

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44

**Evidence for ancestral olfactory sensitivity but not discrimination across two living elephant species**

Authors: Melissa H. Schmitt<sup>1,2</sup>, Matthew S. Rudolph<sup>3,4</sup>, Sarah L. Jacobson<sup>3,4</sup>, Joshua M. Plotnik<sup>3,4</sup>

**Affiliations:**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology, University of California, Santa Barbara, California, USA

<sup>2</sup>School of Biology and Environmental Sciences, University of Mpumalanga, Private Bag X11283, Nelspruit

<sup>3</sup>Department of Psychology, Hunter College, City University of New York, NY, USA

<sup>4</sup>Department of Psychology, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, NY, USA

**Corresponding authors: Melissa H. Schmitt ([melissa.h.schmitt@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.h.schmitt@gmail.com)); Joshua M. Plotnik ([Joshua.Plotnik@gmail.com](mailto:Joshua.Plotnik@gmail.com))**

45 **Abstract:**

46 While African savanna and Asian elephants split between 4.2-9 MYA, they are often regarded as  
47 one united group, ‘elephants,’ even in the scientific literature. This is concerning, as while both  
48 are keystone species in their respective habitats, each face different environmental pressures and  
49 have rarely been compared experimentally. Savanna elephants must locate resources that vary  
50 spatially and temporally across patchy savannas, while Asian elephants do so within dense  
51 forests containing high biodiversity. Both species use olfaction to guide decision-making,  
52 however, considering their ecologies, we hypothesize that their olfactory abilities differ. Thus,  
53 we investigated the sensitivity and detection limits of both savanna and Asian elephants’  
54 olfactory systems, as well as changes in these limits in a complex odour environment using two  
55 odour-based choice experiments. While both species correctly detected a target odour – savanna  
56 elephants detected it at 50 parts per million (ppm) and Asian elephants at 100 ppm – only the  
57 savanna elephants’ limit changed (to 1,000 ppm) in the complex odour environment. Our  
58 findings suggest that these species have similar olfactory sensitivity, which probably evolved in a  
59 shared ancestor, but divergent olfactory discrimination abilities, which are likely a result of  
60 variation in both the density and species diversity of their habitats.

61

62 **Keywords:** Cognition, Evolutionary Ecology, Foraging Ecology, Odour, Olfaction, Sensory  
63 Abilities, Volatile Organic Compounds

64

65

66

67

68

69

70

71

72

73

74

75

76

77

## 78 **Introduction**

79 Phenotypic comparisons amongst closely-related and relatively recently-diverged species [e.g.,  
80 chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) and bonobos (*Pan paniscus*): 1] are often made to understand the  
81 role that environmental pressures play in shaping differences in behaviour [2, 3]. While these  
82 comparisons are prolific in the literature, there has been little attention paid to the behavioural  
83 differences between Asian and African elephants, which are morphologically similar, but have a  
84 more distant phylogenetic split than chimpanzees and bonobos. African and Asian elephants  
85 genetically diverged 4.2-9 MYA [4]. Since then, African populations have split into the extant  
86 savanna elephants (*Loxodonta africana*), and forest elephants (*Loxodonta cyclotis*), while  
87 Eurasian populations diverged into the extant Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*), and extinct  
88 mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius*) [4]. Asian elephants and savanna elephants are often  
89 considered to be analogous to each other due to their broadly similar morphology, comparable  
90 foraging habits, and their roles as ecosystem engineers and keystone species in their respective  
91 habitats [5, 6]. However, what is often overlooked is that these species face markedly different  
92 physical and social environmental pressures, which may play a key role in shaping differences in  
93 their behaviour.

