

Look Who's Talking!



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Each African elephant has a one-of-a-kind voice, say scientists. Why are scientists tuning

Why are scientists tuning in to elephant chats?

Many people have heard the loud trumpet sounds that elephants make. But did you know that elephants make a lot of other noises that humans can't hear?

Scientists have recently learned that each elephant has a unique voice. **Unique** means "one of a kind." Scientist Anne Savage told *Weekly Reader*, "Each person's voice is different. It's the same for elephants."

The scientists listened to the secret language of African elephants at Disney's Animal Kingdom in Florida. To hear the elephants, they used special equipment. Each elephant wore a radio collar fitted with a microphone. Then the sound was recorded and studied using a computer.

Saving African Elephants

African elephants are **endangered**, or at risk of dying out. In the past, people have hunted the elephants for their ivory tusks. Today that practice is not allowed in most African countries. However, some people ignore the laws and still hunt elephants. The huge animals are also endangered because people build homes and farms in areas where elephants live.

Did You Know?

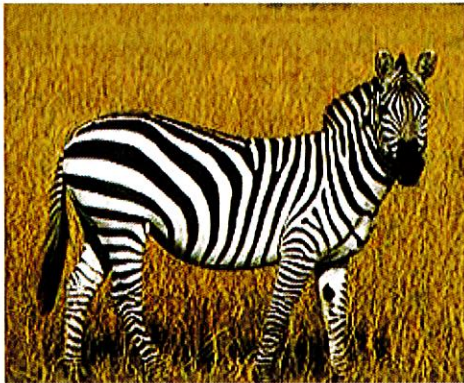
African elephants are the largest living land animals. The average male weighs more than four cars!

An African elephant never sweats. Heat escapes through its large ears to keep the animal cool.

African elephants like to take baths every day. Then, they cover themselves in dirt to keep insects away.

The work scientists are doing at Animal Kingdom may help African elephants in the wild. "If we can tell individual voices apart, we can keep track of each elephant over time," says Savage. "We can tell when elephants are feeling nervous by the voices they are using. In the wild, that would help us know if they are in danger, so we can help them."

Head Count



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Zebra

As the tallest animals in the world, giraffes have a great view of the zoo. Scientists recently had an even better view--from 280 miles above Earth! Animals at the Bronx Zoo in New York City were tracked from outer space with a **satellite**. A satellite is a spacecraft that orbits a planet or moon.

The satellite took images of different species of zoo animals and sent the images back to Earth. These pictures

showed many groups of plants or animals that are alike in certain ways. Scientists studied the images to see how well the satellite could spot different species.

So far, scientists are pleased with the results. They hope to use the satellite to track **endangered** animals in faraway places in the wild. Endangered animals are at risk of becoming extinct, or dying out completely. Currently, people track animals either by foot or by airplane. Scientists think that using a satellite to track animals will be both easier and cheaper.



Leigh Haeger

The Bronx Zoo is located in New York City.

Future Plans

"Taking a count is the first step in finding out if a species is in danger of extinction," scientist Scott Bergen told *Weekly Reader*. Along with counting endangered animals, scientists want to learn where they migrate. When animals migrate, they move from one place to another. Why do scientists want to learn where animals migrate? "[We want to know where to] create national parks and other protected areas for endangered animals," said Bergen.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Use the article "Look Who's Talking!" to answer questions 1 to 2

1. What have scientists learned about elephants' voices?
2. How can scientists use their knowledge about elephants' voices to help elephants in the wild?

Use the article "Head Count" to answer questions 3 to 4.

3. What do scientists hope to track by using a satellite?
4. How might scientists use a satellite to help endangered animals?

Use the articles "Head Count" and "Look Who's Talking!" to answer questions 5 to 6.

5. What general goal do the scientists in both texts share? Use evidence from both texts to support your answer.
6. Could scientists use a satellite to help African elephants? Why or why not? Support your answer using evidence from both texts.