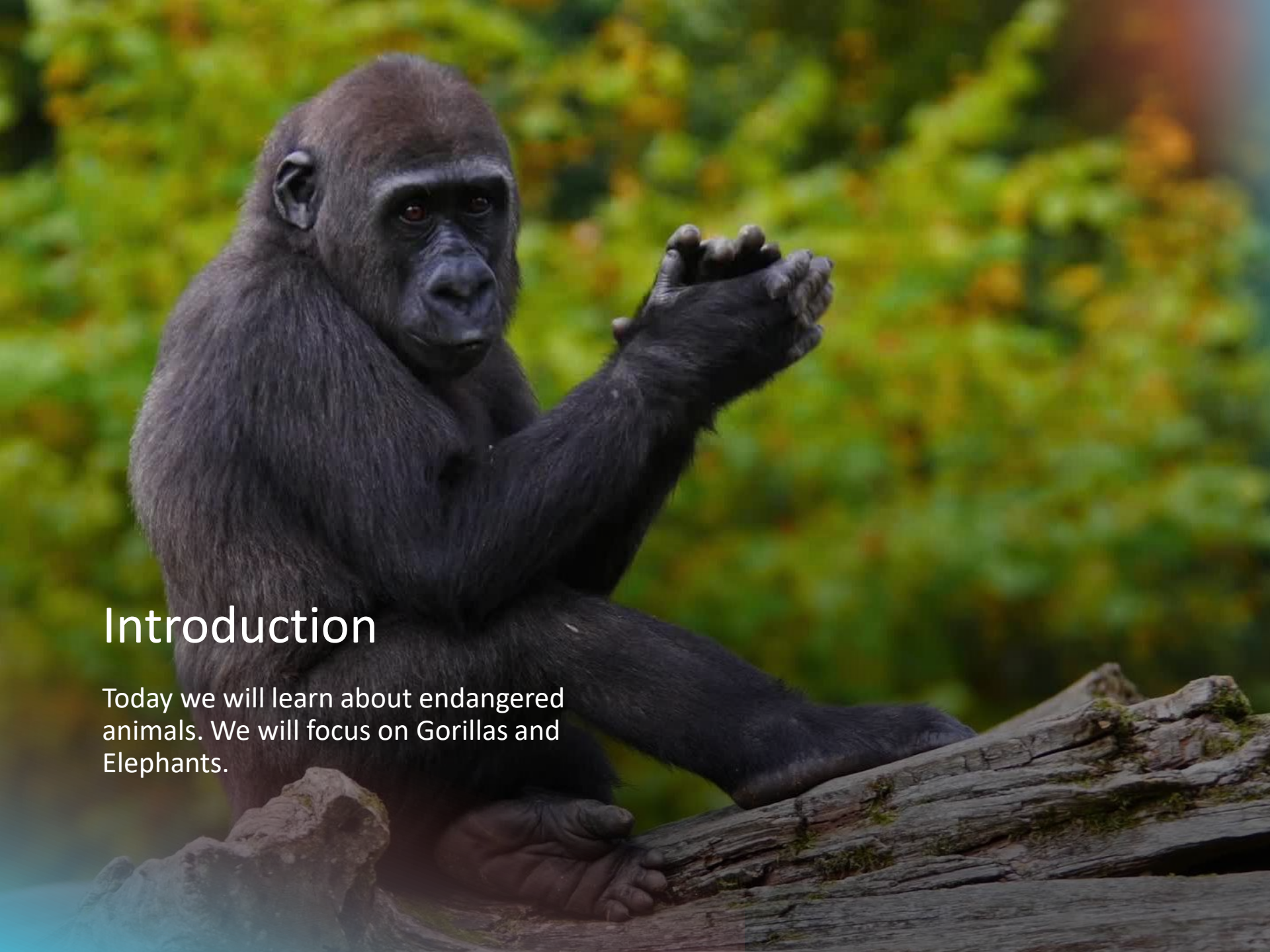


# Endangered Animals





A photograph of a gorilla sitting on a large, mossy log in a lush, green forest. The gorilla is looking towards the camera with its hands clasped together. The background is filled with out-of-focus green foliage.

