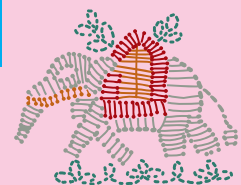
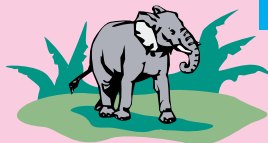
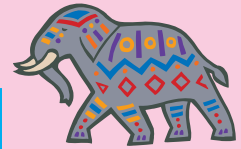
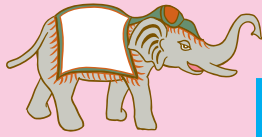


# *Are Elephants Scary?*



**By Benyapa Bakewell**



# *Are Elephants Scary?*

**By Benyapa Bakewell**

October 27, 2001

# Elephant By Benyapa Bakewell

This animal has big enormous ears and an extraordinary nose.

When he stomps it's a big scare.

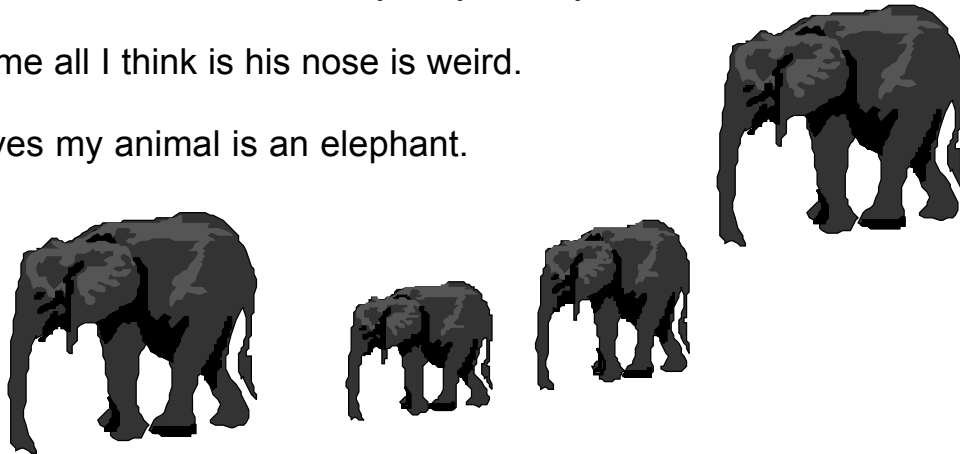
You might think he's scary but you are wrong.

You can ride him, work with him and most of all play with him.

You can think that he's scary oh yes oh yes —

But me all I think is his nose is weird.

Oh yes my animal is an elephant.



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Fighting elephant on modern Thai money

# Are Elephants Scary?

## INTRODUCTION

African and Asian Elephants are mammals of the same family called *Elephantidae*. However, although they look very similar, they are no more closely related than cats and dogs, so it would be impossible for them to have babies together. The Asian elephant's scientific name is *Elephas maximus*, and the African elephant's scientific name is *Loxodonta africana*.

Here you will learn about how tall elephants are, what foods they eat, how often they bathe, and if they have any living relatives. Last but not least, you will learn why elephants are endangered, so if you want to help save elephants you will learn how in this book.

So read this book to learn about elephants.



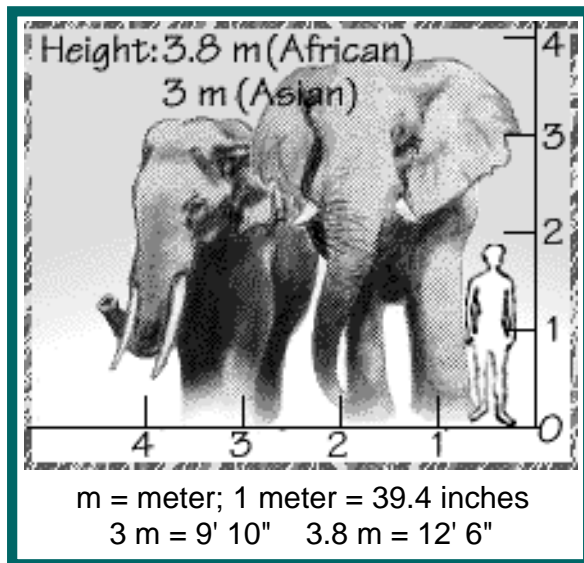
Map showing distribution of African and Asian elephants

