

KUISHI PAMOJA

TO LIVE TOGETHER



This is what elephant footprints look like



Front: 500mm



Hind: 520mm

Important Warning

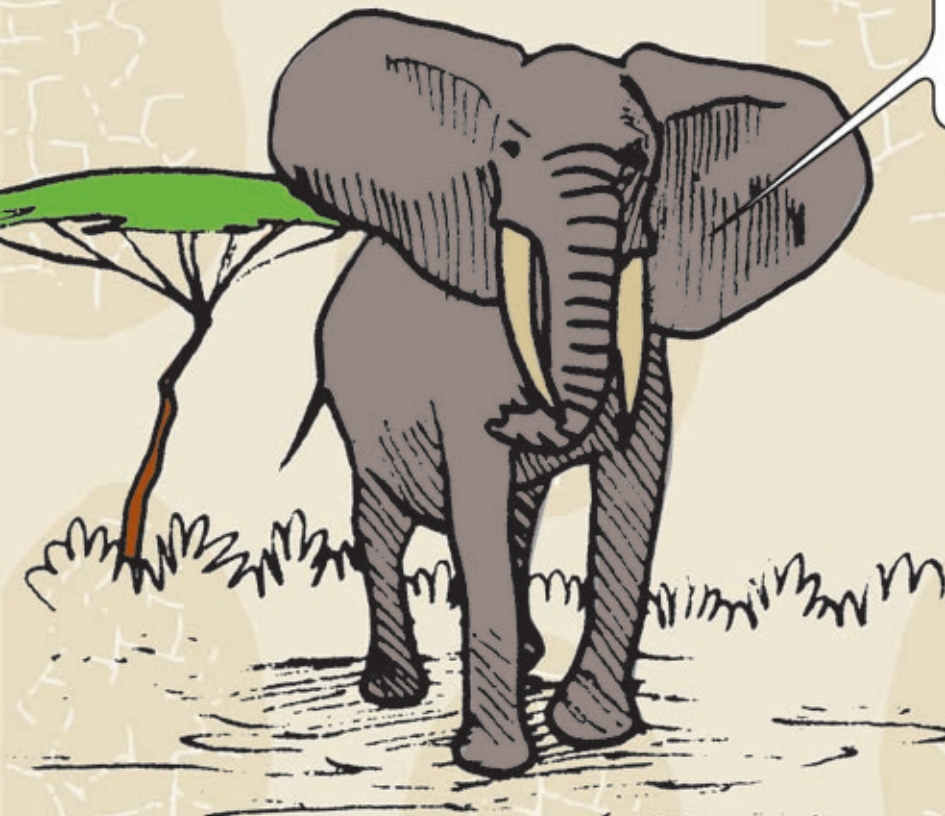
The insights into methods for living and coping with elephants provided in this booklet are based on years of research and experience of scientists, farmers and wildlife managers. We strongly caution the reader to avoid being close to wild elephants while on foot as they can be dangerous. For advice on how to avoid being attacked by elephants, seek help from local wildlife experts and managers or those with experience of walking in areas where there are wild animals. Neither the publishers or the authors can be held responsible for claims arising from accidents where people and elephants have come into contact.



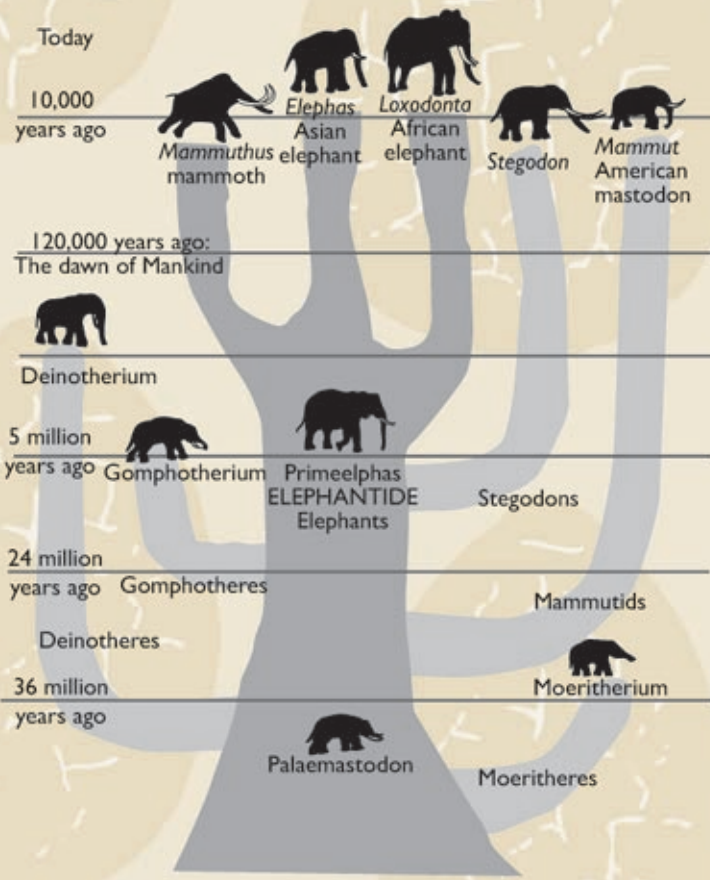
KUISHI PAMOJA TO LIVE TOGETHER

Elephants are the largest land mammals on the planet. They have been here for millions of years. They are highly intelligent and social with strong family ties. Millions of tourists travel to Africa each year to catch a glimpse of the largest mammal on the planet. However, elephants can also be dangerous and a nuisance to farmers growing crops. Today elephants and people are in conflict in many parts of Africa. This booklet explains why. This booklet also explains why it is important that we learn to live together with elephants and provides some simple methods for how to do this.





