

# Asian Elephant

by

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The scientific name of an elephant is *elephas maximus*. The Asian elephant's classification is mammalian. Asian elephants live in Southeast Asia, South China, Sri Lanka, and India. Elephants are found in the dense forests and grassy plains. An Asian elephant is about 9 feet tall and weighs about 10,000 pounds. Asian elephants have smaller ears than African elephants. Asian elephants have two big bumps on their forehead. The back of an Asian elephant bends up in the middle, and usually only the males have tusks. Elephants eat leaves, grass, fruit, and plant roots. The mother has one baby at a time. A baby elephant is called a calf. A calf weighs about 200 pounds when it is born. The calf drinks his mother's milk for two years. When a calf is born, each member of the herd helps to raise it. The Asian elephant is an endangered animal. Hunters shoot elephants for their tusks. Farmers kill elephants that destroy the crops they plant. The destruction of their habitat causes the number of elephants to get smaller every year. The future of elephants is up to us.



These pictures were taken in Sri Lanka by my uncle.

Facts:

1. The trunk of an elephant is the longest nose of any living animal.
2. An elephant has the largest brain of any living animal.
3. There are 40,000 muscles and tendons in an elephant's trunk.
4. The head of an elephant is the largest head of any living animal.
5. An elephant's tusks are really two teeth that grew very large.
6. For its size, an elephant can run 24 miles an hour.
7. An elephant stands on his or her tippy toes.
8. Elephants eat for almost 16 hours each day.
9. This pregnancy is the longest of any living animal.
10. An adult elephant drinks about 50 gallons of water every day.