



# GENTLE GIANTS: ASIAN ELEPHANTS



**\*\*Activities are bolded in each section for quick reference.\*\***

**Coding for Conservation:** Asian elephants are endangered, with only 30,000-50,000 individuals left in the wild. One of the biggest threats to their species' survival is habitat loss - even if it's only part of their home habitat and not the whole thing (also called fragmentation). The Cincinnati Zoo has teamed up with conservation groups, using creative coding to raise awareness of how to help save these gentle giants.

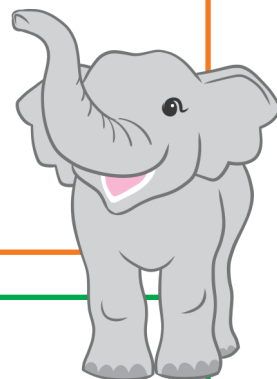
**Adults: check out their [game](#), *Harmony: Heroes of Elephantia* (available free in the Google Play store). Girls can also come up with their own idea for a game to teach others about Asian Elephants!**

Learn all about Asian elephants as you complete this fun patch!  
(*Daisies and Brownies complete 3.*  
*Juniors through Ambassadors complete 4.*)

## Artists at Heart:

Elephants are very smart and creative! They use their trunks like we use our hands - to grasp, move, and pick-up things. In zoos, elephants can do tasks and activities to work their brain and trunks, just like they would in the wild. One activity trainers often introduce is painting!

**Make an elephant painting of your own!** Hold your arm all the way out like a trunk and try to paint. Use your own paints or use [these](#) recipes for paints made from nature materials.



## Elephant Virtual Programs:

Join us for one or both of our virtual programs about Asian elephants!

- **[Elephant Habitat and Adaptations](#)**  
(Daisy/Brownie/Junior)  
*Saturday, Nov 16 11:30 AM-12:30 PM*  
Elephants can be found in tropical rainforests, grasslands and even deserts. How can they survive in all of these places? They have adaptations that help them thrive in wild spaces. Let's explore some of the unique features of elephants to understand the concept of adaptations using elephants as a case study.
- **[Elephant Conservation](#)**  
(Cadette/Senior/Ambassador)  
*Saturday, Nov 16 10:00 AM-11:00 AM*  
Learn about The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee and how they contribute to elephant conservation! Discuss how you can get involved with conservation and get important tips for getting a project started in your own community!

## Alaska's Own Asian Elephant:

Did you know that the Alaska Zoo in Anchorage had an Asian elephant? Annabelle was brought as a young elephant to Alaska in 1966 and she quickly became a driving influence for the creation of the Alaska Zoo that opened its gates only three years later. In 1990, a new trainer introduced Annabelle to painting as a form of mental exercise. While Annabelle is no longer at the zoo, her presence lives on.

## Choose one activity:

1. Visit the Alaska Zoo and see if you can find all of Annabelle's paintings!
2. Read the book [Mukluks for Annabelle](#)





### **Boggling Behavior:**

Like all animals, Asian elephants have specific ways of moving, playing, communicating, and finding food. Most behaviors are designed to help that species survive.

Play **Elephant Behavior Bingo** while watching one of the live elephant cameras below! Which behaviors do you think they learned from other elephants? Which do you think are *innate* (born with it)?

[Houston Zoo \(live cam\)](#)

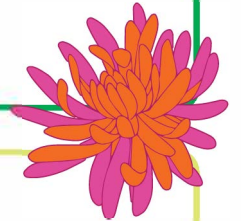
[Smithsonian Institute National Zoo \(live cam\)](#)



### **Ancient Relatives:**

The Asian elephant is the closest living relative to the Woolly Mammoth! Did you know that skeletons between related animals look very similar to each other? Thanks to some very well-preserved Woolly Mammoth remains, paleontologists (scientists that study fossils) have been able to look at their bone structures to better understand their connection.

**Check out this paleontology matching activity featuring [Mastadons](#) (another ancient relative of the Asian elephant)!**



**Local Delicacies:** India is home to the largest population of Asian elephants, where they have the greatest range of ideal habitat (or environment) left. Of the 30,000-50,000 elephants left in the wild, at least 50% of them live in countries like Karnataka and Kerala on the Indian subcontinent, with some also living in Sri Lanka.

**Try making an Indian-inspired recipe with your family!** Lentil-based dishes like [Dal Bhat](#) are a good place to start, or you can find another recipe that sounds good.

### **Listening with Their Feet:**

Low frequency sound waves (like the sound of car traffic) travel long distances - much farther than a voice could carry. Elephants communicate to each other over long distances by making low frequency sounds that vibrate through the ground. Their feet are very sensitive to these vibrations.

**[Check out](#) what ecologist Caitlin O'Connell-Rodwell has to say about this amazing ability. Then try making a [DIY cymatics \(vibrations\) machine](#) to help you see what different sounds look like!**

Questions? Contact the program team at [program@girlscoutsalaska.org](mailto:program@girlscoutsalaska.org).

Order your patches online here:

<https://www.cognitofirms.com/>

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