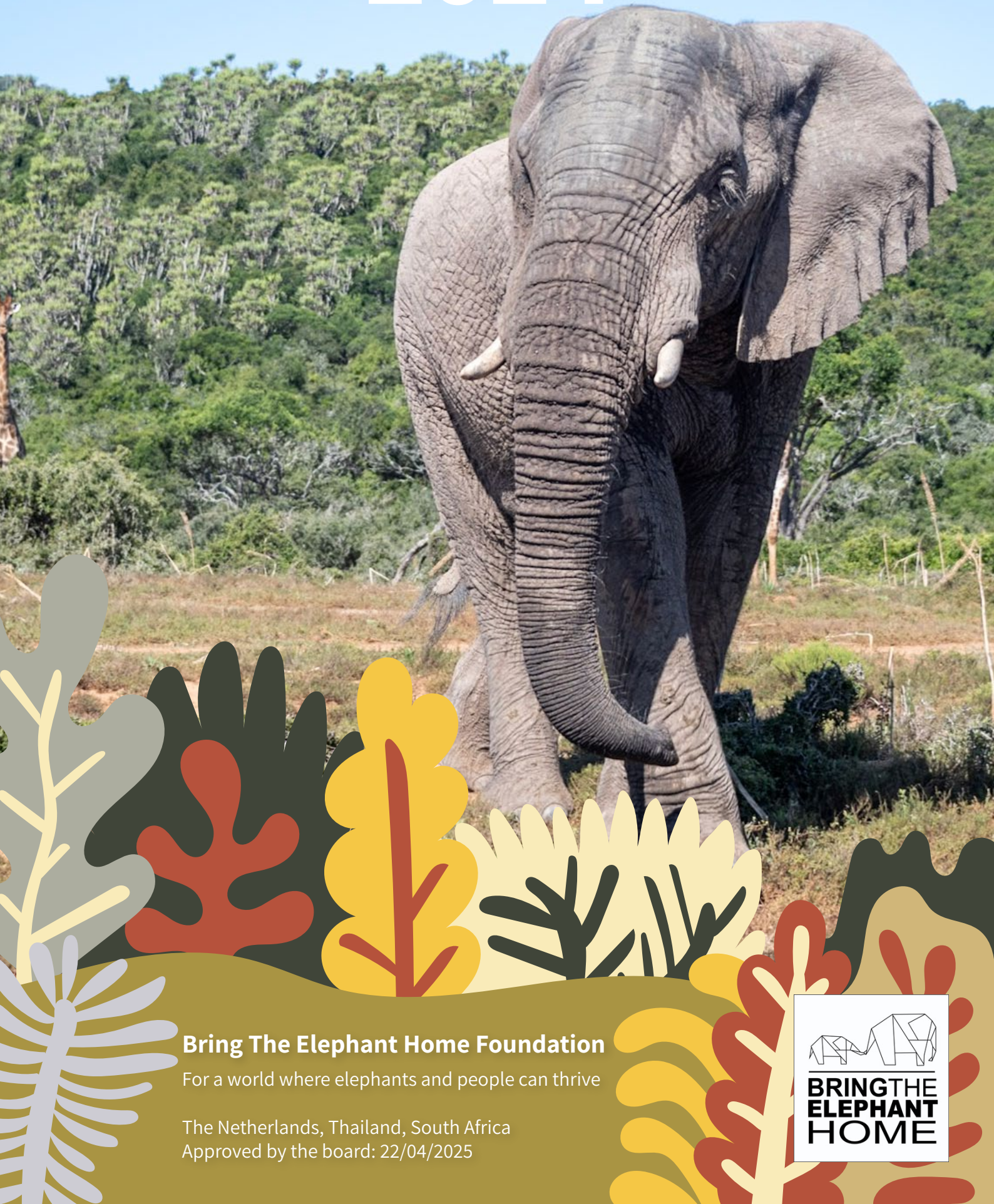


ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Bring The Elephant Home Foundation

