



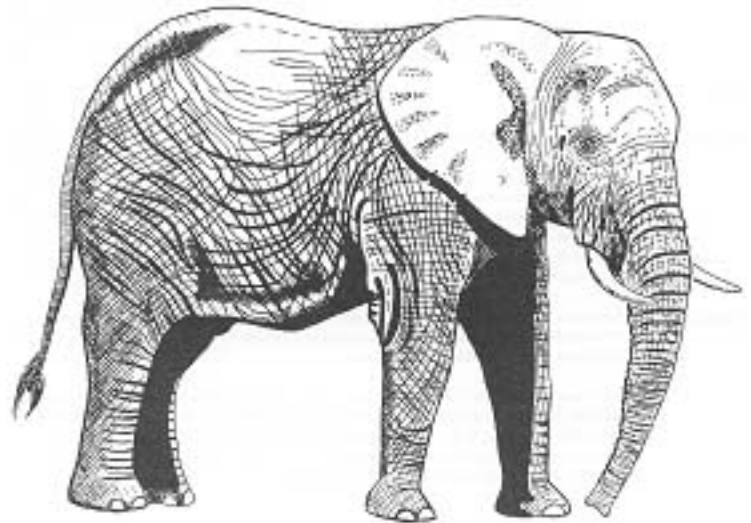
Loxodonta africana

(Blumenbach, 1797)

Common names:

engl.:	African Elephant
esp.:	Elefante africano
fr.:	Eléphant d'Afrique
de.:	Afrikanischer Elefant
ital.:	Elefante africano
kis.:	Tembo, Ndovu

Scientific synonyms: *Loxodonta cyclotis*
Loxodonta pumilio



Characteristics: *Loxodonta africana africana*

Adult:

General appearance: The largest terrestrial mammal. The outline of the back is convex, the highest points of the silhouette being the withers and the loins.

Measurements: Height at shoulder in males up to 4 m (usually 3.20 to 3.50 m), head body-length (including trunk) 6.00 to 7.50 m, tail 1.00 to 1.30 m.

Body-weight: Exceeding 7 tons in old males (15 years (Basle Zoo): 3500 kg, 18 years Basle Zoo): 4280 kg, 26 years, (Hannover Zoo): 6600 kg, record bull from Angola 12'000 kg).

Head: Large, but relatively smaller than in the Asian species. Forehead receding, sometimes with a median hump.

Trunk: Massive, with prominent transversal muscular rings. Tip with two prehensile lips.

Ears: Enormous, up to 1.50 m from top to bottom, triangular in shape, the upper edge tends to flop over with increasing age.

Tusks: Visible tusks in both sexes. Massive, curved, and forward projecting. Length up to 350 cm, weight up to 107 kg, but average much smaller and lighter.

Legs: Usually four nails on each fore foot, three on each hind foot.

Tail: With a terminal tuft of long coarse hairs. Diameter of hairs circular.

Skin: Wrinkled. Dull brownish grey, sparsely scattered with black bristly hairs.

Sexual dimorphism: Females are smaller (average shoulder height c. 2.85 m) and lighter (18 years old females at Basle Zoo: 2600, 3000, 3200 kg) than males. Tusks smaller, weight up to 18 kg, average 7 kg.

Juvenile: Weight at birth c. 110 kg, shoulder height c. 95 cm.

Distribution:

Sub-Saharan Africa: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, United Rep., Central African Rep., Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Upper Volta, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**Population:****Wild population:**

Savannah elephants: about 800'000 in 1979.

Forest elephants: The equatorial forest, covering more than one-third of the current elephant habitat, was estimated to contain at least 400'000 elephants in 1979, and possibly as many as 3'000'000.

The most important elephant populations are located in Zaire (400'000 +), Tanzania (160'000) and Sudan (130'000 +).

Captive population:

Savannah elephants are frequently kept in zoos and safari parks, and occasionally in circuses. The captive population is not self-sustaining. Outside of Zaire, there are only 6 captive forest elephants in 5 collections (year 1981).

