



**CHAMPIONS  
OF THE  
WILD**

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OF THE  
WILD**

# ELEPHANTS

**ELEPHANTS**

**AS SEEN ON  
DISCOVERY  
AND  
ANIMAL  
PLANET**



VHS

C9198 140

A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA RELEASE

# ELEPHANTS



Joyce Poole's love of elephants comes through in every word she speaks about these magnificent animals – the world's largest and most powerful land-based mammals. Poole first came to Kenya's Amboseli National Park in 1975 to work with world-renowned researcher Cynthia Moss. During her years at Amboseli, she got to know many of the park's 1,000 elephants, and they came to know her. When we join Poole as she returns to the park after several years away, many of her old elephant friends stop by to say hello.

Elephants live in extended family units headed by a dominant female, or matriarch. Poole says the matriarch rules not through force but through respect. She is instrumental in passing on knowledge and survival skills to the rest of the family.

In the video we meet a family whose mother, the much-loved elephant known as Tuskless, had been killed by the Kenya Wildlife Service in a tragic case of mistaken identity. Tuskless's 14-year-old daughter, Tulip, cares for her own daughter as well as her younger sister and an orphan. She may eventually become the new matriarch. We watch as she is courted by bulls while at the same time looks after the young in her care.

Poole's discoveries have expanded our understanding of elephants. She knew that elephants use a broad number of vocalizations to communicate with each other, and she had recorded many of these. But Poole suspected she was not getting the whole story. Using sensitive microphones to capture sounds beyond the range of human hearing, she discovered that elephants make about 20 low-frequency sounds nobody had heard before. Poole decoded what the rumbles meant, for example, "let's go," or "here I come."

Decades of ivory poaching reduced the number of elephants in Kenya from an estimated 165,000 in the late 1960s to about 20,000 by 1989. But things are looking up for African elephants these days, thanks in part to the work of Joyce Poole. She has helped to draft an international treaty banning trade in ivory.

She also strongly feels that her discoveries can be instrumental in helping us save elephants. Most human beings accept that all humans have rights, but most are unwilling to extend protection to animals. The more similarities we find between ourselves and an animal, the more willing we are to treat that animal with care and respect. So, Poole would say, learning that elephants live in family units similar to ours, that they have the ability to mourn and that they quite likely have a sense of humour will help us to save the elephants from extinction.

## Pre-Viewing Questions

1. Joyce Poole says that elephants are similar to humans in many ways. Can you think of three similarities?
2. You will see in the video that Joyce Poole felt a responsibility to help save elephants. Should researchers become actively involved in conserving the animals they study?



Champion:  
**Joyce Poole**

**Champions of the Wild** takes you around the globe with stories of remarkable endangered species and the dedicated champions determined to save them. Buy the whole collection!

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## Post-Viewing Questions

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1. Joyce Poole calls Tulip's care of the orphan "compassion." Do you agree? Do you believe elephants can feel such complex emotions? What about other animals?
2. Do you think the Kenya Wildlife Service was justified in having a shoot-to-kill policy to deal with poachers? Is it right for the KWS to shoot elephants that have killed Masai cattle?
3. The video paints the reopening of the ivory trade as a tragedy for elephants. But some south-Saharan countries claim their record on elephant conservation is better than that of countries such as Kenya. If this claim is true, does it justify a limited elephant kill and controlled ivory sales?

## World Wide Web Sites

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*Please note that addresses on the Web can change unexpectedly.*

The Elephant Information Repository. A rich site with lots of elephant facts and conservation news:

**[elephant.elehost.com/index.html](http://elephant.elehost.com/index.html)**

An elephant fact sheet from the US Fish and Wildlife Service:

**[www.fws.gov/r9extaff/biologues/bio\\_elep.html](http://www.fws.gov/r9extaff/biologues/bio_elep.html)**

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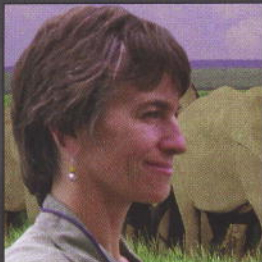
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## ELEPHANTS



They say that elephants never forget. Joyce Poole believes it – and, she says, elephants are far more like humans than most of us realize.

Poole came to Kenya to study elephants in 1975 as a 19-year-old. She fell in love right away and spent years getting to know the animals at Amboseli National Park. But something was nagging away at her: while she was learning more and more about some of the most fascinating

animals on earth, poachers were wiping out many thousands of African elephants.

So Poole quit Amboseli for a short but wildly successful career in the Kenya Wildlife Service, where she helped draft policies that would fight poachers.

Now Poole is back at Amboseli, learning more about the elephants that have become her close friends over the years.

Endangered animals – and the champions who have dedicated their lives to saving them – feature in this spectacular series of half-hour videos! Filmed around the world, from the frozen fields of Canada's North to the jungles of Borneo, **Champions of the Wild** combines natural history with personal drama.

Director and Producer: **Christian Bruyère**

Executive Producer: **Michael Chechik**

**25 minutes, 30 seconds**

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