For a world where elephants and people can thrive

The Netherlands, Thailand, South Africa

Approved by the board: 22/04/2025



**BRINGTHE
ELEPHANT
HOME**



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1. FROM THE FOUNDER

As I reflect on 2024, I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for our dedicated team, our courageous community partners, and everyone who has walked alongside us on this journey. The year 2024 marked the 20th anniversary of Bring The Elephant Home. Two decades ago, I could never have imagined how a small dream to help elephants in need would grow into a global movement for conservation, coexistence and community empowerment.

Twenty years ago, with nothing more than passion and purpose, I signed the registration papers that formally launched our journey. What began as a mission focused on improving the welfare of captive elephants has since evolved into a much broader vision—one grounded in science, compassion, and hope. Looking back, I see how much we've accomplished and learned. From early reforestation efforts to innovative coexistence strategies integrating elephant-resistant crops and bee-based deterrents, every step has been shaped by our willingness to listen, take action, learn, and adapt. Today, our work goes far beyond elephants—it's about restoring our connection with nature, building relationships, and creating a future where people and wildlife can thrive together.

2024 was a year of action and reflection, full of milestones that reaffirmed our mission and strengthened our commitment. I am endlessly proud of our team, partners, communities, and supporters who make this work possible. Every rewilded landscape, every empowered farmer, and every elephant observed in a thriving natural habitat is a victory we share.

Over the past year, we deepened our research, expanded our projects, and continued to build bridges across continents. We remained rooted in the belief that conservation must be just, ethical, inclusive, and collaborative.

This annual report is a reflection of that belief—of the science we've advanced, the lives we've touched, and the partnerships we've built. I invite you to explore the milestones and moments that shaped this inspiring year.

With heartfelt thanks,
Dr. Antoinette van de Water
Founder & Director
Bring The Elephant Home



2. MISSION AND STRATEGY

Mission Bring The Elephant Home: To increase the chances of survival for elephants and work towards a world in which people and elephants can live in harmony, benefiting from each other's existence.

Strategy:

- Preservation of the wild elephant and the restoration, expansion, connection and protection of habitat in collaboration with local partners.
- Implementing, testing and sharing knowledge about sustainable solutions and new technologies to encourage human-elephant coexistence.
- Promoting human-elephant coexistence in collaboration with local stakeholders.
- Encouraging local participation in nature conservation and empowerment of local communities.
- Raising awareness about the importance of nature and elephant conservation.



3. PROJECTS 2024

3.1 The Tom Yum Project

Overview

The Tom Yum Project empowers Thai farmers to cultivate aromatic, elephant-deterrent crops, such as lemongrass, chili, galangal, and kaffir lime, using regenerative, sustainable techniques. Designed to reduce human-elephant conflict while supporting rural livelihoods, the project integrates ecological research, sustainable agriculture, and market innovation. Through education, enterprise, and collaboration, the Tom Yum Project promotes peaceful coexistence between elephants and people.

Key Achievements

- Expanded to 16 retail partners across Thailand, supplying elephant-friendly products to organic shops, vegetarian restaurants, and refill stations.
- Launched dried lemongrass and essential oil product lines to improve shelf life and market reach.
- Completed six fresh lemongrass deliveries to a

local factory despite logistical challenges.

- Hosted farmer workshops on crop production, processing, and sustainable farming.
- Co-hosted the Alternative Crop Festival and Economic Workshop, strengthening community engagement.
- Surveyed 277 farmers in Yan Sue Village to assess the impact of human-elephant conflicts in our neighboring village, their attitudes towards elephants and their interest in growing alternative crops.
- Partnered with King Mongkut's University of Technology and Happy Grocers for soil health improvements and microbiome research across different land-use types.
- Enhanced monitoring with camera traps, acoustic sensors, and drones.
- Ruam Thai village approved the relocation of Tom Yum facilities and the development of a Community Resilience Hub.
- Farmers participated in workshops on crop production, value-added processing, and sales.
- The Tom Yum product production by our





community team for 2024 included a total of 500 soaps, 300 candles, 150 lip balms, 200 cooking packs, and 50 tea packs. Additionally, we spent approximately 4,000 baht to purchase ingredients directly from alternative crops in Ruam Thai.

