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Mammals | ELEPHANT



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SCIENTIFIC CLASSIFICATION

Class: Mammalia (Mammals)

Order: Proboscidea

Family: Elephantidae

Genera: *Loxodonta* (African elephant) and *Elephas* (Asian elephant)

Species: *africana* and *maximus*

Subspecies: *Loxodonta africana africana* (African bush elephant)

Subspecies: *Loxodonta africana cyclotis* (African forest elephant)

Subspecies: *Elephas maximus indicus* (Indian elephant)

Subspecies: *Elephas maximus maximus* (Ceylon elephant)

ABOUT FUN FACTS AT THE ZOO CONSERVATION

Range: Africa and Asia

Habitat: Savanna, open woodland, tropical, and subtropical forests

Impressive elephants

They're enormous and intelligent, strong and sociable. Humans have been impressed by elephants for centuries, simply because they are so big—a male African elephant can weigh up to 7.5 tons (6.8 metric tons)! They also amaze us with their long and flexible noses, large and flapping ears, and loose, wrinkly skin. There are many stories about elephants—you've probably heard of Horton, Babar, and Dumbo. Elephants are one of the best-known animals in the world.

African and Asian

Elephants are large and gray and have big ears and long trunks, right? If all elephants seem the same to you, take a closer look. There are two elephant **species** that are usually recognized: the African elephant and the Asian elephant. There is some ongoing debate about how many **subspecies** may exist, or whether some of these might, in fact, be species in their own right. Here are a few ways to tell them apart:

- **African elephants** have large ears that are shaped like the continent of Africa, both males and females have visible **tusks**, their skin is very wrinkly, their back is swayed, and the end of their trunk works as if they have two fingers there to help them pick things up. African elephants are the largest mammals on land.

ZOO BLOGS

Endangered Pacific Pocket Mouse Relocated To Historic Range
June 7th, 2016

Rare Red Ruffed Lemur Born at the Zoo
June 1st, 2016

A Special Eggs-pertise
May 27th, 2016

LATEST TWEETS

Nature is not a place to visit. It is home. — Gary Snyder
<https://t.co/DoE6xbTgM8>
— 15 hours 35 min ago

Black & white Bakka.
#Caturday (photo: Paul Manaig)
<https://t.co/Gjc4QUCbJ7> — 1 day 20 hours ago

#Koalaifornia's newest resident had her 1st checkup. Cambee gave birth in Nov, but her joey just recently e...
<https://t.co/g4oeX9QNjq>
— 2 days 17 hours ago

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Subspecies: *Elephas maximus sumatranus* (Sumatran elephant)

- **Asian elephants** have smaller ears, usually only the males have visible tusks, their skin is not as wrinkly as African elephants', they only have one "finger" at the ends of their trunk, and their back is dome-shaped.

QUICK FACTS

Life span: Late 30s to more than 50 in the wild and in zoos

Gestation: 20 to 22 months

Number of young at birth: 1

Age of maturity: 13 to 20 years

Size: Females average 8 feet (2.4 meters) tall at the shoulder; males average 10 to 10.5 feet (3 to 3.2 meters)

Size: African forest elephant averages 8 feet tall at the shoulder

Weight: African elephant females up to 8,000 pounds (3,600 kilograms); males up to 15,000 pounds (6,800 kilograms)

Weight: Asian elephant females average 6,000 pounds (2,720 kilograms); males average 11,000 pounds

Weight at birth: 110 to 264 pounds (50 to 120 kilograms)

Size at birth: 26 to 42 inches (66 to 107 centimeters) tall at the shoulder

- Cool ears _____
- Thick skin, soft heart _____
- Tooth and tusk _____
- A unique nose _____
- The biggest of all _____
- A huge habitat _____
- Big appetites _____
- Life in a herd _____
- Catch me if you can! _____
- Sound off! _____
- Baby elephant walk _____
- Appreciating elephants _____



About

San Diego Zoo Animals

San Diego Zoo Animals (formerly Animal Bytes) is the source for facts, articles, photos, videos, sounds, and more about the wildlife that you can find at the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park, as well as animals and habitats that San Diego Zoo Global Wildlife Conservancy is working to help through conservation and research projects.

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- River, Lake, & Wetlands
- Savanna
- Scrubland
- Temperate Forest & Taiga
- Tropical Rain Forest
- Tundra

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