

Elephants

Found throughout various countries in eastern and southern Africa, the magnificent African Elephant is the largest land animal and is even larger than the Indian Elephant! If you're travelling in countries such as Botswana, Tanzania or Zimbabwe, you might be lucky enough to spot one in their natural habitat. Every year, these incredible mammals travel around the country, so they can find food during the wet and dry seasons.

What do elephants look like?

Did you know that African elephants are normally about 3 metres tall, which is the same as three young children standing on each other's shoulders? Incredibly, their weight can increase to roughly 5,400 kg! Normally, male elephants are larger than females but both males and females have tusks. These are large, pointed, ivory teeth. Unfortunately, poachers (someone who hunts, captures or kills wild animals illegally) kill these beautiful creatures for their tusks. Covering their bodies, they have wrinkled, grey-brown skin which has very little hair. Interestingly, African Elephants can be identified by their ears! These elephants have extremely large ears which are up to 1.5 metres long and are shaped like the continent of Africa. Scientists have found out that the elephants' ears can be used to cool them down so they don't become overheated!

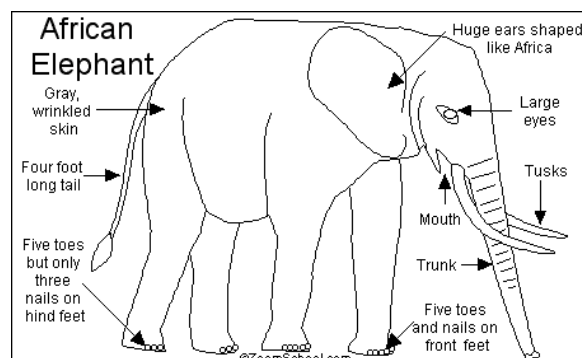
What do elephants eat?

These herbivores actually spend most of their time eating. They usually eat roots, grasses, leaves, fruit and bark and regularly eat up to 260 kg every day when they become adults. They use their tusks and trunk to get food and water. The elephant's long trunk is probably the most recognisable part of the elephant! To get water, the elephant sucks water into the trunk, then curls it towards their mouth and squirts the water into it! Elephants breathe through two nostrils at the end of their trunk, which is an extension of the nose.

How do elephants behave?

Did you know that elephants are very loyal animals? These mammals have very strong social bonds, which means they like living in herds. The females are the head of the herds and they are called cows. Occasionally, males, who are called bulls, will join the group, yet, the females remain in charge.

Elephants are in danger of becoming extinct (to die out). Although many organisations are trying to protect this amazing animal, the elephant's main enemy is man and they are in danger of extinction due to loss of habitat and poaching (they are killed for their ivory tusks).



Questions

1. Where can you find African elephants in the wild? (1 mark)

2. Why do elephants move around? (1 mark)

3. Circle the correct answer to complete each of these sentences:

d) Elephants are normally about... (1 mark)

three metres long.	four metres tall.	three children.	three metres tall.
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e) Normally, male elephants are... (1 mark)

larger then females.	smaller then females.	the same size as females.	afraid of females.
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f) Poachers sometimes kill elephants for their... (1 mark)

skin.	ears.	tusks.	tails.
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4. Answer true or false to these statements. (4 marks)

Statements	True	False
Elephants are carnivores.		
Elephants eat roots, grasses, leaves, fruit and bark.		
They eat up to 2600 kg a day.		
Elephants breathe through their two nostrils.		

5. How do elephants use their trunks to drink water? (3 marks)

6. Why do elephants live in herds? (1 mark)

7. Who is the elephants' main enemy? Why? (2 marks)



Answers

1. Where can you find African elephants in the wild? (1 mark)

Botswana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe

2. Why do elephants move around? (1 mark)

to find food during the wet and dry season

3. Circle the correct answer to complete each of these sentences:

d) Elephants are normally about... (1 mark)

three metres long.	four metres tall.	three children.	three metres tall.
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e) Normally, male elephants are... (1 mark)

larger than females.	smaller than females.	the same size as females.	afraid of females.
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Elephants are carnivores.		●
Elephants eat roots, grasses, leaves, fruit and bark.	●	
They eat up to 2600 kg a day.		●
Elephants breathe through their two nostrils.	●	

5. How do elephants use their trunks to drink water? (3 marks)

suck water up their trunks

curl it towards their mouth

squirt the water into it

6. Why do elephants live in herds? (1 mark)

because they have very strong social bonds

7. Who is the elephants' main enemy? Why? (2 marks)

Man because they kill animals for their tusks and they are destroying their habitats so they have nowhere to live.