Challenges

- Inconsistent buyer demand and high transport costs highlighted the need for more stable markets and improved logistics.
- Dependence on fresh lemongrass sales proved vulnerable to market fluctuations.
- Need for FDA approval for Tom Yum products to allow export.
- Knowledge Gained
- Ongoing monitoring is providing data on elephant behavior, crop selection, and movement patterns in agricultural landscapes.
- Soil microbiome research is helping assess the ecological benefits of alternative agriculture.

Looking Ahead

In the year ahead, we will focus on deepening the project's economic and ecological impact by expanding both our research and market presence. To strengthen our outreach strategy, we plan to recruit dedicated interns and FDA consultants who can help scale production, ensure quality standards, and realise new distribution channels for our elephant-friendly products. In parallel, we are collaborating with architects from the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden to design and begin developing the Community Resilience Hub in Ruam Thai: a central space for processing, education, and innovation. We will continue to host farmer workshops, refine our alternative crop research, and work toward building stable sales channels for dried lemongrass and essential oil products. These efforts will help create a more resilient, self-sustaining system that supports both local livelihoods and elephant conservation.



3.2 Bee The Change

Overview

Bee The Change is an innovative project that explores the use of Asian honey bees (*Apis cerana*) and synthetic bee pheromones to deter elephants from crop fields. At the intersection of science, traditional knowledge, and sustainable livelihoods, the project supports both biodiversity and human-elephant coexistence. Local communities participate as beekeepers and field researchers, gaining skills and income while protecting their farms.

Key Achievements

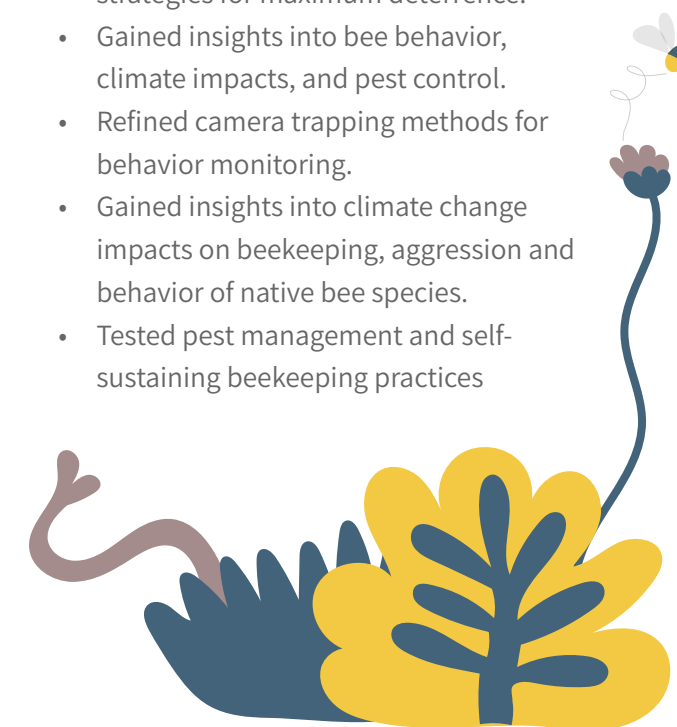
- Conducted a comprehensive field trial (April–November 2024) to test beehive and pheromone-based deterrents.
- Recorded 144 elephant detections, generating insights into how elephants respond to bee-based interventions.
- Worked closely with five local beekeepers, providing training and technical support.
- Strengthened links between livelihood support and ecological restoration.