94         Although both species fill comparable niches in their respective ecosystems [6], there are  
95 some key ecological differences between their environments. Savanna elephants live in a range  
96 of habitats, but are primarily found in mesic to arid woodlands (i.e., land covered with woody  
97 vegetation) and savannas (i.e., areas characterized by a mosaic of trees and grasses) [7]. While  
98 Asian elephants also inhabit a variety of habitats, including forests, shrubland, and grassland,  
99 they are considered to be forest edge specialists with a preference for a combination of natural  
100 forest and secondary vegetation [8-10]. On average, the habitats that savanna elephants live in  
101 have lower quality food (Net Primary Production (NPP)  $<700 \text{ g C m}^{-2}$ ) compared to the habitats  
102 where Asian elephants occur ( $<1200 \text{ g C m}^{-2}$ ) [11]. Another key difference among their habitats  
103 is the level of floristic diversity. The ecoregions where savanna elephants occur have ~500-3000  
104 species of vascular plants, while the ecoregions where Asian elephants occur include between  
105 1000-5000 species [12], which represent vastly different numbers of potential food options.  
106 Thus, Asian elephants need to find key food resources in floristically more complex  
107 environments compared to savanna elephants. Moreover, food resources are not evenly  
108 distributed across the landscape and are also subject to dramatic changes in availability as a

109 result of seasonality [13, 14]. This is particularly important for savanna elephants that often  
110 occur in ecosystems which are characterized by pronounced wet and dry seasons [13, 15].  
111 During the dry season in particular, high-quality food resources are less available than they are in  
112 the wet season and are often spread across the landscape mixed in with lower-quality resources  
113 [16, 17].

114         With respect to foraging behaviour, although both species are considered to be generalist  
115 herbivores, they do exhibit a degree of selectivity [18-21]. Being megaherbivores (species  
116 >1000kg in mass), their large body size results in both species having high absolute intake rate  
117 requirements [e.g., >150kg of vegetation per day: 22, 23]. Given this, locating resources that  
118 vary in quality and quantity across the landscape has important implications for shaping elephant  
119 behaviour. For example, savanna elephants have much larger maximum home range sizes (e.g.,  
120 3,700 km<sup>2</sup>) than Asian elephants (e.g., 1000 km<sup>2</sup>) [24, 25]. This difference is largely a result of  
121 differences in resource availability (e.g., plant productivity) and human activity [8, 24, 26, 27].  
122 Ultimately, the two elephant species must locate resources in habitats that differ dramatically in  
123 resource availability, quality, and spatial distribution.

124         To guide their behavioural decision-making within these heterogeneous environments,  
125 both elephant species can use cues gathered from their environment. Numerous studies have  
126 reported the importance of olfactory cues for social communication and food selection in Asian  
127 and savanna elephants, and that their sense of smell may play an important role in physical and  
128 social decision-making [28-31]. While olfactory behavioural choice experiments have been  
129 performed with both savanna and Asian elephants [32-38], there have been no studies comparing  
130 the olfactory abilities of the two species. This is surprising considering the importance of  
131 olfaction for both species of elephants. Thus, for the first time, we investigated how shared  
132 ancestry and environmental conditions may have shaped the sensitivity of both the African  
133 savanna and Asian elephants' olfactory systems and the limit of their capacity for olfactory  
134 detection, as well as whether those limits fluctuated in a complex odour environment. To do this,  
135 we used two odour-based experiments. The first experiment aimed to determine a limit for  
136 olfactory detection under controlled conditions, while the second experiment aimed to determine  
137 whether this threshold varied when a masking odour was present, to mimic conditions of wild  
138 foraging in a complex odour environment (i.e., floristically diverse environments).

139 For the ‘detection threshold’ experiment (Experiment 1), we hypothesized that savanna  
140 elephants would perform better than Asian elephants because savanna elephants must locate  
141 resources that are more patchily distributed across their habitats than those in which Asian  
142 elephants live. However, it is possible that both species have similar overall detection abilities,  
143 which is likely rooted in their shared evolutionary history. For the ‘detection in complex  
144 environments’ experiment (Experiment 2), we hypothesized that Asian elephants may out-  
145 perform savanna elephants because they must locate target food resources that are mixed into a  
146 high diversity of other plants in structurally dense habitats. This would result in more complex  
147 odour environments, compared to those in which savanna elephants live. Alternatively, the  
148 ability to detect target food items in complex odour environments may be similar for both  
149 species due to their shared ancestry. Any differences in olfactory discrimination between the two  
150 species are likely the result of the different ecological and socio-environmental factors each  
151 species faces in their respective habitat.