# Are Elephants Scary?

## HEIGHT

How big is an elephant? Is it as big as a dinosaur? No, but it is the biggest land animal alive today. Actually, there are two kinds of elephants, the African elephant and the Asian elephant. The Asian elephant is a huge animal, but the African elephant is even bigger

This graphic shows a man and two bull elephants. (A male elephant is



called a bull, a female is called a cow, and a baby is called a calf.)

As you see, the African bull elephant is 0.8 meters, or about 32 inches taller than the Asian bull elephant. The Asian elephant is 48 inches, or more than one meter taller than the man.

Because elephants are so big it is hard for them to bend down to get food and water. Early elephants were short like pigs and had no trunks. As elephants grew taller and taller, they evolved longer and longer trunks.

# Are Elephants Scary?

## FOOD

How much does an elephant eat? Does an elephant eat 50 pounds a day? No, an elephant eats a *huge* amount a day. Amazingly, elephants have only four teeth. An Asian elephant can drink 40 gallons of water and eat more than 300 pounds of food, while an African elephant can drink 50 gallons of water and eat over 400 pounds of food in one day.

In the wild, elephants eat roots, grasses, leaves, fruit, and bark. Asian elephants love sugar cane and bananas! In zoos elephants eat bread, carrots and hay.



Elephants use their trunks to get food. At the end of their trunks they have gripping fingers. An African elephant has two gripping fingers, one at the top and one at the bottom of the trunk, though the Asian elephant has only one at the top of the trunk.



# Are Elephants Scary?

## BATHING

Do elephants usually bathe? Why do elephants put sand on themselves? If they can find water deep enough elephants love to bathe every day, usually in the evening. Elephants put sand on themselves for fun. They use their trunks to suck up water or sand and blow it all over themselves. When elephants swim it's very important to keep their trunks up so they can breathe. If it is an Asian elephant their trainer washes them from head to toe. If it is an African elephant they have no trainer because they are too wild to handle so they bathe themselves.



Elephants bathing in Mae Taeng, Chiangmai, Thailand



# Are Elephants Scary?

## RELATIVES

Do elephants have any living relatives? What were some of their old relatives, and what did they look like? To answer the first question, they have no close living relatives, even though almost any animal with a long nose makes people think of elephants. For example, the elephant seal has a very long nose and is even named after the elephant, but it is not a relative. On the other hand, even though the dugong and the manatee do not have long noses, they are distant relatives of the elephant.

Some of the early elephants were called Stegodon, Platybelodon, and of course the woolly mammoth. The Stegodon, which lived about 500,000 years ago, was the first true elephant, but the interesting thing is that even though he came before the woolly mammoth, the Stegodon looks very similar to elephants today. The Platybelodon you will see in the picture on the next page looks very funny. His mouth is lowered, his trunk is flat and his tusks are small. Of course you all know the woolly mammoth was covered with fur and had long curved tusks. The largest woolly mammoth was around 14 feet tall.

## Are Elephants Scary?

You would not believe it but there was once an elephant with no trunk. His name was Moeritherium (mē'ri-thē'ri-ŭm) and he lived about 50 million years ago. Perhaps this was the elephant in Rudyard Kipling's story, *The Elephant's Child*.

