

Elephants

Where do elephants live?

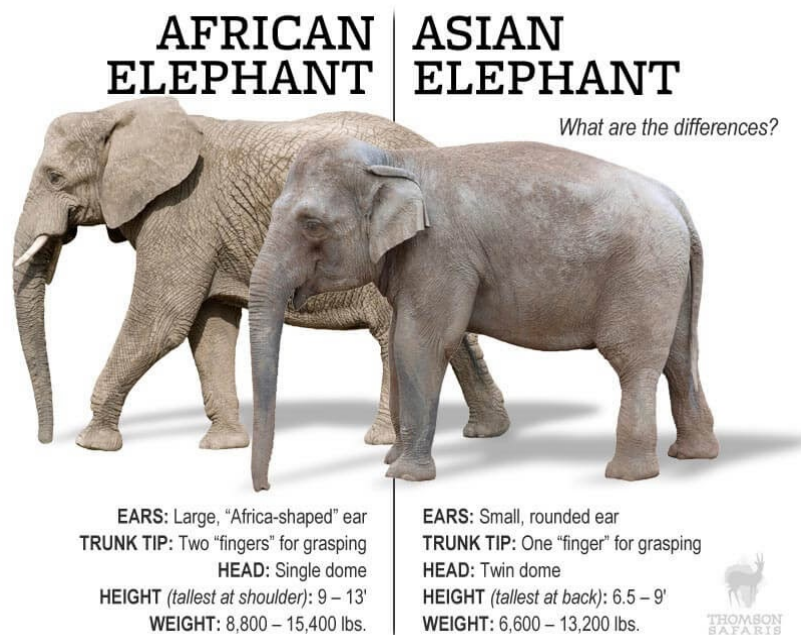
There are only three species of elephant alive today. The African bush elephant can be found throughout the grasslands of Sub-Saharan Africa. The African forest elephant only inhabits the forests of central Africa in the Congo River Basin. Asian elephants are found throughout Southeast Asia. Elephants live in family groups, typically with the females caring for the calves while the males are separated from the group.

What do elephants eat?

Elephants are grazers and typically feed on grasses, leaves and fruits, but they will also eat twigs and bark. Elephants are considered a keystone species, namely because of the wide variety of seeds they disperse through their dung.

What eats elephants?

Fully grown elephants have no natural predators. However, smaller elephants and calves are preyed upon by lions, tigers, and hyenas. The biggest threat to elephants are humans who kill the elephants for their tusks.



How do you think elephants survive?

How do elephants survive?

Trunks

The trunk is a multipurpose organ! Elephants not only have an excellent sense of smell, their long nose is like an extra arm. Elephants use their trunks to grasp leaves to eat from high up in the trees, drink water, and even use it as a snorkel. It's made entirely of muscle and can lift well over 700 lbs.



“Fingers”

Elephants have “fingers” at the tips of their trunks to grasp things and pick up small items. African elephants have two fingers, while Asian elephants only have one. Elephants are able to pick a single blade of grass or hold a potato chip without breaking it.



Tusks

The elephant's tusks are actually modified incisors (front teeth). Tusks are used for defense, protecting the trunk, and for digging. Just like how humans are left- or right-handed, elephants are either left- or right-tusked.



Ears

Elephants cannot sweat, so they lose heat primarily through their large ears. Heat is lost through the thousands of tiny blood vessels called capillaries. Elephants also have excellent hearing and can communicate across great distances.

