

## Three more elephants killed in Sri Lanka, bringing toll to seven

September 28 2019

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Seven elephants are believed to have been poisoned by angry villagers in Sri Lanka

Wildlife officials found three more dead wild elephants in central Sri Lanka Saturday, raising the number believed to have been poisoned by

angry villagers to seven.

The animals were found at a [forest reserve](#) near Sigiriya, a fifth-century rock fortress and UNESCO-protected [heritage site](#), police said.

"Since Friday, we have found the remains of seven cow elephants, including a tusker," police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera said.

Nearly 200 elephants are killed every year on the island, many by farmers after the animals stray onto their land.

Marauding elephants kill roughly 50 people annually, mostly when the creatures stray into villages near their habitat.

A pregnant female and a male were among the four carcasses found on Friday.

Wildlife experts and vets will carry out autopsies, said a police official in Sigiriya, north of Colombo, as they suspect the animals may have been poisoned.

Police said there had been a spate of incidents involving wild elephants storming villages and destroying crops in the area.

Killing the [animals](#) is in theory punishable by death.

Sri Lanka's elephant population has dwindled to just over 7,000, according to the latest census, down from an estimated 12,000 at the beginning of the last century.

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