

# Parental behavior, elephant with babies, Serengeti, Tanzania



**Picture Caption:** Elephant female and young, Serengeti National Park, Tanzania. Elephants form close-knit, long-lasting family groups consisting of adult females and young of both sexes. The tiny elephant under the large female is probably less than a year old and her baby. The other young elephant might be hers as well, or might be the offspring of another female in the group. Because females stay with their matriarchal clan, mothers and daughters may live together for several decades. African elephants have a gestation period of 22 months, their babies weigh approximately 120kg (~270lbs) at birth, and they may nurse their young for 4-5 years. Given this tremendous investment in each one of their offspring, elephant populations tend to grow very slowly. The African elephant is an archetypal example of a K-selected species, with this heavy investment in individual offspring and slow population growth.

Summary Table

Common name	Elephant, African
Scientific name	<i>Loxodonta africana</i>
Taxonomic group	Elephantidae
Source	Dan L. Perlman
Ecosystems	Grasslands, savannas
Grasslands and savannas	Tropical savanna

Change over time	Life cycles
Behavior	Social; Parental
Organisms	Animals
Animals	Mammals
Lessons	Life Histories
Date	August 09, 2003
Location	Serengeti National Park, Tanzania, Africa

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