Challenges

- Drought conditions led to hive absconding and reduced bee health.
- Limited funding and high team workload affected scalability.
- Coordination with external partners influenced project timelines.

Knowledge Gained

- Improved hive setup and deployment strategies for maximum deterrence.
- Gained insights into bee behavior, climate impacts, and pest control.
- Refined camera trapping methods for behavior monitoring.
- Gained insights into climate change impacts on beekeeping, aggression and behavior of native bee species.
- Tested pest management and self-sustaining beekeeping practices





Looking Ahead

As we move forward, our priority is to support the beekeeping group in refining and scaling bee-based deterrence techniques that have shown strong potential in the field. One of our key goals for 2025 is to publish the results of our 2024 field study, which will provide the scientific foundation for expanding this approach to new communities. We will continue building local capacity through beekeeper training and mentorship while also seeking long-term funding to enhance the sustainability and reach of the project. By integrating scientific innovation with community-driven solutions, Bee The Change will continue to demonstrate how biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods can thrive together.

3.3 Elephant Research

This year marked a period of remarkable progress and innovation for Bring The Elephant Home’s

Elephant Research Programme in Thailand. Through a combination of fieldwork, scientific collaboration, and capacity-building initiatives, we continued to advance our mission to foster coexistence between humans and elephants while contributing to the conservation of Asian elephants. Some of the programme’s key milestones from 2024:

Completing the Rewilding Research Project in Mae Ping-Omkoi Forest Complex

We concluded our elephant population and potential for elephant rewilding research in the Mae Ping-Omkoi Forest Complex, a project aimed at restoring habitats and securing viable ecosystems for elephants and other wildlife. This initiative included the first systematic elephant population analysis in this forest complex in nearly two decades. Our findings provided invaluable insights into the population dynamics, habitat use, and ecological requirements of elephants in this critical yet under-researched area. Our project also compared the behavior of captive and wild elephants to identify ideal rewilding candidates. The project produced a holistic framework that is ready to implement when and where conservation managers, policymakers, local people, and other stakeholders are aligned to pursue rewilding captive elephants to restore dwindling wild populations and their habitats.



Elephant behavior and identification in Kuiburi National Park

In Kuiburi National Park, we made significant strides in documenting the park’s wild elephant population by developing an extensive elephant identification database. Over 80 individual elephants have now been cataloged, using a system that uses physical traits to generate unique codes for each elephant. This database not only facilitates long-term monitoring of elephant demographics and behavior but also supports ongoing efforts to mitigate human-elephant conflict by identifying habitual crop foragers and informing targeted intervention strategies.

Brooke Friswold, a PhD researcher from the Conservation Ecology Program at King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi, completed her data collection in 2024. Her research examines how tourism trends impact elephant well-being in Kui Buri National Park, focusing on behavioral adaptations and stress responses to varying levels of human presence. Through 6.5 months of observational data, including 521 focal samples and 332 elephant detection events, the study analyses factors such as noise levels, vehicle numbers, and proximity to tourists. These findings will provide critical insights for balancing

conservation efforts with sustainable tourism, ensuring that visitor activities minimise stress and disruption to wild elephants. These findings are currently being analysed and will be published in 2 publications in 2025.

Global Collaboration at the Coexistence Fellowship Summit

Natsuda “Mo” Sutthiboriban and Marisa “Kie” Phringphroh, two BTEH field researchers, joined the Coexistence Fellowship Summit hosted by the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. During this week-long program, they developed a theory of change to address human-elephant conflict in Kuiburi National Park, which will serve as a roadmap for future conservation initiatives. They also refined research plans to guide their work over the next two years, focusing on mitigating





crop foraging behavior, understanding population dynamics inside and outside the protected area, and promoting sustainable coexistence between local communities and elephants.