Hi! My name is Tembo, I am an African elephant. It has taken me millions of years to get here. I was here long before people.



My name is Mzee, I am a farmer and live with elephants. I know what it is like to lose my crop to elephants. I have also learnt from Tembo that elephants are valuable, and that they belong here just as much as we do. Tembo and I will do our best to give farmers some ideas on how to avoid conflict and how to protect your shamba using several different methods.



Mzee and I are going to take you on a Safari to learn something about elephants, what are they? Is it a bull or a female? Are they intelligent? Why are they valuable? If we are able to understand each other better, I know we have a greater chance of being able to live together.



There used to be hundreds of thousands of elephants in Kenya. They lived everywhere even in areas that are now towns and cities.

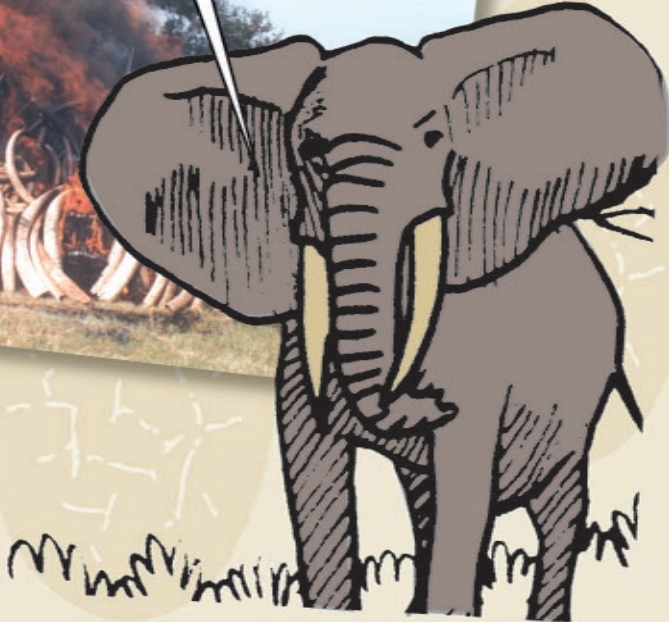


100 years ago there were under 1 million people living in Kenya. We lived off the land of which there was plenty for everyone.



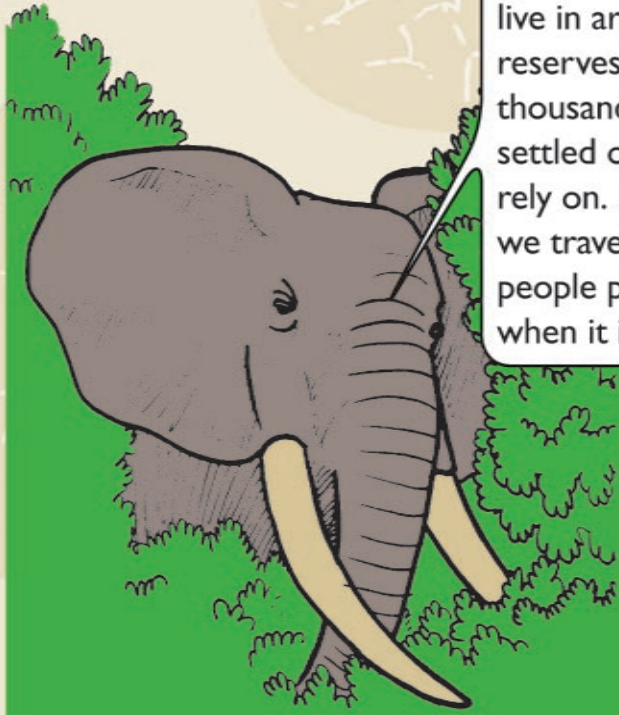


There were 167,000 elephants in 1973. Today we number just 22,000. In the 1970s and 80s elephants were massacred by poachers for their ivory. It's thanks to the creation of the KWS and the ban in the ivory trade that there are any of us elephants left at all in Kenya.

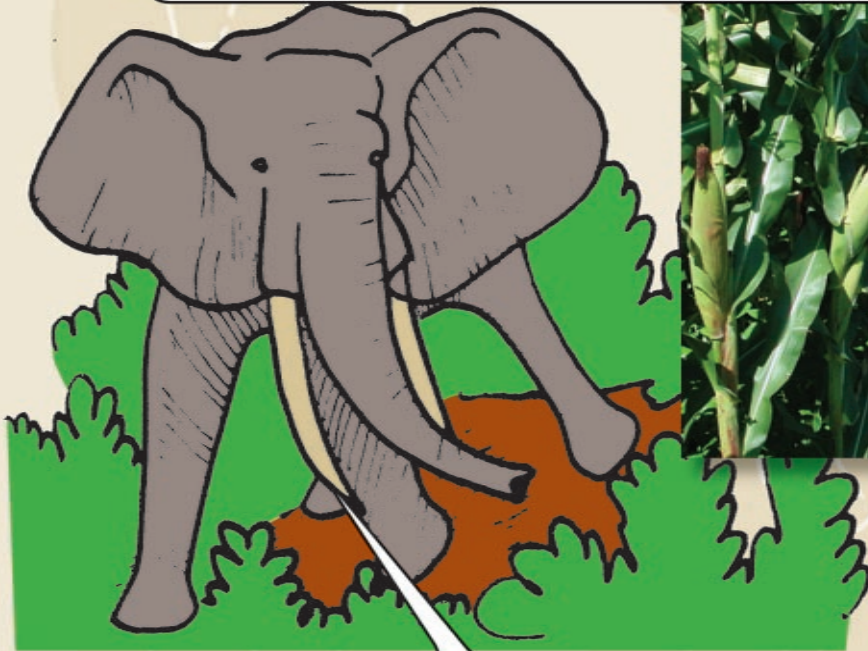


The human population has increased and there are now approximately 35 million people living in Kenya. Because of this population increase, there is very little arable land left in rural areas for us farmers. We are forced to move further and further into the bush in search for areas to cultivate and graze our livestock. However these remote places are also home to elephants and other wildlife.

