



The Heart of The Herd

Out of curiosity, who's the boss in your household? Are they a woman (eg. Your mom or your grandma) or are they a man (eg. Your dad or grandpa)?

Some of you might say that your dad is the boss, but in fact research states its more commonly women.

I'll let you in on a not-so secret secret, elephants are most commonly lead by a female aswell, we call them the Matriarchs.

But in a herd of elephants there are generally about 10 individuals, with merged clans having up to 70 members. So how do they decide whos in charge? It's quite simple actually, they just choose the oldest female.

Yes, that does infact mean that grandma elephant, with all her years of wisdom and experience, is the boss of the herd.

Giant Hearts

It's a rainy summer afternoon and you have to walk over 10 blocks to get home from school, how does that make you feel? What

about if the sun was shining and there wasn't a cloud in sight?

These are what we call emotions, sadness and happiness being the most common but there are so many More.

Empathy, as defined by google, is the ability to understand and share the emotions of another. So if you and I were in a room together and you felt sad, my ability to relate with you and share your sadness would mean i'm being empathetic.

Elephants are known to be one of the most empathetic creatures in the animal kingdom. The ability to be selfless, supportive and compassionate is why we sometimes refer to elephants as "gentle giants"

An example of elephant empathy is when another elephant is in distress, other elephants will actually try to calm them down by touching them with their trunk, or vocalizing using deep rumbling sounds.

An example of elephant empathy is when another elephant is in distress, other elephants will actually

try to calm them down by touching them with their trunk, or vocalizing using deep rumbling sounds.

Did you know elephants even grieve their dead? Though this seems normal to us humans, this is actually very uncommon in the animal world.

On a brighter note, they also celebrate new life. The birth of a baby elephant is an exciting experience for elephants. Ever heard the saying "it takes a village"? Well elephants are a prime example of it, they all work together to raise the young. It's a herd responsibility, not just the mothers.

Long Live The Matriarchy

Ivory is a white material that comes from tusks and teeth of animals, the primary source for this is elephants. Its extremely valuable and also extremely rare, rarer than money or gold in fact.

Rarity increases value and value increases the market price. Because it's not a commonly found material there is a lot of restrictions on the acquiring of it. Because this is a animal byproduct, this means

restricting hunting on animals that can be harvested for ivory.

Because of the restrictions, there tends to be a lot of illegal hunting, more commonly referred to as poaching. These poachers then sell the ivory on a black market for insane profit.

In todays world after years and years of people killing these animals for trophies or rare materials, the number of elephants in the wild decreases significantly every year. For example the number of African Elephants estimated to exist on the planet in 1998 was 750,000, but in 2003 this number was estimated to have dropped a whopping average of 350,000

This is extremely worriesome for the future of this magnificent species. Think of the biggest animals you know of on this planet, there sure isn't many is there?

We need to prioritize conservational efforts to increase the population otherwise they are at risk of becoming extinct in the relatively near future, what a tragedy.

Neck-staordinary Giants

Image by Annabel_P from Pixabay



Pressure Point

Giraffes are known as the tallest land animals in the world, and they have incredibly long necks. Because their necks are so long, their hearts and brains are positioned far apart from each other. The heart has a very important job: it pumps blood to all the organs in a body, whether that's a human or another animal. The brain, on the other hand, needs that blood to function properly, almost like using it as a power source.

To understand how this works, imagine you are trying to push a heavy rock high into the sky. The further you want to lift it, the harder you have to push against the force of gravity pulling it down. Now think about how blood needs to travel all the way up a giraffe's long neck to reach its brain. To make this possible, giraffes have developed a special way of managing their blood flow. They have much higher blood pressure than any other land animal, which helps ensure that blood reaches their brain effectively.

Catching Some Z's

When you look at the savanna in Africa, you'll see many predators that hunt giraffes because they provide a lot of food. For example, just one giraffe could feed a pride of lions for several days! Given this danger, giraffes have adapted in an interesting way: they need very little sleep to stay alert and safe.

Giraffes typically require only about 30 minutes of sleep each day. Even more remarkable is that they usually sleep in short bursts, often lasting just 5 minutes at a time. Sometimes, they even keep their eyes slightly open while resting, which helps them stay aware of their surroundings.

