

A CEYLON
PRESS TINY
GUIDE

A CHECKLIST
TO THE
ANTEATERS &
8 MID-SIZE
MAMMALS
OF SRI LANKA

ANTEATERS & MID-SIZE MAMMALS



1 ANTEATER

Pangolins, or scaly anteaters, measure six feet nose to tail, and live in burrows in rainforest, grassland, and hill country - right across the Indian subcontinent and Sri Lanka. They are clothed in overlapping and rounded scales and compensate for poor vision with highly developed hearing and smell. Their noses, bristling with the most powerful of scent sensors, sit at the end of exceptionally long snouts well adapted to eat termites and ants.

2 HARE

The Ceylon Black-Naped Hare is fifty centimetres head to body and distinguished by having a black patch on the back on its neck. It is more of a night creature, leaving the day for alone sleeping in the grassland that is its preferred habitat. Blessed with excellent sight, hearing, and smell, it can outrun most enemies and is widespread across the island.

3 JACKAL

The Sri Lankan Jackal is second only to the Leopard in the pecking order of island predators. It differs from its Indian cousin by virtue of its marginally greater size, the rooted lobe on the inner side of the third upper premolar and a darker less shaggy coat. It is a skilled hunter, a pack animal that will eat anything from rodents, birds, and mice to young gazelles, reptiles, and even fruit.

4 OTTAR

The Ceylon Otter is famously family-orientated and lives in family groups , scrupulously hygienic. Covered in dark brown fur and about a metre long, weighing in at eight kilos, it lives mostly on off fish.

5 PORCUPINE

The Indian Crested Porcupine is found right across Sri Lanka - and India. Nocturnal, and usually hidden in the burrows that are their homes, they are eager consumers of bark, fruit, berries, vegetables and almost most plants in gardens and plantations. Monogamous, their pregnancies last eight months and the two to four cubs that are born live on with the parents until they are two or three years old.

6

SLOTH BEAR

Sri Lanka's Sloth Bear is a unique endemic subspecies of the very same sloth bear that inhabits the Indian subcontinent. It is a little smaller in size than its Indian cousin, with shorter fur and, typically measuring six feet in length and weighing in at up to 300 pounds for a male or 200 for a female. Once found in plentiful numbers across the island, they are now in serious and significant retreat, with an estimated 500-1000 bears in the wild today. It is very solitary, living alone in the forest except for those rare moments when it seeks a mate.

7

WATER BUFFALO

The most commonly seen water buffalo in Sri Lanka are domesticated breeds such as Nili-Ravi and Murrah, and Surti, famous for its sickle-shaped horns. In the wetter parts of the country swamp buffalo can be seen with their marginally lower and heavier build and light grey colouring. All of these are feral off shoots of the native Asian wild water buffalo, now so rare on the island that is classed as Endangered. Elusive and often aggressive, it is slate grey with curved horns and a stocky body that weighs around 1,200 pounds.

8

WILD BOAR

Sri Lanka's wild boar is differentiated from its Indian cousin, with whom it coexists on the island, by a crested mane that runs from head to back, sharp features, an athletic build, more pointed head and set of ears. They can weigh up to three hundred pounds and measure five feet in length. They live right across the island – in forests, grasslands, scrublands, and farmed areas.

DISCOVER MORE

A HISTORY LIKE NO OTHER

Contrary & creative, Sri Lanka built a tropical Versailles as the West constructed in wattle & daub. When the Cold War ebbed, its own began. The Ceylon Press *History of Sri Lanka* - in eBook and Podcast - unpicks its serpentine history.

BEHIND EACH GREAT STORY

Island Stories: The Sri Lanka Podcast and the Press's *Complete Audio Books* explore the things that make Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan.

OFF PISTE

The Ceylon Press' *Alternative Guides* concern themselves with subjects and places without crowds; forgotten as they are by most academics, historians, and modern travellers.

LESS IS MORE

The Ceylon Press' *Tiny Guides* fillet the essentials of their subject from nature to history, culture to travel.

INSTANT OVERVIEWS

With their short, and readable introductions, The Ceylon Press' *Pocket Professor Very Short Introductions* illuminate Sri Lankan subjects from ancient dynasties to endemic mammals.

COMPANIONABLE LOOK-UPS

The Ceylon Press's subject *Companions to Sri Lanka* makes visible the whole island – from its arts, wildlife, & landmarks to religion, food, & history.

A LITTLE LIGHT RELIEF

And least it gets too serious, enjoy the off-grid *Jungle Diaries* blog & Podcast; and *Archaeologies*, the blank verse diaries of an occasional hermit.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Swarbrick is a publisher, planter, hotelier, hermit, and writer.

He was born in Colombo and raised, with few concessions to modernity, in India, Singapore, and the Middle East. Cornish, he gained his degrees on the Celtic fringe: at the Universities of Wales, and Stirling, prolonging an introduction to accepted working hours for as long as was decently possible.

Having worked at News Corp's HarperCollins UK as board director for various otherwise homeless departments including sales, art and marketing; and HarperCollins India, he ran Hachette's consumer learning division. Prior to this, he launched Oxford University Press's first commercial online business, Oxford Reference Online.

When the doubtful charms of boardroom bawls, bottom lines, and divas diminished, he returned to Sri Lanka, the land of his birth hundreds of years earlier, to rescue a spice plantation and set of art deco buildings that had gone feral in the jungle.

Today, as The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel, it has become one of the country's top ten boutique hotels, run by the kindest and most professional of hospitality teams; and overseen by several small schnauzers.

It also helps fund The Ceylon Press, set up to make Sri Lanka's rich and complicated story, a mystery to many, and a secret to most, more accessible. The Press' books, companions, podcasts, blogs, and guides are freely available at theceylonpress.com. The Press also publishes Poetry from the Jungle, a podcast that recasts the orthodox view of the world's best poets and poems.

ABOUT THE FLAME TREE ESTATE & HOTEL

"It's absolute paradise," wrote one guest recently; "I would fly back to Sri Lanka simply to stay in this place for a couple more days."

Centered on a 25-acre organic spice and timber plantation, The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel has been renovated and furnished with art & antiques; its healthy menus fusing street food with fine dining.

Its 1,000 high rocky hills stalled the Dutch army in 1765; and until the civil war the estate stretched over 100 acres with 3 working elephants.

Today its restored plantations grow cardamom, turmeric, ginger, cloves, pepper, cocoa; rubber, coffee, vanilla; cinnamon, coconuts - and scores of trees from ebony to sapu – best enjoyed from the vantage point of the hotel's infinity pool. Visit www.flametreeestate.com.

It also houses and funds The Ceylon Press whose books, companions, podcasts, blogs, and guides are freely available at theceylonpress.com.

A GIFT FOR READERS

As a reader of this book, you naturally qualify for special treatment should your holiday ever bring you to Sri Lanka and The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel. Simply drop the general manager a note to tell him how you came across us and to make arrangements to best suit your time and budget:

GeneralManager@flametreeestate.com