



[http://images.nationalgeographic.com/wpf/media-live/photos/000/004/cache/african-elephant\\_435\\_600x450.jpg](http://images.nationalgeographic.com/wpf/media-live/photos/000/004/cache/african-elephant_435_600x450.jpg)

# The African and Asian Elephants

## Two Endangered Mammals

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Winter 2013

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## Introduction

The world's largest land mammal is in danger of extinction and these gentle giants need your help! People have been killing elephants for their ivory tusks for many years, and their population became fewer and fewer. Many people think elephants are dangerous, but they are actually very gentle and kind. They deserve to live!

## Names

Elephants have several names. Their common name is elephant. The scientific name for the African elephant is *Loxodonta africana*. The scientific name for the Asian elephant is *Elephas maximus*. You probably wouldn't call elephants by their scientific names unless you were a scientist.



African Elephant

[http://bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/s2007/shah\\_rach/AfricanElephant111.jpg](http://bioweb.uwlax.edu/bio203/s2007/shah_rach/AfricanElephant111.jpg)



Asian Elephant

<http://www.animalstown.com/animals/a/asian-elephant/wallpapers/asian-elephant-wallpaper-4.jpg>



An African elephant

[http://images.nationalgeographic.com/wpf/media-live/photos/000/004/cache/african-elephant\\_435\\_600x450.jpg](http://images.nationalgeographic.com/wpf/media-live/photos/000/004/cache/african-elephant_435_600x450.jpg)



An Asian elephant

[http://www.konicaminolta.com/kids/endangered\\_animals/library/field/img/a-elephant\\_img01-l.jpg](http://www.konicaminolta.com/kids/endangered_animals/library/field/img/a-elephant_img01-l.jpg)  
[http://www.konicaminolta.com/kids/endangered\\_animals/library/field/img/a-elephant\\_img01-l.jpg](http://www.konicaminolta.com/kids/endangered_animals/library/field/img/a-elephant_img01-l.jpg)

## Description/ Unique Abilities

There are two species of elephants, Asian elephants and African elephants, and they have very different bodies. Asian elephants have small, drooping ears that look like the shape of the country they come from, which is India. Their backs rise in the middle, and they are big and have a trunk and tusks. In contrast, African elephants have very large ears that look the continent they come from, which is Africa. Their backs sag in the middle, and they have a long trunk and big tusks. African elephants are larger than Asian elephants. African and Asian elephants can't breed together because they are different species. Usually elephants are grey, sometimes with some brown. Elephants have enormous and amazing bodies.

Elephants have some remarkable abilities. Elephants can drink forty gallons of water a day! They will take showers by sucking water in their trunks and then blowing it out onto their backs. With their trunks, elephants can lift a tree, give a hug with their trunk, and even go snorkeling. Elephants can also dig and rip bark off of trees with their tusks. With their flexible trunks and their strong tusks, elephants have lots of amazing abilities.

## Habitat

Elephants are big eaters and need food, water, and a delightful habitat to survive. They need food, water, and shelter.

One of their climate requirements is warm weather, and they wouldn't be able to survive in cold weather.

Elephants are herbivores and they eat grasses, leaves, bamboo, and bark. They can eat three hundred pounds of food in one day! The elephant's habitat is wonderful and they need it in order to live.



Savanna

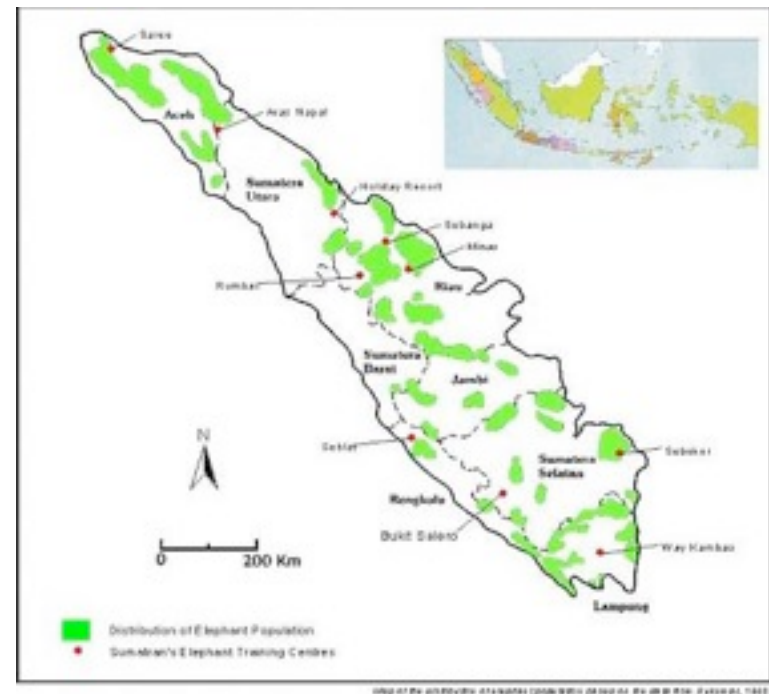
<http://media.nomadicmatt.com/africaupdate4.jpg>





## Range and Population

There used to be many more elephants, but threats have made their population go down and now they're endangered. African elephants are found in savannah zones in thirty seven countries south of the Sahara Desert. Asian elephants are found in India, China, and much of southeast Asia. There are about 450,000–700,000 African elephants left. There are about 35,000–40,000 Asian elephants. As you can see, there are more African elephants than Asian elephants.



Elephants are found in parts of Africa, Asia, and India

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/ad031e/ad031e01.jpg>



## Mating habits/ Life cycle

It is true that elephants have very unique mating habits and life cycles. Elephants mate during rainy weather and usually have one calf. They give birth once every five years. When a baby is born, it weighs more than two hundred pounds. They can live to be seventy years old. Unfortunately they can't always live that long because of their threats.



Elephants mating

[http://elephantswithoutborders.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/3L5D8002\\_1.JPG](http://elephantswithoutborders.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/3L5D8002_1.JPG)



<http://xaxor.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Funny-cute-baby-elephants26.jpg>

## Threats

Elephants have many threats that endanger them. People will build farms on the African elephant's habitat, and because of the farms, there isn't enough food for elephants to eat. Ivory poachers target the elephants with the largest tusks. Hunters will kill elephants for their skin, meat, and tusks. They use their skin for bags and shoes. It's against the law, but people kill them anyway. If people stop killing them and stop building farms on their habitat, then they wouldn't be as endangered.



People sell elephants ivory tusks.

<http://www.english-online.at/news-articles/business-economy/elephant-tusks-from-poaching.jpg>



Peppers Plants

[http://www.newgeography.com/files/koby\\_1.jpg](http://www.newgeography.com/files/koby_1.jpg)

## Solutions

Elephants might not be around very long unless you help. You can help by donating money to fundraisers. Help to protect their habitat by giving them the land they need but still have some farms. You can help save the Asian forest by not building buildings on their habitat to help the Asian elephant and raise awareness. Help to eliminate poaching elephants. Try and buy products made from legally harvested timber, instead of ivory.

Elephants desperately need our help, try helping so when your older they will still be alive.



An baby elephant with a zoo keeper

<http://www4.pictures.zimbio.com/gi/Baby+Elephant+Born+Munich+Zoo+nkkhizRLPdul.jpg>

## Conclusion

Imagine elephants gracefully eating grass in a herd not getting bothered by any poachers with open land and enough room for their habitat. Imagine them swimming and playing in the water with no problems. there still is a chance they can live like that again but they need your help before it's too late!

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