# Introduction

Today we will learn about endangered animals. We will focus on Gorillas and Elephants.



# Gorillas

- **Gorillas, the largest primates, are found in Africa and live in diverse forest environments. There are two species: western and eastern gorillas, with each having distinct subspecies. They are highly social animals, living in family groups led by a dominant silverback male. Gorillas primarily eat plants, including shoots, roots, vines, and fruits.**



# Classification and Distribution

- Gorillas belong to the genus *Gorilla* and are divided into two species: western and eastern. Eastern gorillas are further divided into two subspecies: the mountain gorilla and Grauer's gorilla. Gorillas are endemic to Africa, meaning they are only found on that continent.

# Physical Characteristics

- Gorillas are the largest primates, reaching heights of up to 6 feet and weighing up to 600 pounds. They have long, strong arms and relatively short, stocky legs. Male gorillas have a bony crest on top of their head, and their chest is very thick and strong. They have black hair, except for their faces, hands, and feet.

# Social Structure and Behavior

- Gorillas live in family groups, known as troops or bands, with a silverback male as the leader. These groups can range in size from a few individuals to over fifty. They communicate using a variety of vocalizations, body language, and facial expressions. Gorillas exhibit a range of emotions, including laughter and sadness.

## Diet and Habitat

- Gorillas are primarily herbivores, consuming a variety of plants, including roots, shoots, vines, leaves, and fruits. They live in a variety of rainforest environments in central and eastern Africa.

# Conservation Status

- All gorilla species are endangered or critically endangered. The mountain gorilla is particularly rare. Conservation efforts are underway to protect gorilla populations from threats like habitat loss, disease, and poaching.



# Intelligence and Cognitive Abilities

- **Gorillas are known for their intelligence and have been observed using tools. Koko, a captive gorilla, even learned sign language. They are also capable of problem-solving and exhibit complex social behaviors.**



## Elephants

- There are three different species of elephant – the African Savannah elephant, the African Forest elephant and the Asian elephant. Elephants are known for their large ears, tusks made of ivory and their trunks.





