

**NEUROLEPTANALGESIA OF WILD ELEPHANTS (*ELEPHAS MAXIMUS MAXIMUS*)  
FOR EXTENDED PERIODS WITH COMBINATION OF ETORPHINE  
HYDROCHLORIDE WITH ACEPROMAZINE MALEATE**

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The suitability of etorphine hydrochloride with acepromazine maleate for neuroleptanalgesia in wild Asian elephants for extended periods was evaluated. Ten adult elephants (4 males and 6 females) in the jungles of North Western Province of Sri Lanka were tranquilized for radio collaring during September to November 1997. A volume of 3.3 (2.5 - 4.5) ml Immobilon (2.45 and 10 mg/ml respectively, C-Vet Veterinary products, Leyland, UK) was administered intramuscularly using projectile syringes fired from Palmar cap-chur gun. Dosage was determined according to visual estimation of bodyweight of individual elephant. The body condition was good in all ten elephants and their average (minimum-maximum) shoulder height was 225 (180-310) cm. The average approximate distance to elephants when they were fired with the projectile syringe was 26 (15-50) m. The average time to recumbence after firing was 18 (15 - 45) min. Nine out of the ten elephants were maintained on lateral recumbence without supplementary doses, for a further period of 42 (28-61) min for application of the radio collars. The respiratory and heart rates during anesthesia were 7 (4 - 10) and 52 (40 - 60) per min. respectively. An equal volume of (8.15-14.67 mg) diprenorphine hydrochloride ("Revivon", 3.26 mg/ml; C-Vet Veterinary products, Leyland, UK) was given intravenously for recovery, which was achieved in 6 min after injection. All elephants slowly retreated into the jungle immediately afterwards. Subsequently, they were radio monitored for several months for different studies. In conclusion, it can be stated that, etorphine hydrochloride in combination with acepromazine maleate can be used safely on wild Asian elephants for periods extending up to 1 hour.

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