAY 4 – Optional visits. Minneriya National Park.

The morning is free. Optional excursions could be taken to the rock temple at **Dambulla**, the largest cave monastery in Sri Lanka with a history going back to the 1st century B.C., or perhaps to **Polonnaruwa**, which flourished under the Chola Dynasty from the 11th to 13th centuries AD. Return to Sigiriya for an afternoon at leisure. In the late afternoon pay your final visit to Minneriya National Park to view the elephants.

**Meals included: Breakfast.**

## DAY 5 – Drive to Puttalam.

Heading west from Sigiriya, transfer by road to the town of Puttalam. Afternoon free.

**Meals included: Breakfast.**

## DAY 6 – Wilpattu National Park.

Today you will enjoy a full day visit to Wilpattu National Park, located around 26 kilometres north of Puttalam. Declared a National Park in 1938, Wilpattu is the largest in the country, covering some 131,694 hectares. Vegetation varies greatly and the transition from thick jungle to open scrubland and the windswept dunes of the western coastal belt is surprisingly abrupt. A unique feature of this Park is that it has a large number of *villus* (lakes) where you can watch wildlife and many species of birds. Leopards and herds of wild elephant are frequently seen here. Other sightings you can expect are Spotted Deer, Sambhur, Barking Deer, Wild Boar, Wild Buffalo, Sloth Bear, Mongoose, Crocodile and Peacocks. Return to Puttalam in the late afternoon.

**Meals included: Breakfast.**

## DAY 7 - Return to Negombo.

Return by road to Negombo for an afternoon at leisure beside the Indian Ocean.

**Meals included: Breakfast.**

## DAY 8 - Depart for home.

Private transfer to Colombo Airport for your homeward flight.

**Meals included: Breakfast.**

### The price includes:

- Hotel accommodation as listed above in double or twin-bedded rooms (please advise us which you prefer) with private facilities.
- 7 breakfasts as shown in the itinerary.
- Private transportation throughout.
- All sightseeing as shown (unless indicated as 'optional'), including entrance fees.
- The services of a private English-speaking driver/guide throughout.

### Not included in the price:

- International flights (see website page). We are happy to discuss the flights with you and give you further guidance.
- Optional sightseeing.
- International airport taxes.
- Tipping. We will give you guidance in this often sensitive matter.
- Sri Lankan online visa. This should be purchased in advance via the Electronic Travel Authorization System (ETA) website - <http://www.eta.gov.lk/slvisa/>. The current cost for UK citizens is US\$35 for a double entry visa which is valid for 30 days. There is no charge for children under 12 years of age.

**A deposit of £250 per person is required at the time of booking. The balance of the price for your Sri Lanka holiday must be paid at least 8 weeks before your departure date.**