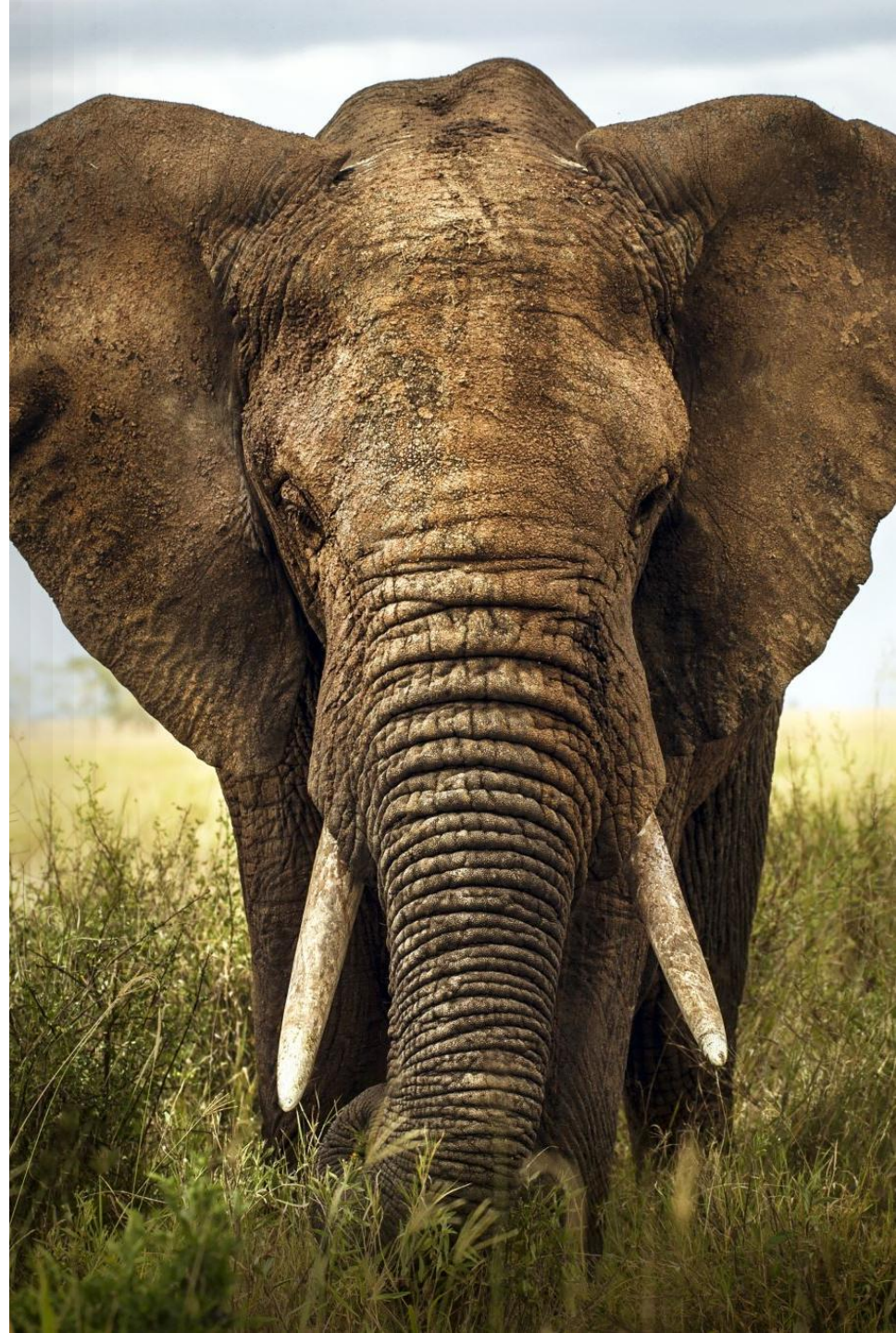
## Physical Characteristics

- **Elephants are the world's largest land animal! Male African elephants can reach 3m tall and weigh between 4,000 - 7,500kg. Asian elephants are slightly smaller, reaching 2.7m tall and weighing 3,000–6,000kg.**