In places where giraffes are kept in captivity, where there are no predators to worry about, they can relax a bit more. In these safe environments, giraffes have been observed sleeping for up to 4 hours, allowing them to rest more comfortably without the constant threat of danger.

Grazers of the Savanna

One of the primary roles of giraffes is that they are exceptional eaters. Their long necks allow them to reach high branches and leaves that many other animals cannot access. By eating these leaves, giraffes help control the growth of trees and bushes in their habitat. This grazing keeps the savanna open, allowing sunlight to reach the ground and promoting the growth of a variety of plants.

Their feeding habits also create opportunities for other animals. When giraffes pull down branches, they may knock down leaves and fruits that fall to the ground, providing food for smaller animals. This means that giraffes support a diverse range of wildlife in their ecosystem.

Seed Dispersers

Giraffes also play an important role in seed dispersal. As they munch on leaves and fruits, they often consume seeds as well. These seeds can pass through their digestive system

and be deposited elsewhere in their droppings. This process helps to spread plant life across the savanna, promoting biodiversity. New plants can grow in different locations, which is essential for a healthy ecosystem.

Towering Heights

The most noticeable feature of giraffes is their height, which can reach up to 18 feet! This allows them to access leaves and fruits high in trees that many animals cannot reach. Their long legs and necks give them an advantage in finding food.

Long Necks and Specialized Bones

A giraffe's neck can be up to 6 feet long, yet it has the same number of vertebrae as a human neck—seven! Each vertebra is elongated, helping them graze on treetops while maintaining balance. Their necks can also bend down to drink water, an important survival skill.

U.S. \$4.95 (CANADA \$6.95)



Fall 2024

Issue 21

4KIDS

Guardians Of Africa

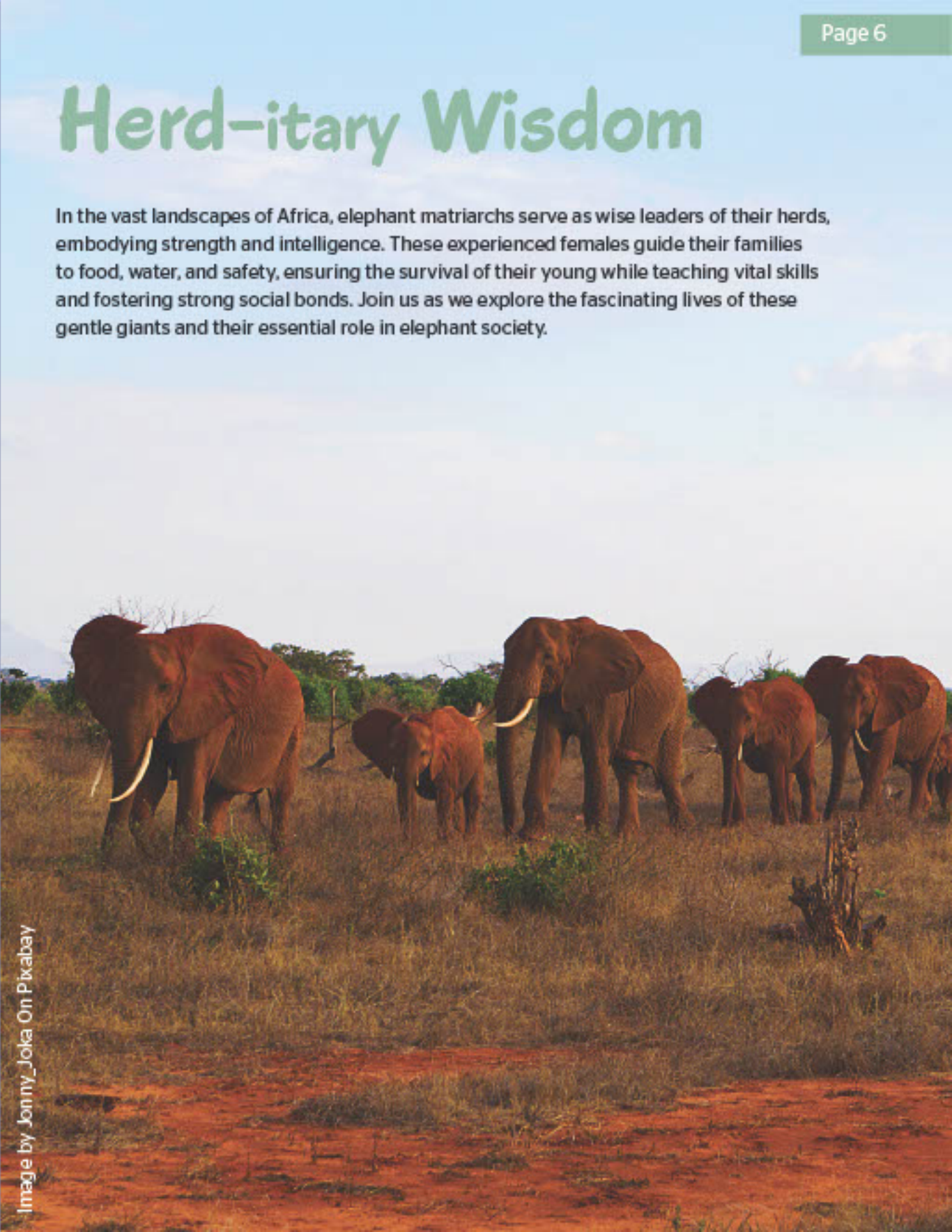
**Neck-traordinary
Giraffes Dive** INTO
A WORLD WHERE YOU VIEW
EVERYTHING FROM ABOVE.