I need big spaces to survive. Most of the areas we live in are located outside of national parks and reserves. We have lived in some of these areas for thousands of years. In the last 30 years people have settled on many of the unprotected areas that we rely on. As a result we meet many people when we travel outside of protected areas. Some of these people plant crops that we enjoy eating, especially when it is dry and food is scarce in the bush.



I have been forced to try my luck at cultivating in an area that is surrounded by wild animals. I rely on my crops to make a living and to feed my family so I must try and plant something. However elephants sometimes come and destroy my crops. This makes me very angry.



Many farmers think I am just a pest and would like to get rid of me altogether but I want to give you some reasons for learning to live with me.

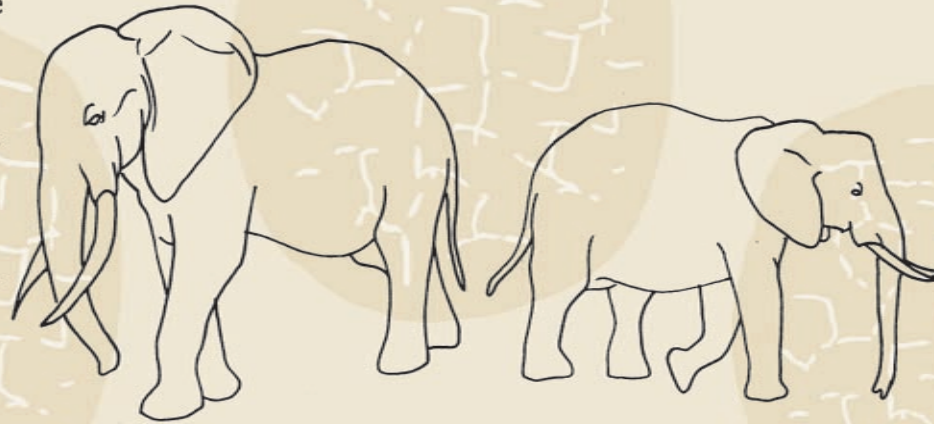


We elephants are considered highly intelligent animals and have complex social lives. Female elephants known as cows live in family units led by the eldest female who is called a matriarch. Family units are comprised of closely related cows and their immature offspring. The bonds between individuals in an elephant family are very strong, perhaps even stronger than the bonds between humans. Elephants are also known to mourn their dead.



Male elephants known as bulls leave their family unit between the ages of 11 and 15. Bulls lead independent lives and may spend time alone or with other family groups or they may join up with other bulls in bull areas.

Adult bull elephants are much bigger than adult cows. They have round foreheads, thicker tusks and a belly that slopes downwards from their front to their back legs.



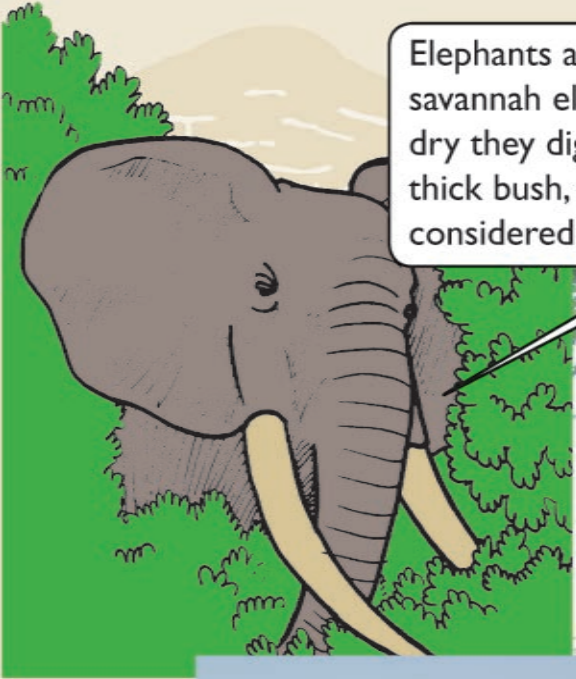
Cow elephants are smaller than bulls and have angular foreheads, slim sharp tusks and have two breasts located between their front legs.



Elephants are the largest land mammal in the world. We are also rare and so every year millions of people from all over the world come to Africa especially to see us. These people do not have elephants in their home countries and are very grateful for the opportunity to see elephants in the wild. These guests to our country pay for their entrance visas, hotels, food, guides, national park entrance fees, vehicles, safari employees and many other expenses. Without tourists, many African countries would be far poorer than they are today.



Elephants are also important animals for the environment. In the forests and savannah elephants help to spread seeds of different tree species. When it is dry they dig for water, creating water holes for other animals. By opening up thick bush, they create habitats for grazing species. For these reasons they are considered important species, on which other wild animals and plants depend.



Elephants are valuable but most elephants feel threatened by local people on foot and can be dangerous. We can reduce this danger by avoiding confrontation with elephants. Here are some situations you should try and avoid:



A cow with a young calf is likely to be very protective and can be highly aggressive towards people.



