



ELEPHANT PROFILE



Tembo AT A GLANCE

Sex: Male

Age: 40 Years

Shoulder Height: 3.7m

Approximate Weight: ±7.5 tons

TEMBO

The Heartbeat of the Herd

We often think of the Elephant Whispers herd as *Tembo and Co!*

Meeting all 7.5 tons of Tembo—his impressive tusks, incredible strength, and commanding yet gentle presence—is an unforgettable experience. As you get to know him, his leadership within the herd and his deep bond with his human caregivers become even more extraordinary.



In Swahili, *Tembo* means ‘elephant’—a fitting name for one who embodies strength, wisdom, and connection. He enjoys the company of his Handlers, actively seeking them out and greeting returning team members with an affectionate (and rather overwhelming) trunk hug. First-time recipients of this warm welcome often find it a little daunting!

While Lindiwe is the nurturing matriarch, Tembo plays a vital role as both a teacher and a disciplinarian. He guides the herd, ensuring that young elephants learn essential skills while maintaining order when needed. But Tembo isn't just physically impressive—he's also highly intelligent. He understands more than 130 words, comprehends full sentences, and even recognizes the names of his human team!

His deep connection with both humans and the herd was especially evident during a recent walk home as a storm approached. Sensing the elephants' unease, the Handlers rode on their backs to comfort them. When a loud thunderclap startled the herd, they instinctively pressed close to Tembo for reassurance. In that moment, he lifted his head high, ensuring his tusks wouldn't touch the Handlers—a testament to his ever-present awareness and protective nature.

Despite his generosity and calm demeanor, one thing remains non-negotiable—his treats! The other elephants know better than to try stealing from Tembo.

Even a strong leader needs time to unwind, and for Tembo, that means playing in the dam with a massive tree trunk. He spends ages maneuvering it, flipping it over, and ‘planting’ it in the mud—a playful yet powerful display of his immense strength.

Each elephant in the herd brings something special—some with quirky traits, others with leadership—but Tembo is the thread that weaves them all together. He is their protector, guide, and constant source of strength, uniting his elephant family and the humans who care for them.



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