

The two species of elephants

[Environment](#), [Animals](#)



In the present day there exists two species of elephants. These two species have many relatives that have come before them and died out. Several of these species are Paleomastodon, Deinotherium, Gomphotherium, Primelephas which is a direct ancestor to the modern day elephant, Stegodon, American mastodon, and woolly mammoth. All of these species are considered Proboscidea which are mammals that have trunks "proboscidea encompasses the trunked mammals" (J.

D. Illiger). Within the Proboscidea family there consists the Elephantidae, which elephants would be considered. There are many different types of elephants due to where the species was located and the types of plants in which they ate. The earliest common ancestor of all elephants was the Paleomastodon which originated in Africa about 36-35 million years ago. It was a small mammal that had a trunk and it evolved into the many different species of elephant.

One of the first species that adapted from the Paleomastodon was the Deinotherium which lived in Africa and had tusks that pointed downward which helped it scrape bark from a tree. It also had a small brain which scientists believe is responsible for its extinction due to lack of intelligence compared to other species. Gomphotherium is another species of elephant that lived in the Americas, Europe, and Asia and originated about 13 million years ago. It lived in swampy lake areas and marshes.

This species had long tusks and a short trunk which was adapted to help it dig through mud to find aquatic vegetation. Stegodon which was the largest of all the species of elephants grew to its size due to abundance

offoodthat it would find in the parts of asia in which it lived. Most of them died out hundreds of thousands of years ago except for a subspecies that lives in Indonesia on an Island of flores. This subspecies was smaller than the other species since it was secluded on an island and did not have access to as much food.

The American Mastadon was found in the Americas and was a fur covered species of elephant, to help protect it from the colder climates, that was hunted into extinction by humans about 10, 000 years ago. Primeelephas is a direct genus to the modern day elephant and originated in Africa about 23 million years ago. It evolved into three new species the Woolly mammoth, African elephant, and Asian elephant. The woolly mammoth lived in most places in the northern hemisphere and was covered in a coat of fur due to the cold climates in which it lived.

It lived through the last ice age and died out at the end of it due to hunting and the quickclimate change. The two living species of elephant left are the African elephant or loxodonte and the Asian elephant or elephas. These two species are very similar except that the Asian elephant has an arched back while the t Of2 KS OT tne ATrlcan elephant. Delgrosso 3 ATrlcan elepnants Dack Is relatively stralg an tne longer tus All species of animals must adapt to survive. It is through these adaptations that ifferent species arise.