Adult bull elephants come into a sexually active and highly aggressive state called 'musth' for certain periods of the year. A bull in musth is often alone and has fluid seeping out of the sides of his head. His penis is often dribbling and out of its sheath.

Injured elephants may be in pain and are likely to feel highly threatened by people. If you think an elephant is injured leave it alone and make a report to the local wildlife authority immediately.



Avoid walking at night along main roads or elephant paths in an elephant area. Especially avoid walking home drunk at night. This is the most common way to be killed by an elephant.



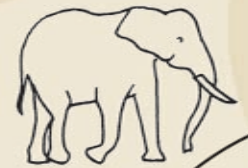
Avoid surrounding and harassing an elephant in a settlement area. If an elephant feels trapped it could become dangerous.

I used to think it was impossible to keep elephants out of my farm but now I know of some simple methods to help me protect my crops. These methods fall into two categories, passive and active. Combining the following methods is much more effective than using any single method on its own.

Reporting: It is important to report incidents to the wildlife authorities. If they know you are experiencing a problem, they might be able to help. Mobile phones are now available and so communicating with the Kenya Wildlife Service has become much easier. It is also important to ensure that the incidents you report are serious because if you demand a patrol of your area you are taking away that patrol from other communities that may be more needy.



Farm planning: It is easy for elephants to raid farms that are isolated.



It is far harder for them to raid farms that are grouped together. Therefore farmers living in elephant areas should work together to grow their crops.

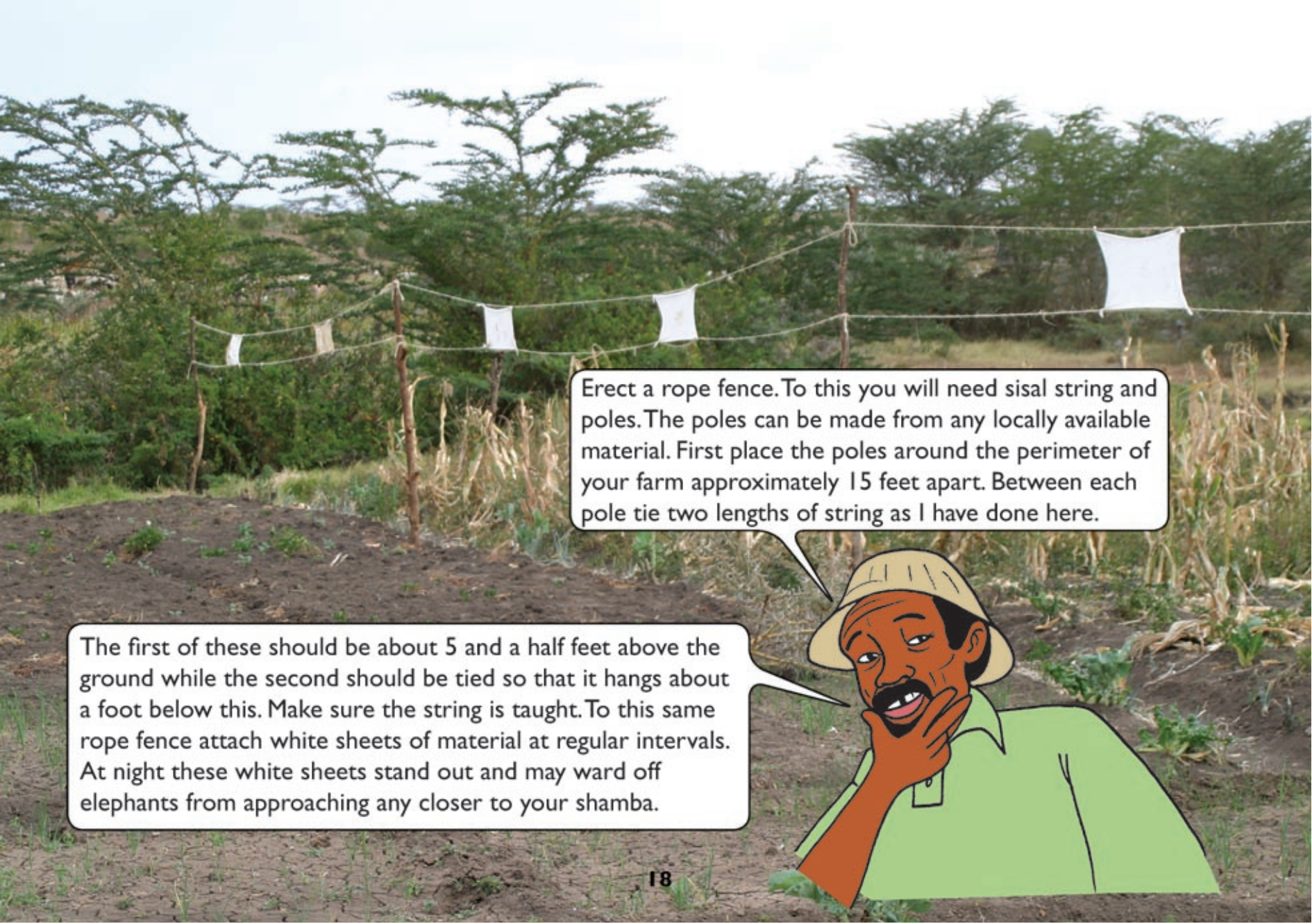




There are several passive methods for keeping elephants away from your farm.

Clear a buffer zone around your farm as elephants feel vulnerable walking across an open area when they are crop-raiding.





Erect a rope fence. To this you will need sisal string and poles. The poles can be made from any locally available material. First place the poles around the perimeter of your farm approximately 15 feet apart. Between each pole tie two lengths of string as I have done here.

