

## 6 WHAT MY FAMILY DOES – The family roles and duties

Female elephants spend their entire lives in tight-knit matrilineal family groups, some of which are of more than ten members, including three pairs of mothers with offspring, and are led by the matriarch which is often the eldest female. She remains leader of the group until death, or she no longer has the energy for the role. When her tenure is over, the matriarch's eldest daughter takes her place; this occurs even if her sister is present. The older matriarchs tend to be more effective decision-makers.



2019 SRI LANKA

Elephant populations in India and Sri Lanka appear to be cohesive family units and are observed to have 'nursing units' and 'juvenile-care units'. A group containing more than two adult females plus offspring is known as a 'joint family'.

The social life of the adult male is very different. As he matures, a male spends more time at the edge of his group and associates with outside males or even other families. Asian males are usually solitary, but occasionally form groups of two or more individuals. Adult males and females come together for reproduction.



1995 CHINA



1965 NIGERIA



1961 RUANDA

2016 BOTSWANA

