

Fun Facts about Elephants

Elephants do indeed have excellent memories and can recognize faces and locations that they have not seen in years.

An African bull elephant's ear weighs about 100 lbs (45kg)!

Elephants are unique animals in that they identify and care for elephant bones.

An elephants drinks by filling its trunk with water and then pouring the water into its mouth. An elephant can hold about 4 litres of water.

Elephants have an extraordinary sense of smell, which is said to be many times more discriminating than that of a bloodhound.

Elephants are the largest living species of land animal - and they get so large by eating a diet largely made up of leafy greens!

The closest living relatives to the elephant are manatees and hippopotami - imagine those family picnics!

Elephants are members of the pachyderm family. The word comes from the Greek words for "thick skinned".

The skin of an elephant is about 4 centimeters thick.

In 1982 an attendant at the zoo in Prague reported that he had gotten some bad stains on his shirt. He sent the shirt to the laundry, but the stains were still there. On a very hot day at work the attendant took off his shirt and laid it aside. An elephant grabbed the shirt and gulped it down before he could get it back. A day or two later, when the shirt reappeared at the other end, it was still intact; and the stains were gone!



Photo by: Brian Scott - 2006

Elephants can reach speeds of over 40km/h but but they cannot jump. A ditch too wide to step across or an incline too steep to climb is a reliable barrier for elephants.

A lady's high heel has greater pressure per square centimetre than an elephant's foot!

Elephants have very large and complex brains. At an average of 4.8 kg the elephant brain is the largest among living and extinct terrestrial mammals.

The behavior of elephants both in the wild and in captivity suggests that elephants are able to use their long-term memories to "keep score" and to extract "revenge" for wrongs done.

Using their trunks as snorkels and by swallowing air to regulate buoyancy, elephants are great swimmers!