The first of these should be about 5 and a half feet above the ground while the second should be tied so that it hangs about a foot below this. Make sure the string is taught. To this same rope fence attach white sheets of material at regular intervals. At night these white sheets stand out and may ward off elephants from approaching any closer to your shamba.

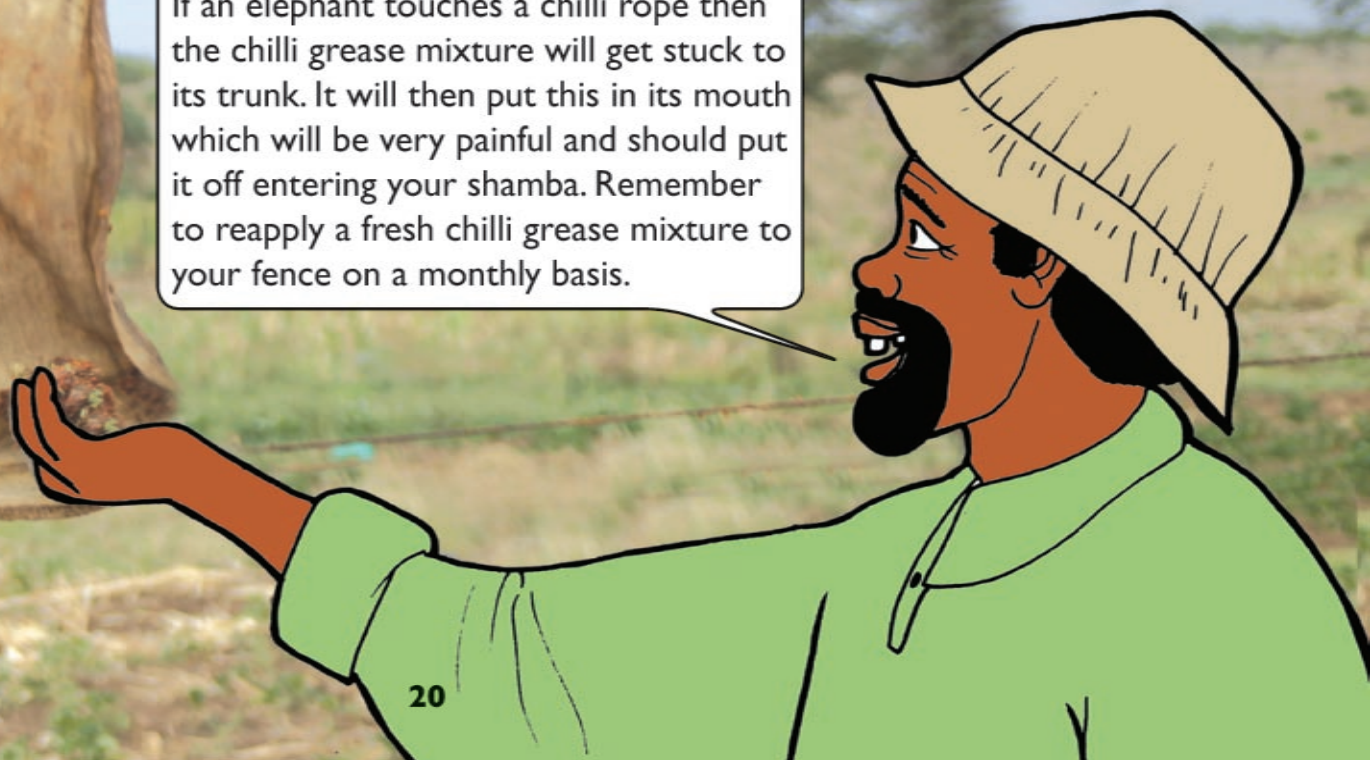


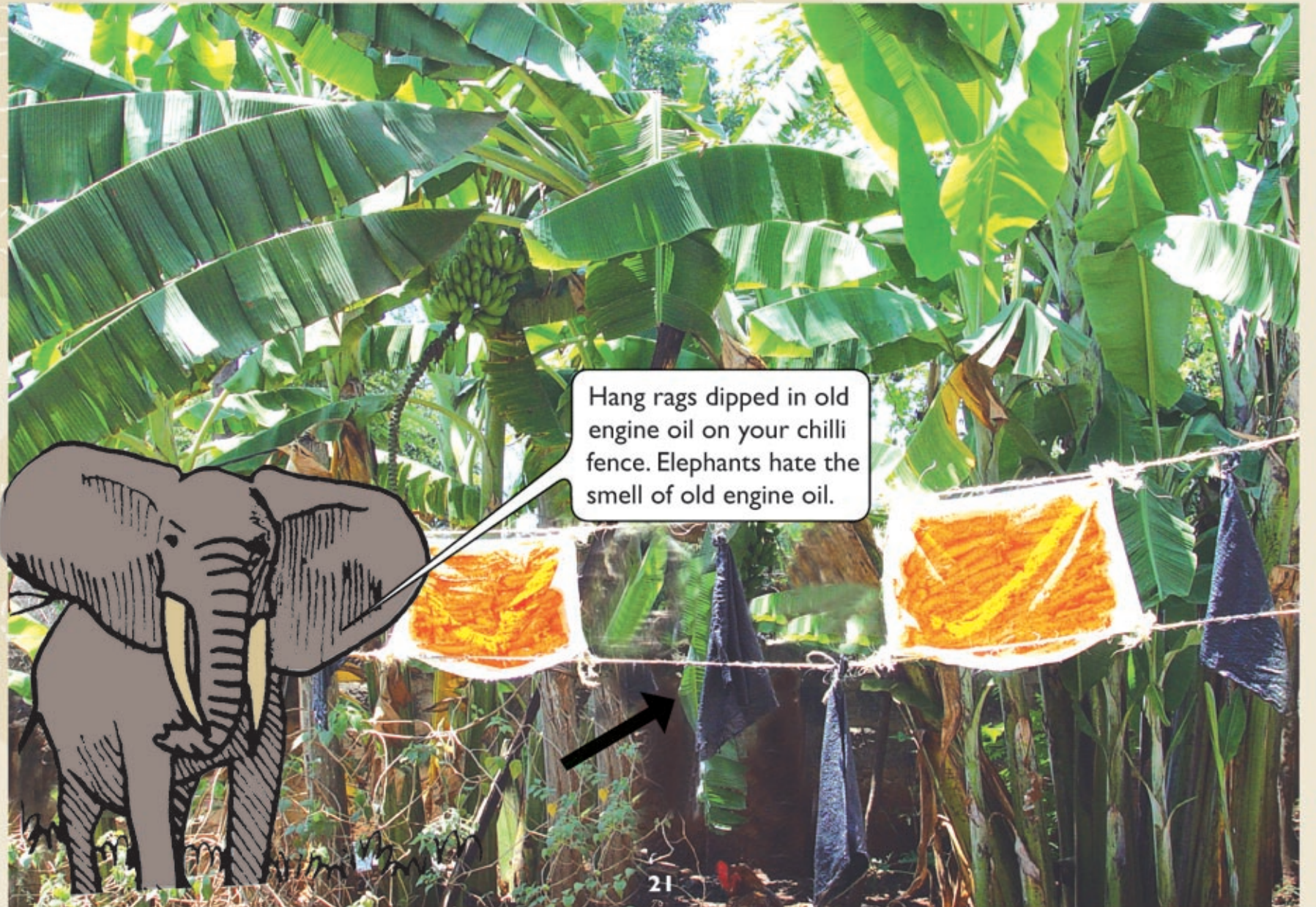
Hang bells from your rope fence. If the bells ring at night they should wake you up and you will know an elephant is trying to enter your shamba. If you hang a plastic bag from your rope fence as I have done here it will make a loud noise with the wind. This may scare elephants away.



Leave several kilos of chillies out to dry in the sun. Once dried, pound these chillies with a maize pounder. Now mix the crushed dried chillies with grease in a container and apply to your rope fence. An effective chilli grease mixture should cause your skin to feel a temporary burning sensation. Use gloves to avoid discomfort and take great care not to put the chilli grease in your eyes as this will be extremely painful. If eaten chillies will cause elephants and other mammals to feel pain temporarily.

The chilli grease mixture will also cause elephants and other animals to feel uncomfortable if they get it on their skin. If an elephant touches a chilli rope then the chilli grease mixture will get stuck to its trunk. It will then put this in its mouth which will be very painful and should put it off entering your shamba. Remember to reapply a fresh chilli grease mixture to your fence on a monthly basis.