*In the High and Far-Off Times, the Elephant, O Best Beloved, had no trunk. He had only a blackish, bulgy nose, as big as a boot, that he could wriggle about from side to side; but he couldn't pick up things with it.*



Moeritherium



Platybelodon



Stegodon

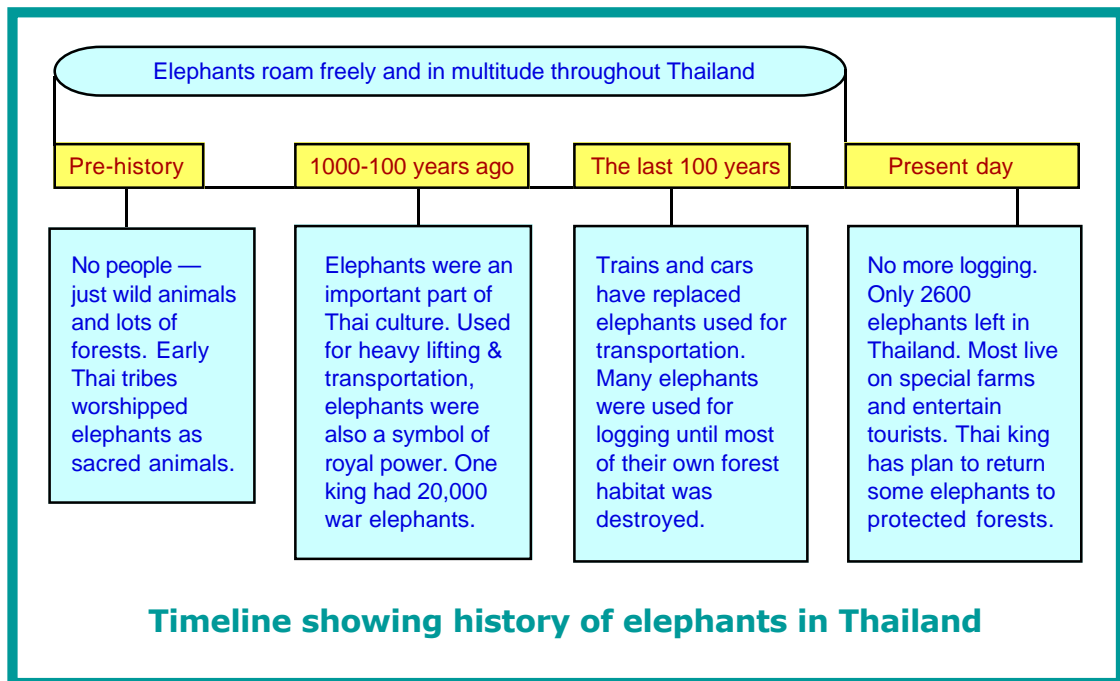


Woolly Mammoth

# Are Elephants Scary?

## How to Save Elephants

Today both African and Asian elephants are in danger because some people are killing them for their tusks to make jewelry, and other people are destroying their habitats by building farms, factories, houses, and roads. The elephants are running out of room to live.



There are three different ways I will tell you how to save elephants. One way is buy the music that some Thai elephants play because that money goes to the elephants that play the music. Their CD is called *Thai Elephant Orchestra* by David Soldier & Richard Liar. It is available from Amazon.Com.

## Are Elephants Scary?

Other elephants at the Thai Elephant Conservation Center in Lampang, Thailand, are artists, and the Asian Elephant Art and Conservation Project has sold some of their paintings at Christie's Auction House in New York.



[www.elephantart.com](http://www.elephantart.com)

Another way to help is to adopt an elephant. You don't actually bring an elephant home, you just pay twenty-five dollars a year to this foundation that helps save elephants. If you start paying for an elephant that is young right now you might even get to name him or her. You also get a picture of the elephant you adopted.

For more information you may contact:

World Wildlife Fund Thailand  
A New World for Thai Elephants  
Lampang, Thailand  
E-mail: [wwfthai@ait.ac.th](mailto:wwfthai@ait.ac.th)

# Are Elephants Scary?

## Conclusion

While I was doing this report I learned a lot about elephants that I didn't know before, like that elephants have gripping fingers. I am glad I chose to do this report on elephants; it was very exciting. I'm going to adopt an elephant and maybe our Happenin' Habitat can adopt one too! I hope you all liked the pictures and the whole report.



*Then the Elephant's Child sat back on his little haunches, and pulled, and pulled, and pulled, and his nose began to stretch. And the Crocodile floundered into the water, making it all creamy with great sweeps of his tail, and he pulled, and pulled, and pulled.*

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# Elephant Art