Launching the First Elephant Research Program

This year, we hosted our first Elephant Research Program in Thailand, bringing together six researchers for a 10-day immersive field experience at our field station in Ruam Thai Village, which borders Kuiburi National Park. Participants gained hands-on training in data collection, statistical analysis, and conservation science skills, working alongside our team to study elephant behavior in the national park. This program provided a valuable experience to the visiting researchers and gave the BTEH team the opportunity to share their knowledge and skills with a new audience.

Looking Ahead

Next year will focus on translating our research findings into practical conservation action. We will publish key results from our work in Kuiburi and Omkoi, and continue mentoring local researchers as they implement long-term monitoring and community-based solutions. Our team will build on existing partnerships to refine strategies for mitigating crop-foraging behavior and explore opportunities for implementing the rewilding framework developed in Mae Ping-Omkoi. Through this, we aim to strengthen coexistence approaches that benefit both elephants and the communities who share their landscapes.

3.4 Conservation Events

In 2024, Bring The Elephant Home organised 14 impactful conservation events, engaging 625 participants across five regions. These events provided hands-on education about elephant conservation, human-elephant coexistence, and the role of community-based conservation and ecotourism.



PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

“The program was carefully designed to educate participants on elephant conservation, community involvement, and environmental sustainability.”

“This trip was all about connection, sustainability, and exploring new ideas, and I loved every moment of it.”

“One of the most valuable aspects of the trip was the opportunity to engage in conversations with a wide range of people, which gave us a profound understanding of the challenges and solutions surrounding human-elephant coexistence.”

“The safari at Kui Buri National Park was a standout experience, allowing students to witness wildlife in their natural habitat.”

“Every story felt meaningful, and it made me realise the importance of sustainable conservation.”

“It was inspiring to learn firsthand how local people coexist with wildlife, and I left with a much deeper understanding of conservation and community.”



Key activities included Human-Elephant Coexistence walks, elephant dung paper-making workshops, tie-dye shirt making, Tom Yum product crafting and cooking classes, and immersive wild elephant safaris. These experiences fostered awareness and action while directly benefiting local communities. Through these initiatives, we provided livelihood support to 18 more local people in 2024 on top of our existing community members and engaged at least 50 community members per event, reinforcing our commitment to sustainable development and ecological resilience.

Additionally, we facilitated critical conservation support, including:

- Donations for individuals affected by human-elephant conflict
- Providing flashlights for rangers monitoring wild elephants and farmers guarding their crops at night
- Research scholarships and community leadership development
- Built an earthen house for Ruam Thai School as a learning center for youth vocational development through the collaboration





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of Round Square, an international schools network, and Flooglebinder, a British travel company focusing on social and environmental impact

- Constructing and improving two elephant monitoring stations
- Notable events included collaborations with JUMP!, ISB, SFS, Flooglebinder, NIST, and the Cincinnati Zoo, with the largest gathering hosting 120 participants in Kanchanaburi in November.

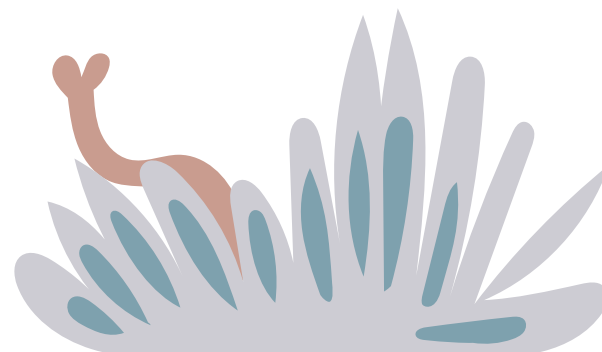
These conservation efforts continue to have a tangible impact, strengthening coexistence between people and elephants while empowering local communities.

Looking Ahead

In 2025, we will build on the success of this year's conservation events by developing deeper partnerships with schools, universities, and local organisations. Expanding youth engagement and integrating conservation storytelling and science will be central to our approach, alongside new formats that connect participants more directly with on-the-ground efforts. We will continue to ensure that events not only raise awareness but also deliver tangible benefits for local people and long-term conservation outcomes.

