

Some Facts About Elephants (Part 2)

(Story words: never, smart, forgets)

Elephants have the biggest brains of any land animal and are about as smart as dolphins. People who investigate the lives of elephants have seen many things that display how quick-witted and wise they can be.

There is an old saying, “An elephant never forgets,” and it is true that elephants recognize humans or other elephants that they have not seen for many years. They also can recall where watering holes might be, even when they have not been near that spot in a long time.

The fact that elephants have long life spans of 50-70 years might help them to be wise. The oldest female most often leads the group. With luck, she and the other old females may recall many useful things.

Elephants have strong feelings, the way humans do. An elephant knows when another elephant is feeling glum. It will react by stroking the sad pal with its trunk. And, they respond to the bones or skulls of other elephants with what looks like sadness.

It is rare for elephants to stay in one spot for long; but, when elephants see the remains of another elephant, they may stand near those remains for hours, while stroking the bones or skulls with their trunks or feet. When they see the bones of a non-elephant, they do not act this way. They have holes above their eyes that shed tears when they are stressed or have strong feelings.