

## Interesting Facts About Elephants

- There are two types of elephant: the **Asian** elephant and **African** elephant.
- Elephants are the **largest** land mammal in the world. Only whales are bigger.
- Both female and male African elephants have **tusks** but only the male Asian elephants have tusks. They use them for digging and finding food.
- Female elephants are called cows. They start to have calves when they are about 8 years old and they are **pregnant for 22 months!**
- Adult eles eat up to **270 kg of food** and drink **200 litres of water** daily.
- Elephants are **herbivores**. They eat leaves, twigs, bamboo, roots, grass, vegetables, wild fruits, flowers and sugar cane.
- An elephant's **trunk** can grow to just over 2 metres long and has no bones in it. Some scientists say the trunk is made up of **100,000 muscles!**
- Elephants in the wild live to **60 or 70 years old**. In captivity they die much younger. Leading causes are arthritis and foot complications from standing on hard concrete and not getting enough exercise.
- Elephants can **swim** and use their trunk to breathe like a **snorkel**. Bathing is one of their favorite activities. What about you?
- Elephants have no known predators, except for man. Lions may prey on young or weak elephants in the wild, but the main risk is **humans poaching them** or **changing their habitat**.
- Elephants are **very intelligent** and **social** animals. It is cruel to chain them up so they can't touch each other or have only one lone elephant in a zoo.
- Elephants are **emotional**, just like us. They can feel joy, fear, excitement, anger, grief, boredom, love, loneliness and compassion.
- Riding an elephant on its back can **hurt them** because their spine curves the opposite way to a horse, which is physically suited to being ridden.



## Easy Ways to Help Elephants

- Elephants are a “**keystone**” species. Study what that means as far as their relationship with plants and other animals.
- Learn about and support organizations that **protect wild elephant habitat** and find **solutions for human-elephant conflict**. Look at the websites **savetheelephants.org** and **soselephants.org**.
- Support organizations that **stop the illegal poaching** and trade of **elephant ivory**. Check out **biglife.org** and **ivoryforelephants.org**.
- Write a letter or send an email to **zoos** that still keep elephants. Ask them to please send them to a sanctuary like The **Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee** or the **PAWS** sanctuary in California. **Lucy**, the 40 year old elephant at the **Edmonton Valley Zoo** needs your support.
- Tell your friends and family why they **should not buy ivory**, **not go to a circus** with elephants and **not ride an elephant** on their vacation.
- Celebrate **World Elephant Day** on **August 12, 2015**. Ask your teacher if your class can do a presentation to another class about why eles are special and what can be done to help save them.
- Watch the movie “**Return to the Forest**” at **worlddelephantday.org** and take the pledge to protect elephants and their homes.
- Adopt your very own baby African elephant at the **David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust** orphanage in Kenya or an Asian elephant through the **Save Elephant Foundation** in Thailand. It costs as little as \$65 a year.
- Did you know an elephant is killed **every 15 minutes** for its ivory? That is **36,000 eles a year!** At this rate, they could be extinct by 2025. Like the Facebook page **ELEPHANATICS** and **Global March for Elephants and Rhinos - Vancouver**
- Don't ride eles – play with them instead! Go to elephant sanctuaries at **saveelephant.org**, **wfft.org**, **elephantworld.org** and **elephant-soraida.com** in Thailand, and **wildlifesos.org** in India.

