

Fact Sheet: About Mundi

Species: African savanna elephant

Gender: Female

Age: 41

Life Expectancy: Mid to late 60's

Height: 8'

Weight: 8,000 pounds

Physical Characteristics: Mundi is blind in her right eye and has a damaged right tusk

Personality Traits: Calm and Curious

Mundi's History: Mundi is a wild-born African savanna elephant, one of 63 young African elephants brought to the United States by eccentric millionaire Arthur Jones in 1984. Jones orchestrated a rescue mission to bring the calves to his Jumbolair estate in Ocala, Florida after mass culling organized by the Zimbabwe government left them orphaned.

In 1986, Jones broke up the young herd and sold them to zoos, circuses, and private individuals. Following a brutal attack that left her with one blind eye and a permanently damaged tusk, Mundi was sold to the zoo in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.

Mundi has been on display at the zoo since 1988. For nearly 35 years, she has lived alone in an area of about 15,000 square feet with access to an enclosed shelter where she is chained at night.

Why Mundi is being retired: The Dr. Juan A. Rivero Zoo in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico zoo has been closed to the public since September 2017, resulting in growing financial difficulties and the loss of its USDA license for failing to employ a veterinarian and providing substandard care for its animals, many of whom have died.

In 2018, Mundi was under contract to come to ERNA. But the struggling government imploded, all contracts were canceled, and Mundi languished.

Finally, in February 2023, the US Department of Justice ordered the zoo's closure and the relocation of all the remaining animals to reputable sanctuaries. Shortly after, we were once again asked to accept Mundi. Mundi will be Elephant Refuge North America's third elephant and first African.

General Facts About African Elephants

Species: There are three recognized elephant species: Asian, African savanna and African forest.

Number of African elephants in the wild today:

400,000-415,000

African Savannah Elephant Physical characteristics:

African savanna elephants, also known as African bush elephants, are the largest living land mammal in Africa. Their backs are concave and their trunks have two fingerlike tips. Their skin appears loose with parallel folds, which create maximum surface area for heat disbursement. They have large pointed and triangular-shaped ears, resembling the African continent, and outward-curving tusks. They range from South to East Africa.

Diet: Herbivore. Adult African elephants eat up to 200 pounds of plant material each day. In the wild they spend close to 20 hours a day searching for, selecting, collecting and eating a wide variety of live vegetation. African elephants graze, eating a range of plants, including bamboo in the growing season and adding tree branches in the dry season.