3.5 South Africa

In 2024, our research in the Kariega Game Reserve in South Africa continued, in collaboration with the reserve's management, ecologists, the Kariega Foundation, and the Elephant Reintegration Trust. Together with PhD student Brooke Friswold, we are studying the impact of habitat expansion on elephant well-being. We previously fitted elephants with LoRa GPS collars to monitor their movements. We also observe elephant behavior, which is not invasive, using the Zoomonitor app. We developed an ethogram for elephant behavior to analyse behavioral patterns. Additionally, we collect elephant feces for laboratory analysis of glucocorticoids (cortisol levels) to gain insight into the stress levels of elephants. With these three methods, we compare the social behavior, well-being, and movements of the elephants before and after the fences are removed.



We used cutting-edge GIS technology to determine the Habitat Suitability of the reserve where the elephants inhabit and the vegetation and changes over time. The preliminary results of this research have been analysed and found statistically significant findings that fence removal had a positive effect on elephant behavior and well-being as well as on the reserve's ecology. These findings were presented at the Southern Africa Wildlife Management Association (SAWMA) conference in Namibia in October 2024 with a positive reception. Brooke won the Runner-up for Best PhD Presentation for her presentation on this research. The total research is currently being analysed and will be published in 2025.

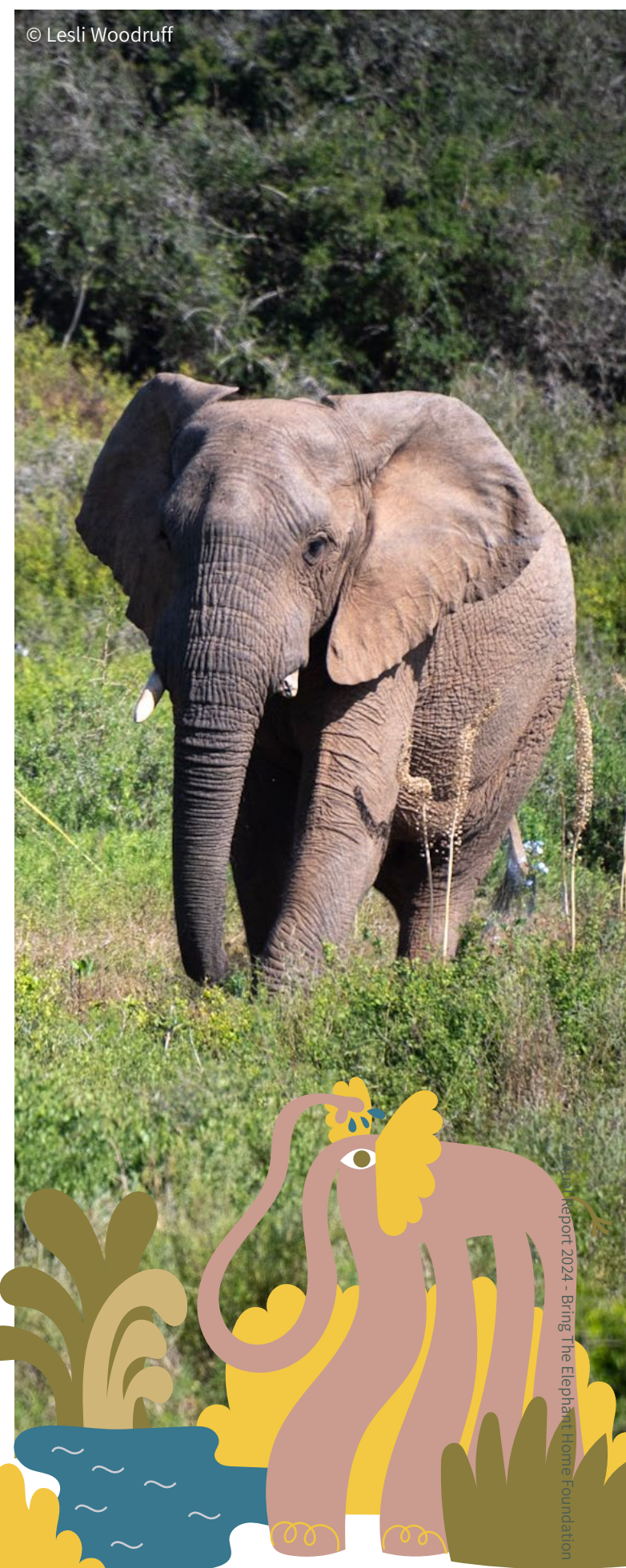
Together with our colleagues at Elephant Reintegration Trust, we have developed a comprehensive plan to develop a first-of-its-kind Elephant Rewilding Reserve.