**Herd-itary
Wisdom** WHAT ROLE
DOES THE ELDEST FEMALE
PLAY IN A HERD OF
ELEPHANTS?

Herd-itary Wisdom

In the vast landscapes of Africa, elephant matriarchs serve as wise leaders of their herds, embodying strength and intelligence. These experienced females guide their families to food, water, and safety, ensuring the survival of their young while teaching vital skills and fostering strong social bonds. Join us as we explore the fascinating lives of these gentle giants and their essential role in elephant society.

Image by Jonny_Joka On Pixabay



Departments & Features

The Straw that broke the camels back
Pages 3-4

A Day in The Life
Pages 5

Herd-itary Wisdom
Pages 6-8

Neck-traordinary Giraffes
Pages 9-11

Junior Ranger Report
Pages 13

Predator's Paradise
Pages 14-16

Jungle Gym Antics
Pages 17-18

Where's Leo the Lion?
Pages 19

Crocodile Crossword
Pages 20

Hippocrritical
Pages 21-23

Endangered Species Ranks
Pages 24

Horns of Resilience
Pages 25-26

Conservation Chronicles
Pages 27

Volume #10, Issue #89 of
Guardians of Africa Kids Magazine
806 Cheriton Dr, 4180
Scottsburgh, Southern Africa

Neck-traordinary Giraffes Pages 17-19

*Dive into a world where you view
everything from above.*

Photo by David Atkins on Pexels.com



Credits

Editor In Chief:

Kwame Adjei

Contributing Writers:

Maria Gonzalez

Youssef El-Sayed

Fatima Nguyen

Proof Reader:

Dominique Lefebvre

Front cover Photo:

Filip Olsok on pexels.com

Herd-itary Wisdom

Pages 17-19

*What role does the eldest female
play in a herd of elephants?*

Photo by Wladimir Kühne on Pexels

Visit us at: www.guardiansofafricakidsmag.com

Phone: 123-456-789

Email: guardiansofafricakidsmag@gmail.com

Facebook: [@guardiansofafricakidsmag](https://www.facebook.com/guardiansofafricakidsmag)

Instagram: [@guardiansofafricakidsmag](https://www.instagram.com/guardiansofafricakidsmag)





“

These tongues are perfect for grasping leaves and are highly dexterous. Their dark color helps protect against sunburn, allowing them to feed comfortably under the sun.

Prehensile Tongues

One fascinating feature is their long, prehensile tongues, measuring up to 20 inches. These tongues are perfect for grasping leaves and are highly dexterous. Their dark color helps protect against sunburn, allowing them to feed comfortably under the sun.

Unique Patterns

Giraffes are known for their distinctive coat patterns, which vary in color and shape. These patterns provide camouflage in the dappled light of the savanna, helping them blend into their surroundings and evade predators. Each giraffe's pattern is unique, much like human fingerprints.

Long Legs and Hooves

Giraffes have long, sturdy legs that allow them to run quickly, reaching speeds of up to 37 miles per hour over short distances. Their wide, tough hooves provide stability on uneven ground.