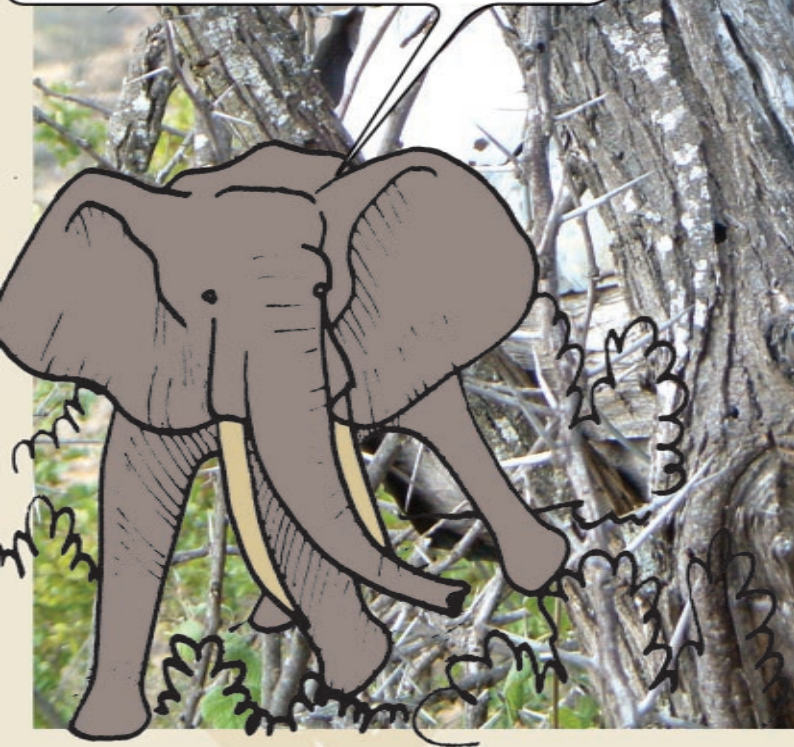


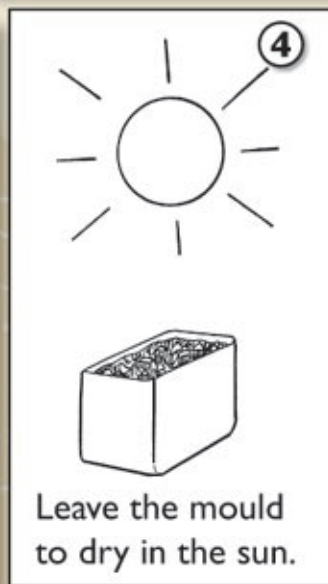
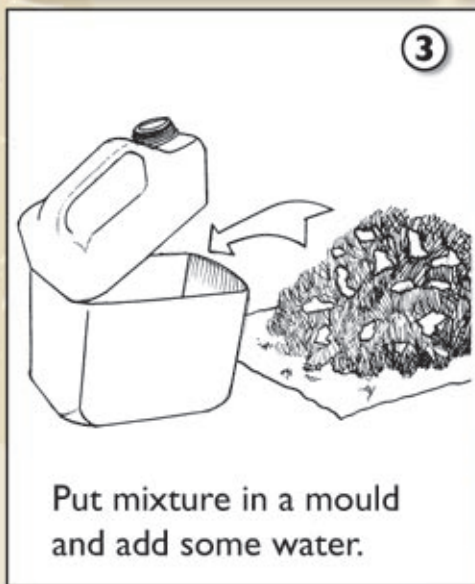
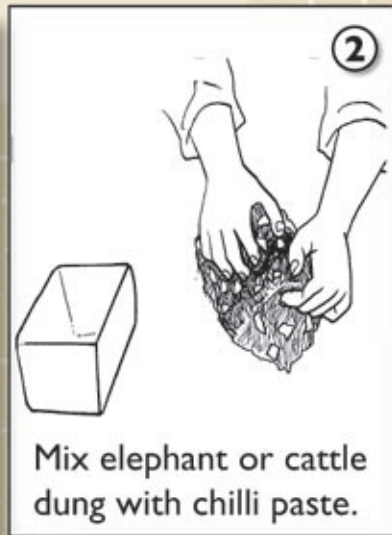
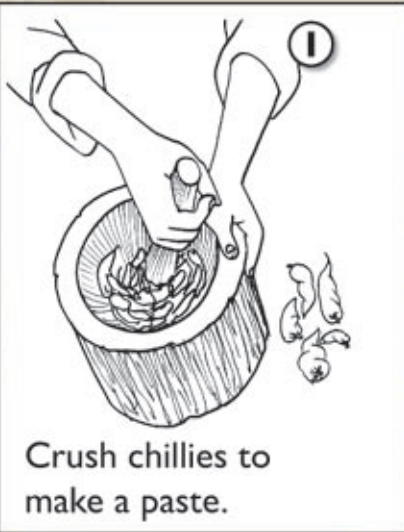


Hang rags dipped in old engine oil on your chilli fence. Elephants hate the smell of old engine oil.



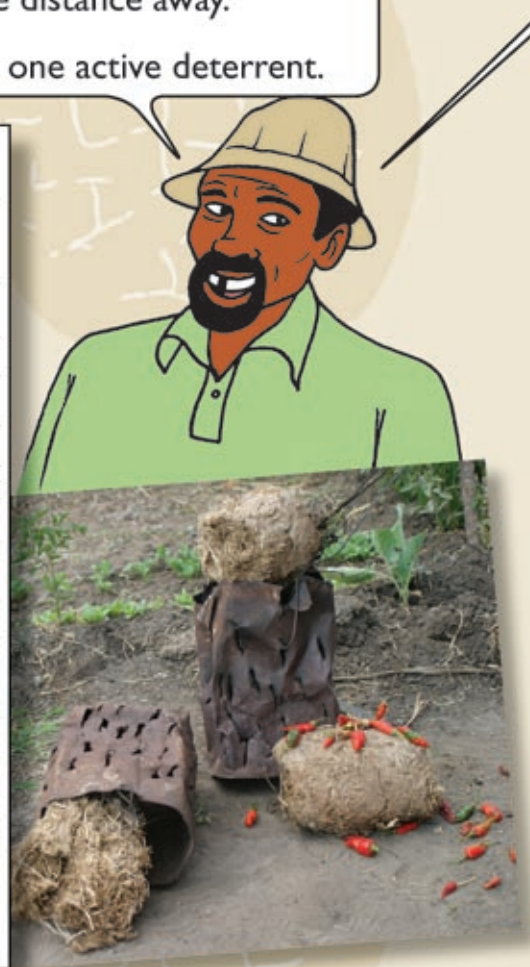
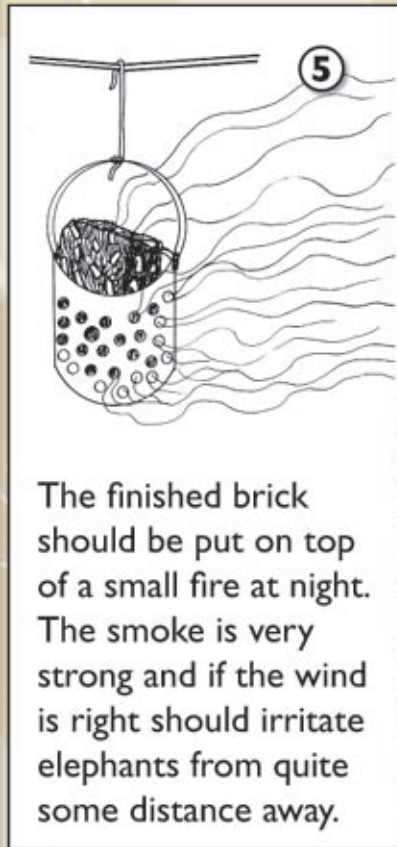
Use beehives to protect trees from elephants. Bees will attack and sting an elephant that disturbs their hive.





If elephants are not put off by your passive methods then there are also some active methods to scare elephants out of your shamba. Make sure you are a safe distance away.