Our work in South Africa is funded through field expeditions that we organise twice a year for small groups of research assistants, Abri voor Dieren, Globeguards, and our adoption program for African elephants. In 2024, 16 research assistants joined us in South Africa, and 49 Bring The Elephant Home donors joined the African elephant adoption program.

Looking Ahead

The focus in South Africa will be on completing data analysis and publishing our research, which will provide valuable insights into the benefits of habitat expansion for elephant well-being and ecological health. We will continue to facilitate elephant research programs and expand our adoption program to ensure sustainable funding for long-term monitoring. In 2025, we plan to register BTEH Africa in South Africa, and expand our work to other African countries through our Elephant Research Collaborative. We continue sharing our findings with policymakers and managers and contribute to broader discussions on ethical elephant management across the region.

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IN SUMMARY: 2024 IN NUMBERS



ALTERNATIVE CROPS

- 277** Local people participating alt crop questionnaire
- 10** Farmers growing alternative crops
- 100** Participants in our Alternative Crop Festival
- 16** Consignment partners



ELEPHANT RESEARCH THAILAND

- 1486** Dung piles counted (Om Koi)
- 1287** Elephant photos/videos (Om Koi)
- 213** Kms walked for line transects (Kuiburi)
- 80** Elephants identified
- 866** Photos in the database
- 109** 5-minute scan sampling behavioral observations
- 187** 14-minute focal sampling behavioral observations



BTEH SOUTH AFRICA

- 16** Participants Elephant Research Program
- 49** African elephant adoption
- 63** Dung samples collected
- 73** Elephants identified
- 567** 14-minute focal sampling behavioral observations



TOM YUM PRODUCTS PRODUCTION

- 500** Soap
- 300** Candles
- 200** Tom Yum Cooking packs
- 50** Teas



BEE THE CHANGE

- 5** Beekeepers
- 45** Beehive experiments
- 6** Pheromone experiments
- 144** Elephant detections



CONSERVATION EDUCATION EVENTS

- 625** Students
- 14** Groups hosted
- 50** Local people benefiting from these events
- 18** New Local People Receiving Additional Livelihood Support in 2024



SOME EVENTS AND (NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS)

- JUMP x Tanglin – Jan 2024 (49)
- JUMP x Brighton College – Jan 2024 (71)
- ISB Student Service – Feb 2024 (17)
- SFS – July 2024 (15)
- Flooglebinder – July 2024 (59)
- Cincinnati Zoo Visit – October 2024 (10)
- NIST – Kanchanaburi – Nov 8-9, 2024 (120)
- ISB – Eco Trip – Nov 15-17, 2024 (33)
- JUMP – NIST – Nov 19-21, 2024 (50)
- Elephant Research Programme TH (8)



OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION

- Presented our mission to the Thai parliament
- 2** Scientific publications in 2024
- 4** Presentations at conferences



