



ELEPHANT PROFILE



ZIZIPHUS

Gentle Majesty of a Watchful Soul

With a name like *Ziziphus Mucronata*, Ziz—or Zizi, as he is affectionately known—was destined to be a character of note. And he certainly is. His name comes from the Buffalo Thorn tree, a fitting tribute since we first encountered him feeding near these very trees.

Ziziphus AT A GLANCE
Sex: Male
Age: 27 Years
Shoulder Height: 3.2m
Approximate Weight: >5 tons



Ziz is instantly recognizable, not just by the unique shape of his forehead—unlike any other male—but also by his air of quiet detachment. While his herd mates are more sociable, Ziz is the quintessential loner, perfectly content in his own company. We've come to see him as a guardian, a silent sentinel watching over his family from a distance. Unlike some of the others, he doesn't seek out a particular companion; instead, he is the steadfast older brother, the calm, unwavering presence in the background. He rarely reveals his emotions, maintaining a composed and steady demeanor. Even when Lindiwe reacts dramatically to an unexpected noise, Ziz remains unbothered, as if above such displays.

But beneath his stoic exterior lies a more playful side—one that emerges in the water. Swimming in the dam is where Ziz lets his guard down, forging a bond with Tembo, who playfully teaches him the skills of self-defense. Yet, once the fun is over and the mudbath done, Ziz returns to his primary focus—eating. As a growing young bull, food is paramount, and he prefers to dine without distractions. Like all elephants, he has a soft spot for oranges, though his fondness sometimes turns mischievous—he's been known to snatch them from his unsuspecting herd mates, treating any protests from the Elephant Handlers as mere suggestions!

Ziziphus connects most with seasoned Elephant Handlers who understand his need for both independence and care. They respect his choice to remain on the periphery while ensuring he still receives the attention he needs. In his quiet way, Ziz reminds us that strength isn't always loud, and guardianship doesn't always require being in the spotlight. He is always there—watching, protecting, and, when the moment is right, simply enjoying his mudbath with great abandon.

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