

Elephant gores British tourist to death

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A British tourist was gored and trampled to death by an elephant in front of his 16-year-old daughter while on a family holiday in Thailand.

Gareth Crowe, 36, had been riding on the animal with his daughter Eilidh Hughes during a trekking tour on the island of Koh Samui.

Witnesses claimed that the elephant gored its handler, named locally as Pamang, before throwing Mr Crowe and his daughter from its back. It then gored Mr Crowe as he lay on the ground before stamping on him.

His daughter, Eilidh, saw her father killed and is being treated in



ions, provoking him to hit the animal with a hooked stick. It is claimed that the elephant then gored the male guide with a tusk before rearing up, causing the British holidaymakers to fall to the ground.

After killing Mr Crowe and seriously injuring its keeper, the animal is said to have run off into the forest.

Wongsiri Promchana, the local governor, said that sources at the Island Safari Tour Company, which operated the trekking tour, had claimed that the elephant had exhibited signs of musth, a hormonal condition that triggers extreme aggression in males.

He added that the hormonal condition could have been exacerbated by hot weather.

A spokeswoman for the island's Bangkok International Hospital confirmed that the teenager was being treated for minor injuries. Mr Crowe's body was taken initially to that hospital before being transferred to a government hospital.

The charity World Animal Protection said that its thoughts were with the man's family but that the incident was a "stark reminder" that elephants were not meant to be ridden. A spokeswoman said: "Elephants are cruelly

abused to tame them enough so they give rides and perform in shows. Most tourists don't know about these abuses or the potential danger that they put themselves in. If you can ride it, hug it or have a selfie with a wild animal, then the chances are it is cruel and the animal is suffering."

A spokesman for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office said: "We are offering support to the family of a British national who has sadly died following an incident in Koh Samui, Thailand, and are making contact with the local authorities to seek further information."