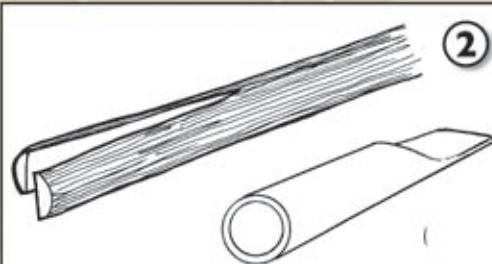
The Chilli Dung Brick is one active deterrent.



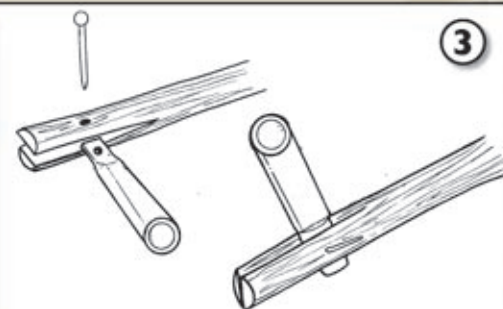
Another active deterrent is the Banger Stick.



These are the materials you will need: A piece of metal pipe approximately 12" long, a bolt, one 5" nail, a bicycle inner tube, a strong straight stick approximately 1m long.



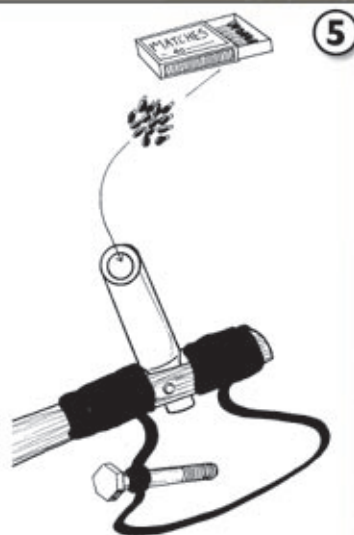
Split one end of the stick about 6" deep. Flatten one end of the pipe and drill a hole in it.



Fix the pipe to the stick using the 5" nail.




Using inner tube, bind pipe to stick and attach bolt in the centre.



Fill the pipe with 2 boxes of matchstick heads.



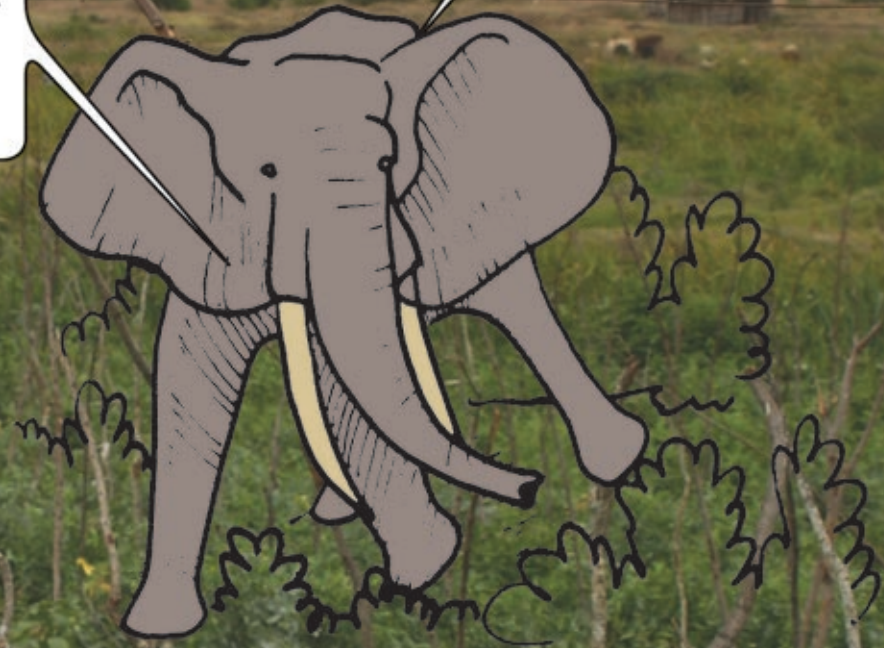


Caution: Your Banger Stick is now loaded. To release noise, bang the bolt against a hard surface.



Elephants do not like to be seen while crop raiding at night. Remember that weak torches and fires are not bright enough to scare elephants away. You will need a powerful spotlight and/or bulb if this method is to be effective.

This is one of the most effective deterrants and only requires one battery, a small solar panel, some electric cable and one bulb. You can also run a spotlight off the same system. Set up the bulb in the centre of the shamba and leave the light on during the night.



Remember that no single method on its own is likely to keep elephants away from your shamba. Therefore you must use a combination of these passive and active methods to keep elephants away from your farm

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & THANKS

- Loki Osborn: Many of the methods for deterring crop raiders illustrated in this booklet were developed by Loki and his Mid-Zambezi Elephant Project through trials in Zimbabwe
- Boniface Kiteme: For raising the funds through ESAPP to make this project possible
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- David Wachira, Joseph Kamotho & Joseph Ng'ang'a: For showing us the methods they are using to keep elephants away from crops in southern Laikipia

We want to hear from you.

Please let us know if these methods for reducing human-elephant conflict work for you or if you have any additional methods or comments to share with us.

Write to: KUIISHI PAMOJA, CETRAD, P.O. Box 144 Nanyuki.

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Thank you for teaching us so much about elephants. We have learnt that you belong here just as much as we do. Through this booklet Tembo and I believe that we will also be able to 'ishi pamoja'.

Thank you mzee for listening to me. We know each other much better now so lets try 'tuishi pamoja'.

