

PLUGGED in FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY AND ART

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This Month's Theme: BIG

BIG!!! Big Elephants! Big Differences!

By Kirsten Friar, Santa Barbara Zoo

Elephants are all the same, right? No way! Elephants are different from one another in some really BIG ways! Hey! Did you know that there are 3 different kinds of elephants: the Savanna (or African) elephant, the Forest elephant and the Asian elephant? Let's take a look at some of the BIG differences between the Savanna elephant and the Asian elephant. Read the list below, then look at the two pictures and see if you can spot all the differences between these two BIG animals!



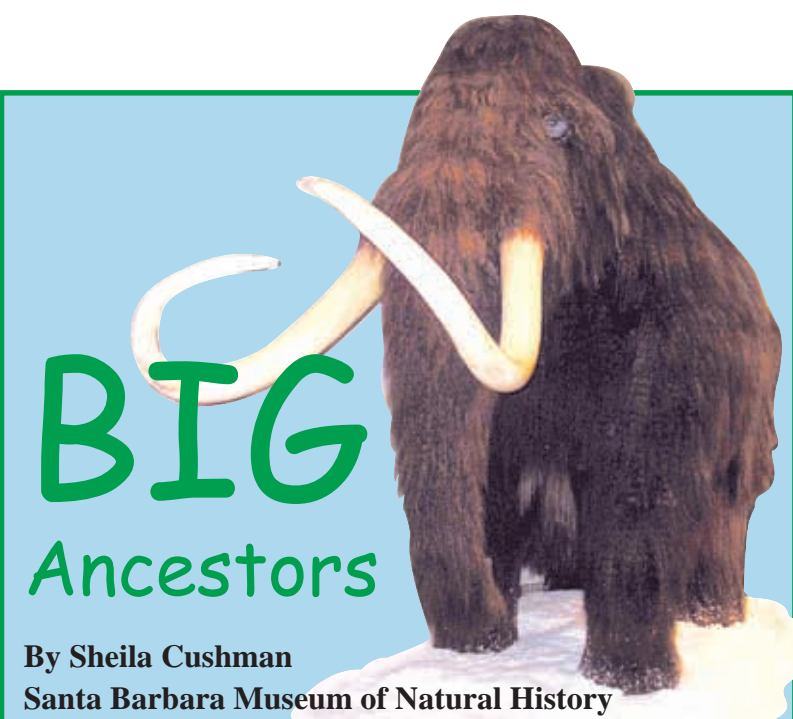
Savanna Elephant:

- Has BIG ears
- Has BIG curving tusks
- Is the BIGGEST land mammal
- Males average between ten and twelve feet at shoulder height
- Males can weigh between five and seven tons!
- These BIG elephants live mostly on the African grasslands- or savanna
- Has more wrinkly skin
- Has 2 finger-like tips on the end of it's trunk
- Darker grey color

Asian Elephant:

- Has smaller, rounder ears
- Has smaller, straighter tusks
- Males average between eight and ten feet at shoulder height
- Males weigh between four and six tons
- These smaller elephants live in the forest jungles of Asia
- Has smoother skin
- Has one thicker finger-like tip on the end of it's trunk
- Lighter grey color

Bonus question: Which type of elephant lives at the Santa Barbara Zoo?



BIG Ancestors

By Sheila Cushman
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Modern elephants like Little Mac and Susie have some really BIG ancestors. About 1.5 million years ago, the first mammoths entered North America from Eurasia. Later on, about 100,000 years ago, woolly mammoths, like the one pictured here, also ventured from Siberia to our continent.


These wild and woolly creatures stood about 9-11 feet at the shoulder and weighed about 13,000 pounds. They had long, black, shaggy fur to keep them warm in the cold climate of the Ice Age. Their huge, curving tusks were used for protection and for digging in the snow in search of food.

What happened to these giants? Woolly Mammoths went extinct 10,000 -- 11,000 years ago because they could not adapt to the sudden warming and loss of vegetation after the Ice Age. Scientists believe that hunting by early humans also led to their extinction.

To learn more, visit **BIG: Elephants, Mammoths, and More** at the S.B. Museum of Natural History this summer.

BIG websites to check out:
<http://school.discovery.com/schooladventures/woolymammoth>
<http://www.mammothsite.com>
<http://www.beringia.com/index.html>
<http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits>
<http://azkidsnet.com/elephant.htm>

 **USDA Forest Service, Los Padres National Forest**
805-968-6640; www.r5.fs.fed.us/lospadres

 **South Coast Watershed Resource Center**
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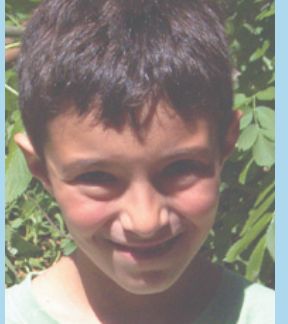
BIG Laughs

By Sheila Cushman
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Spring break campers at the Museum of Natural History share their best elephant jokes.

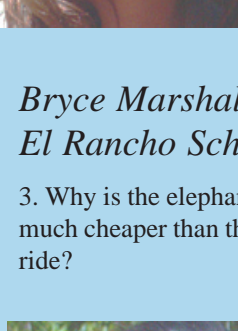
Jacob Moghtader, 9
Cold Spring School

1. Why didn't the elephant bring a suitcase on vacation?



Kavita Suri, 8
Vieja Valley School

2. Why do elephants have trunks?



Bryce Marshall, 7
El Rancho School

3. Why is the elephant ride so much cheaper than the pony ride?



Sylvia Madhow, 8
Waldorf School

4. What's big and gray with horns?



ANSWERS: 1. Because he already had a trunk. 2. Because they don't have pockets. 3. Because elephants work for peanuts. 4. An elephant marching band.

Big Challenge!

An Interview with Scott Morford, Elephant Program Coordinator

By Kirsten Friar, Santa Barbara Zoo

How long have you been taking care of elephants? I have been taking care of Susie and Little Mac, our two female Asian elephants, for 6 years.

Why do you like elephants? They are extremely smart, which makes them fun to work around, and their size! How can you not be impressed with them?

How many times a day do you feed the elephants and what do they eat? We feed them 5-6 times per day. They each get about 100 pounds of hay and a vitamin and mineral pellet made especially for elephants that weighs 8 pounds! They also get lots of cut up fruits and vegetables to reward them when trained. And 3 times a week they get fresh browse, which consists of tree branches or bamboo.

How strong are they? Weighing about 10,000 pounds and standing about 8 feet tall at the shoulder, they are very strong. They can lift 1,000-2,000 pounds with their trunk and can move objects weighing several tons.

Do they need any special care? Yes! They need regular mental and physical stimulation. They need foot care. We trim the pads and nails of their feet. They get baths every day to keep their skin clean. We give them daily physical exams for their health. They also get LOTS of exercise, walking laps for 1-2 hours a day.

What is the biggest challenge working with the elephants? Trying to get them to eat their vitamin pellets. It's like trying to get kids to eat their vegetables. It's hard!

What is the biggest thing about them to you? Their POOP!

What is something most people don't know about elephants? Most people aren't aware of how endangered Asian elephants are in the wild.



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