# Ears

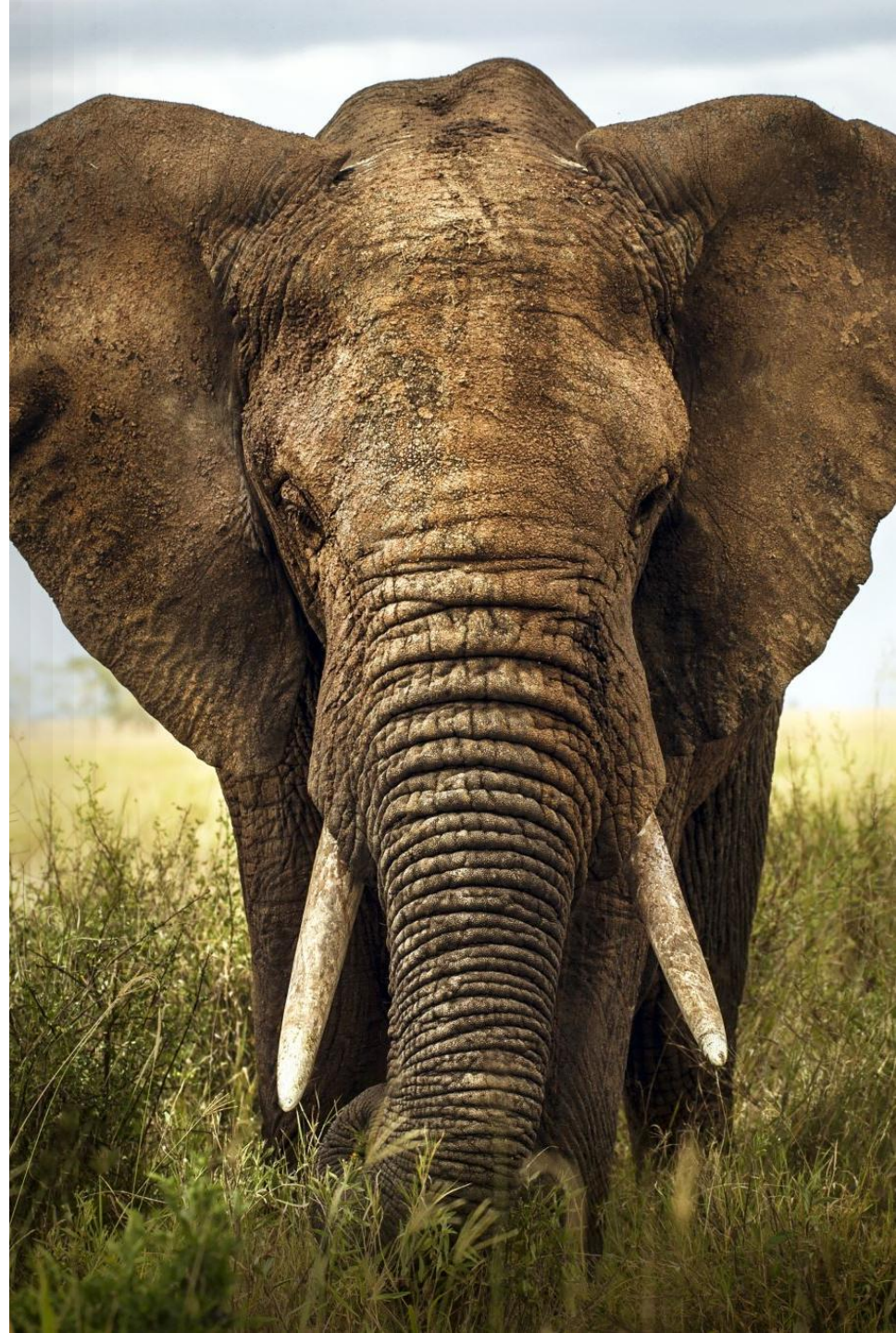
- **There's an easy way to tell the African elephants apart from their Asian cousins – their ears! African elephants have large ears shaped like the continent of Africa! Asian elephants' ears are smaller and shaped like India. Cool, huh?**





