

# THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210607-elephants.html>

A herd of 15 wild elephants is approaching a city of 6.6 million people in China. The group of Asian elephants has trekked nearly 500km from their habitat in a nature reserve in the south of Yunnan province, near the borders with Myanmar and Laos. China's official news agency, Xinhua, reports that there are three calves in the herd. The giant beasts are heading north to the outskirts of the provincial capital, Kunming. They have travelled along highways and through fields of crops over the past few months. A Chinese TV station said that over the past week, the animals guzzled down the water in a water tank and feasted on kilos of corn in farmers' fields. Their journey has been captivating the Chinese public.

Authorities are now attempting to ensure the herd does not enter Kunming city. Experts are coaxing the animals into taking detours that will get them to head back towards their nature reserve. It is unclear as to why the animals have migrated so far away from their original habitat. One reason could be a decline in the amount of edible plants in their reserve. Naturally growing supplies of the elephants' favorite foods, such as plume grass, have fallen. Another factor could be a rise in elephant numbers. Xinhua reports that the wild elephant population in Yunnan Province is around 300, up from 193 in the 1980s. A further explanation offered is that the leader of the herd could have simply led it astray.

Sources: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/herd-wild-elephants-china-yunnan-kunming-14932630>  
<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202106/04/WS60b96024a31024ad0bac37b5.html>  
<https://www.yahoo.com/news/china-elephants-herd-mammoth-500km-165856650.html>

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| 1. herd        | a. Attracting and holding the interest and attention of.  |
| 2. approaching | b. The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.  |
| 3. habitat     | c. The outer parts of a town or city.   |
| 4. beast       | d. A large group of animals, especially hoofed mammals, that live, feed, or migrate together or are kept together as livestock. |
| 5. outskirts   | e. Ate large quantities of something.   |
| 6. feasted     | f. Coming near or nearer to (someone or something) in distance.   |
| 7. captivating | g. An animal, especially a large or dangerous four-footed one.  |

## Paragraph 2

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 8. ensure   | h. OK to be eaten.  |
| 9. coaxing  | i. Something that contributes to a result or outcome.         |
| 10. detour  | j. Away from the correct path or direction.                   |
| 11. edible  | k. Persuading someone or something gradually to do something. |
| 12. factor  | l. Additional to what already exists.                         |
| 13. further | m. An alternative use.  |
| 14. astray  | n. Make certain that something will occur or be the case.     |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210607-elephants.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. Asian elephants have walked almost 500km and are near a Chinese city. **T / F**
2. The elephants started near China's borders with Laos and Myanmar. **T / F**
3. Three young elephants are among the travelling herd. **T / F**
4. The elephants have created very little interest among Chinese people. **T / F**
5. Authorities are creating detours to get the elephants to turn around. **T / F**
6. The elephants could have migrated because of a lack of plume grass. **T / F**
7. Elephant numbers have increased to 3,000 in Yunnan Province. **T / F**
8. A junior member of the herd could have led it astray. **T / F**

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <b>herd</b>        | a. natural surroundings |
| 2. <b>trekked</b>     | b. edges                |
| 3. <b>outskirts</b>   | c. see to it            |
| 4. <b>guzzled</b>     | d. off course           |
| 5. <b>captivating</b> | e. group                |
| 6. <b>ensure</b>      | f. safe to eat          |
| 7. <b>detours</b>     | g. gulped               |
| 8. <b>habitat</b>     | h. marched              |
| 9. <b>edible</b>      | i. diversions           |
| 10. <b>astray</b>     | j. enthralling          |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                       |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. near the borders with              | a. into taking detours |
| 2. there are three calves             | b. so far away         |
| 3. to the outskirts of the            | c. the Chinese public  |
| 4. feasted on                         | d. astray              |
| 5. Their journey has been captivating | e. provincial capital  |
| 6. Experts are coaxing the animals    | f. numbers             |
| 7. the animals have migrated          | g. Myanmar and Laos    |
| 8. a decline in the amount of edible  | h. kilos of corn       |
| 9. a rise in elephant                 | i. plants              |
| 10. led it                            | j. in the herd         |

# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2106/210607-elephants.html>

1. How many people does the article say live in Kunming?
2. Which of China's borders did the elephants live near?
3. How many young elephants are there in the herd?
4. What crops does the article say the elephants have been eating?
5. What have the elephants been captivating?
6. What are experts coaxing the animals to take?
7. Where do experts want the elephants to go?
8. What does the article say is one of the elephants' favourite foods?
9. When were there 193 elephants in Yunnan Province?
10. Who could have led the herd of elephants astray?

## ELEPHANTS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'wild'?
3. What do you think of elephants?
4. What do you think of nature reserves?
5. What do you think of elephant calves?
6. Would you be worried if elephants were heading your way?
7. What giant beasts do you like?
8. What damage could the elephants do?
9. Should the farmers get compensated for the elephant damage?
10. What was the last thing that left you captivated?

*Herd of wild elephants on the march in China - 7th June, 2021*  
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## ELEPHANTS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'elephants'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. What do you know about elephants?
15. What would happen if the elephants entered the city?
16. How interesting are elephants?
17. Should governments ban the destruction of animal habitat?
18. Have you ever been led astray?
19. Where do you think the elephants will end up?
20. What questions would you like to ask the elephant experts?