ORGANIZATION MILESTONES

- 20-year anniversary celebration
- Two Thai researchers awarded CZBG fellowships
- Phase 1 of USFWS grant completed
- First Elephant Research Program in Thailand hosted
- Major data collection completed across projects
- Ruam Thai Village approved community-owned Tom Yum facilities
- Interactive Elephant ID Quiz developed
- Hosted first Coexistence Champions group from CZBG

4. SOCIAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE IN 2024

In 2024, Bring The Elephant Home significantly expanded its online reach, engaging a growing global audience across Facebook (@BringTheElephantHome) and Instagram (@btehasiaafrica). Our platforms continue to be a powerful tool for raising awareness, mobilizing support, and inspiring action for elephant conservation.

Across both platforms, our audience primarily consists of women (around 60-67%) and men (33-40%) aged 25-34, with strong engagement from Thailand, the Netherlands, the United States, India, and South Africa.

Key Performance Highlights:

- Total Facebook reach: 1.5 million (+4.2%)
- Total Instagram reach: 34K (+21.4%)
- Facebook views: 501.6K
- Instagram views: 84K
- Content interactions: Facebook: 21.6K

(+333%) | Instagram: 2.9K** (+100%)

- Link clicks: Facebook: 2.6K (+492.9%) | Instagram: 177** (+100%)
- New followers: Facebook: 1.2K (+362.2%) | Instagram: 507**

Content Performance & Engagement Trends

- Facebook posts outperformed Stories, generating the highest reach and engagement.
- Instagram Stories performed better than posts, reinforcing the platform's preference for interactive, short-form content.
- Organic engagement remained strong, with 85% (Facebook) and 86% (Instagram) of reach coming from unpaid content.
- Top-performing content included elephant conservation updates, success stories, event promotions, and visually compelling storytelling posts.



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5. ORGANISATION

Bring The Elephant Home is a Dutch foundation established on November 12, 2004, based in Vlaardingen, and a Thai foundation (CM211) that was established in October 2007 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Director and Founder of Bring The Elephant Home

- Dr. Antoinette van de Water

Board BTEH Netherlands

The composition of the board during the reporting year 2024:

- Berrie Jurg, chairman
- Jeroen Bol, board member
- Liesbeth Sluiter, board member
- Dr. Suzan Doornwaard, board member

Board BTEH Thailand

- The composition of the board during the reporting year 2024:
- Dr. Antoinette van de Water, chairperson
- Siriporn Sriaram, board member
- Oravee Jitlekha, board member

Country Director Thailand

- Khwankhao Sinhaseni

Program Manager South Africa

- Brooke Friswold



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6. FINANCE

The BTEH Netherlands financial report is available in Dutch, while the BTEH Thailand financial report is published in Thai. Both reports undergo auditing by the respective authoritative bodies. Therefore, the financial details are not included in this annual report.



CLOSING REFLECTION

As I look back on 2024, I feel pride in what we've accomplished together and humility for the trust so many have placed in Bring The Elephant Home. This was a year of celebration, action, innovation, and renewed purpose.

We expanded our research, launched new partnerships, deepened our community engagement, and celebrated 20 years of building bridges between elephants and people. From the Alternative Crop Festival in Ruam Thai to our first Elephant Research Program in Thailand, from developing plans to create an elephant rewilding reserve in South Africa to sharing our findings at international conferences, 2024 has shown us what's possible when science, compassion, and community come together.

Bring The Elephant Home has never been about one species, one solution, or one person. It has always been about a shared vision—made real by

scientists, students, farmers, rangers, donors, and volunteers who believe in coexistence. Each of you is part of this growing movement, and every step forward is powered by our collective hope and action.

The challenges remain urgent—habitat loss, climate change, and growing pressures on both wildlife and people. But this year reaffirmed what we already knew: that bold, community-driven solutions can create lasting change. At BTEH, we dream of a future where wild elephants roam safely through connected landscapes, where coexistence is the norm, and where justice and inclusion guide every conservation decision.

With gratitude,
Antoinette