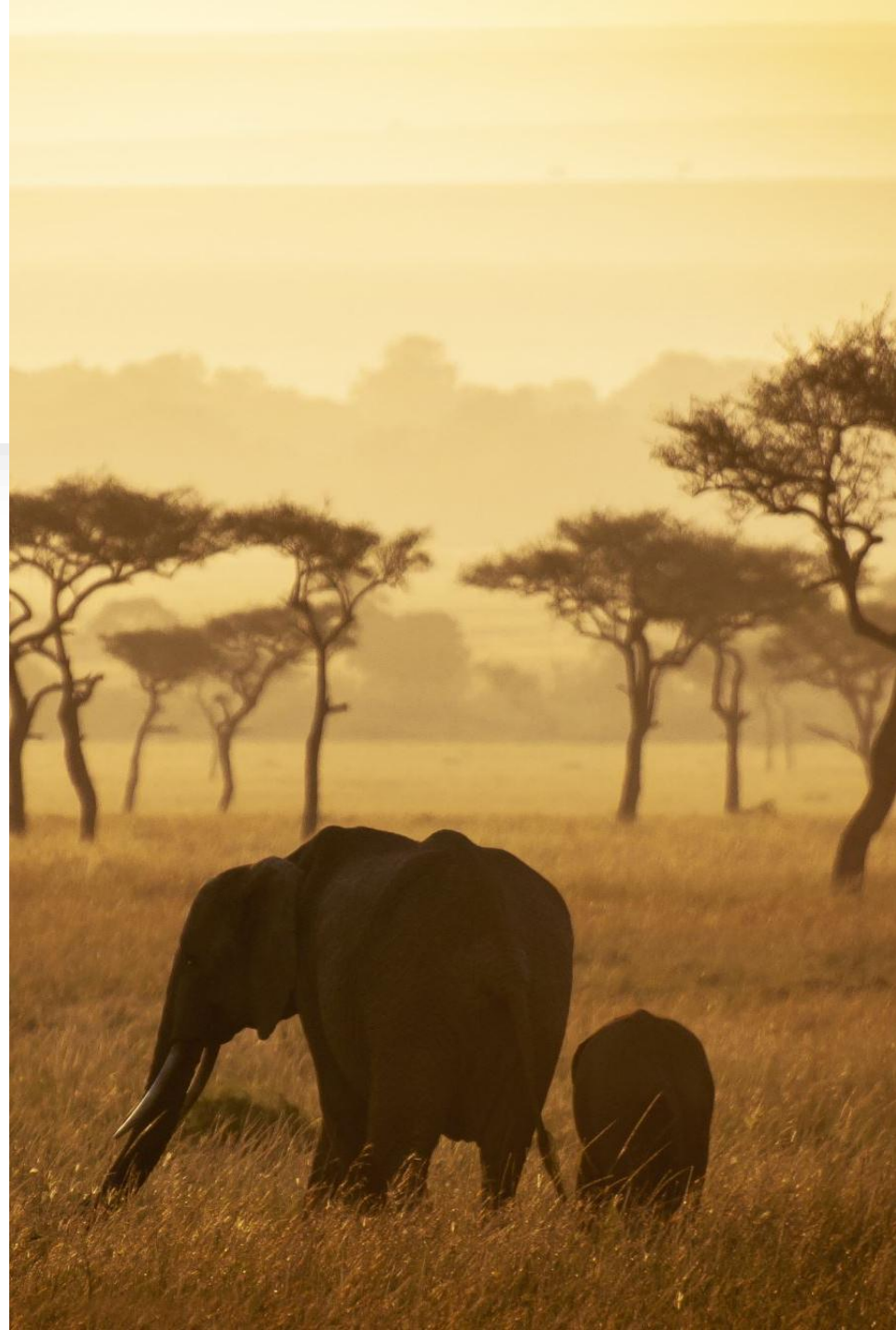
# Tusks

- You can tell a lot about an elephant by looking at their tusks! Elephant tusks never stop growing, so enormous tusks can be a sign of an old elephant. Both male and female African elephants grow tusks, but only male Asian elephants grow them. A tusk-less adult elephant is likely to be a female Asian elephant.