Trade:

Less than 100 live African elephants p.a. are taken from the wild and exported mainly to USA and Western Europe. The most important exporting countries are Zimbabwe (1981/1982: 80 to USA, 19 to FR Germany, 3 to Italy) and South Africa (1980: 33 to USA, 1 to UK).

Enormous trade in ivory (minimum World imports of raw ivory in 1980: 680'000 kg), considerable trade in skins, leather articles and hunting trophies.

Loxodonta africana



Intraspecific variation: There are two clearly distinct types of African elephants (with intergradations): The **Savannah** or **Bush Elephant** (*Loxodonta africana africana*) which is divided into several subspecies by some authors:

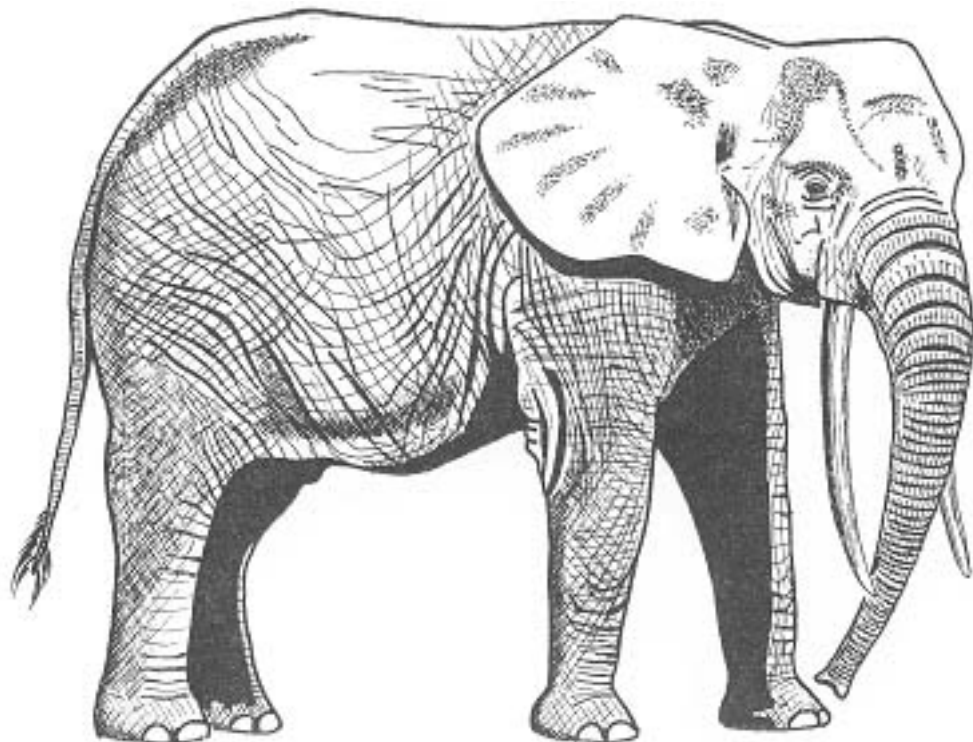
L.a. oxyotis: northern savannah,

L.a. orleansi: Somalia and Ethiopia,

L.a. knochenhaueri: eastern savannah,

L.a. africana: southern savannah;

And the **Forest Elephant** (*Loxodonta africana cyclotis*).



Loxodonta africana cyclotis

Height at shoulder: males c. 2.00 to 2.10 m, ears smaller but relatively broader than in savannah elephant. Tusks slender, rather straight, projecting downwards. Usually five nails on each fore foot and four on each hind foot. Skin smoother than in the savannah elephant. Juveniles at birth c. 76 cm shoulder height.

Similar species: *Elephas maximus* (sheet A-115.001.001.001).

Bibliography: Anonymus (1982) Elephants and Thinos in Africa. IUCN. Gland.
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Ricciuti, E.R. (1980) Th elvory War. Animal Kingdom 83, No. 1.