

# Elephant Freedom Project Transitions to a Hands-Off Facility in Chiang Mai Thailand

*Elephant Freedom Project adopts a hands-off approach, prioritizing elephant welfare with ethical, observation-based tourism starting June 2025*

MAE WANG, CHIANG MAI, THAILAND, March 5, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Elephant](#)

[Freedom Project](#), a leading elephant sanctuary in Chiang Mai, is proud to announce its transition to a completely hands-off elephant experience starting June 2025. This change aligns with global ethical tourism standards and reinforces the sanctuary's commitment to elephant welfare and conservation.

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For years, we allowed a balanced, respectful level of interaction. We feel the time has come to be 100% hands-off while keeping all activities the same. Join us on the mahout adventure.”

*Siriporn Tanasth*

For many years, the Elephant Freedom Project has been dedicated to providing ethical and sustainable experiences for visitors while ensuring the well-being of its elephants. With this transition, the sanctuary will move towards a

model that allows guests to observe elephants in their natural habitat without direct contact, such as feeding, bathing, or touching. Instead, visitors will experience an immersive educational program that showcases the daily lives of elephants and their mahouts (traditional caretakers), offering a deeper understanding of elephant conservation and responsible tourism.

### Why the Switch to a Hands-Off Model?

The decision to transition to a hands-off facility is guided by the best practices outlined by leading wildlife and animal welfare organizations such as [World Animal Protection](#) and the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries. Research has shown that while elephants in captivity can develop a strong bond with humans, minimizing direct human interaction allows them to exhibit more natural behaviors and reduces stress.

“The future of ethical elephant tourism is about allowing elephants to be elephants without interference from humans,” said Siriporn Tanasth, owner of the Elephant Freedom Project. “We believe this change is not only necessary but a progressive step in ensuring the highest welfare standards for our elephants while providing visitors with a truly authentic and educational experience.”

## What Visitors Can Expect from the New Experience

Starting June 2025, all programs at the Elephant Freedom Project in Chiang Mai will focus on observational experiences and cultural education rather than physical interaction. Visitors can still enjoy up-close encounters, but in a way that respects the elephants' autonomy and natural behaviors. Key features of the new hands-off model include:

### 1. Observing Elephants in Their Natural Habitat

Guests will have the opportunity to watch elephants roam freely, forage for food, and interact with each other without human interference. This provides a genuine, non-intrusive way to appreciate these incredible animals while allowing them to live more naturally.

### 2. Mahout & Elephant Educational Sessions

Visitors will learn about the centuries-old bond between elephants and their traditional caretakers, the mahouts. Through guided sessions, guests will gain insight into how elephants are cared for, their unique personalities, and the challenges of elephant conservation in Thailand.

### 3. Ethical Elephant Observation Hikes

One of the new highlights will be guided hikes, where visitors can observe elephants as they explore the jungle, splash in the river, and engage in social interactions without human intervention. These hikes provide a truly natural and unscripted look at how elephants behave in the wild.

### 4. Conservation & Community Engagement

As part of the sanctuary's mission, the new program will include opportunities for visitors to support elephant conservation efforts and local communities. Guests can participate in educational workshops, learn about the Karen and Hmong tribal traditions, and contribute to reforestation and food sustainability projects for the elephants.

## The Impact of Ethical Elephant Tourism in Chiang Mai

Thailand has long been a popular destination for elephant tourism. However, growing awareness about the impact of human interaction on elephant well-being has led to a shift toward more ethical experiences. Many travelers now seek sanctuaries prioritizing animal welfare, avoiding traditional elephant rides, performances, or forced bathing interactions.

The Elephant Freedom Project has always stood for responsible tourism, and this transition to a hands-off approach cements its reputation as a sanctuary that puts the needs of elephants first. By eliminating direct interaction, the project ensures that elephants can live with minimal stress and maximum freedom, setting a new benchmark for ethical tourism in Chiang Mai.

## Voices from the Conservation Community

The decision to go hands-off has been met with enthusiastic support from conservationists, ethical travel advocates, and past visitors.

Dr. Somchai Wattanakul, a Thai wildlife veterinarian and elephant conservation expert, praised the move: "Transitioning to a hands-off model is a significant step forward for elephant tourism in Thailand. It aligns with international welfare standards and sets an example for other sanctuaries to follow."

Former guests have also shared their support. Lisa Carter, a past visitor from the UK, remarked: "I've always admired the ethical approach of the Elephant Freedom Project, and I'm thrilled to see them taking this next step. Watching elephants in their natural state is far more rewarding than touching them."

## Supporting the Hands-Off Transition

To ensure the success of this transition, the Elephant Freedom Project is launching an awareness campaign to educate travelers, tour operators, and conservation groups about the benefits of a hands-off elephant experience. Visitors who have previously participated in hands-on activities are encouraged to return and experience the new, more natural way of connecting with these gentle giants.

Additionally, the sanctuary continues to promote its 'Adopt an Elephant' program, which provides financial support for elephant care, food, and medical needs. This initiative allows supporters worldwide to contribute to the ethical treatment and long-term well-being of the elephants at the sanctuary.

Visit the Elephant Freedom Project – The Future of [Ethical Elephant Sanctuaries in Chiang Mai](#)

The Elephant Freedom Project invites travelers, conservationists, and ethical tourism advocates to visit and experience the sanctuary's new hands-off model. By choosing a no-contact elephant experience, visitors can contribute to the long-term welfare of elephants in Thailand while still enjoying a memorable, enriching, and educational journey.

## About Elephant Freedom Project

The Elephant Freedom Project is a leading ethical elephant sanctuary in Chiang Mai, Thailand, dedicated to providing a safe and natural environment for elephants. The sanctuary promotes sustainable tourism, conservation, and education through immersive, ethical experiences. By eliminating hands-on interactions, the Elephant Freedom Project continues to set a higher standard for elephant welfare in the tourism industry.

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