# African Forest Elephants

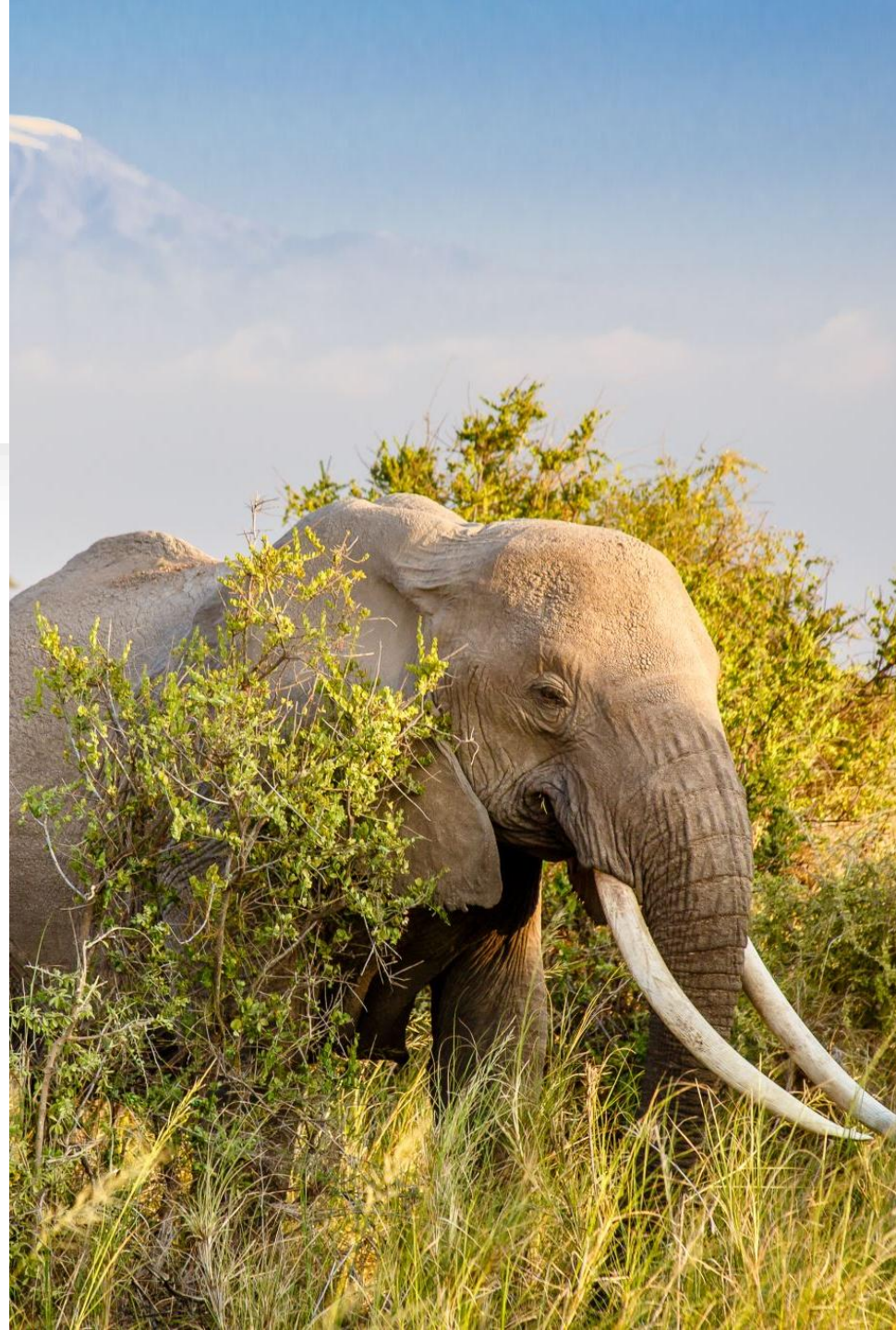
- Until recently, African Forest elephants were thought to be a subspecies of the African elephant, but new research discovered that they are actually a separate species entirely. These elephants live in the tropical forests of Africa's Congo Basin. They have straighter tusks and more rounded ears than Savannah elephants.





# Diet and Habitat

- **Elephants spend between 12 to 18 hours eating grass, plants and fruit every single day! They use their long trunks to smell their food and lift it up into their mouth – yum!**



# Impact on Environment

- **Elephant**  
All that eating means one thing, gang, an awful lot of poo! Each elephant creates about one tonne of poo per week, which keeps the soil fertile and disperses tree seeds. Elephants also dig waterholes and create footpaths, literally changing the landscape around them!

# Salt Mining

- In Mount Elgon National Park in Kenya, a group of elephants use their tusks to mine for salt in underground caves! They feel their way around with their trunks and eat the salts by breaking them off with their tusks.





# Sunscreen

- Elephants have created their very own sunscreen! After a river or swamp bath, they'll throw mud and sand up and over themselves to protect their skin from the hot, burning sun. Clever!

# Conservation Status

- Sadly, elephants are in trouble. Many are killed by humans for their ivory tusks, because they've come into conflict with communities or simply for sport. There are far fewer Asian elephants than there are African elephants. Asian elephants also face threats from tourist attractions where people pay to ride on their backs or watch them paint pictures using their trunks.



# Task Instructions

- Create a fact file about Gorillas or Elephants. Include information about their classification, physical characteristics, social structure, diet, conservation status, and intelligence.



# Conclusion

- Endangered animals like Gorillas and Elephants need our help. Let's learn more about them and find ways to protect them.