152

## 153 **Methods**

154 Using similar procedures conducted in previous research on elephant olfaction [e.g., 31,  
155 32, 33, 36-39], we aimed to compare the olfactory capabilities of savanna and Asian elephants  
156 with respect to their abilities to detect differing emissions of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* (Sigma-  
157 Aldrich, natural  $\geq 95\%$  FG, CAS 3681-71-8), a common green leaf volatile found in the  
158 elephants’ food items [21, 33]. To do this, we conducted two odour-based object choice  
159 experiments. In the first experiment, we aimed to test the threshold detection ability of Asian and  
160 savanna elephants using serial dilutions of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* (Table 1). In the second  
161 experiment, we aimed to understand how this threshold detection varied when a masking odour  
162 was present, to mimic conditions of foraging in a complex odour environment. The range of  
163 concentrations of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* was based on previous research that has shown Asian  
164 elephants can successfully detect and discriminate a target odour from 1,000,000 ppm down to  
165 10,000 ppm [30, 40]. Both of our experiments were run in the same manner; however, an  
166 additional odour was added to each bucket in a separate vial to act as a masking odour to  
167 increase the complexity (noise) of the background odour for the second experiment (see below).

168 The experiments were conducted with savanna elephants in September, 2019 at the  
169 Adventures with Elephants facility near Bela Bela, Limpopo Province, South Africa. For all

170 trials, professional elephant handlers were present to ensure the comfort and safety of the  
171 elephants. We used five semi-tame, wild foraging, adult individuals between 20 and 25 years old  
172 (three females, two males). The experiments with Asian elephants were conducted between  
173 October 2020 and July 2021 at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse, NY, USA. We studied  
174 five resident elephants between 24 and 53 years old (five females). Both experiments for the  
175 savanna elephants were conducted in a free-contact environment (as pictured in Figure 1), with  
176 handlers holding buckets on a stationary table. However, a protected-contact testing procedure  
177 was used when testing the Asian elephants, following the zoo’s elephant husbandry and handling  
178 guidelines (Figure 1). This protected-contact procedure followed Plotnik et al. [32], which used a  
179 sliding table to present the elephants with the buckets.

180

### 181 *Ethics Statement*

182 This research was reviewed and approved by both elephant facilities (Adventures with Elephants  
183 in South Africa, and the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in New York, USA) and approved by the  
184 following ethics committees prior to data collection: Duke IACUC (#A248-18-10) for the  
185 savanna elephants, and the Hunter College IACUC (JP-Categorization Elephants 3/22) for the  
186 Asian elephants.

187

188 **Table 1.** Serial dilutions of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* used in both experiments represented by ppm  
189 of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* suspended in liquid paraffin.

<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Ppm</b>
A	100,000
B	50,000
C	10,000
D	5,000
E	1,000
F	500
G	100
H	50
I	10
J	5

190 The Asian and savanna elephants in our study were tested using the same basic  
191 experimental setup for both experiments. Similar to prior studies [e.g., 31, 32, 33, 36, 38, 39], we  
192 presented the elephants with a binary choice using buckets in which either the target odour or  
193 control odour were hidden (as well as the addition of the masking odour in the case of  
194 Experiment 2). The buckets were clear 6.15 L plastic totes, measuring 29.2 cm X 21.5 cm X 16.5  
195 cm with latching lids. The lids had 18 holes drilled into the top to allow airflow. Holes were  
196 drilled in a rectangular grid fashion across a 120 cm<sup>2</sup> portion of the lid. In the savanna elephant  
197 tests, handlers held the buckets on a stationary table, while in the Asian elephant tests, the  
198 buckets were secured to the table by nesting them inside a second bucket that was bolted to the  
199 rolling table (Figure 1). The bucket bolted to the table acted simply as a brace and there was no  
200 hindrance to air flow for the buckets nested within them in which the odorants were placed. To  
201 avoid any selection bias based on the handlers holding the buckets in place for the savanna  
202 elephant experiments, handlers were rotated randomly. To ensure that each elephant did not  
203 observe the experimental set-up before each trial began, a professional handler instructed the  
204 elephants to face away (180°) from the testing arena before buckets were presented; in this  
205 position, it was impossible for the elephants to see the placement of the bins. Once the vials  
206 holding the target and control odours (and masking odour in the case of Experiment 2) were  
207 placed inside each bin, the bins were arranged side-by-side on a table. The elephant was then  
208 instructed to turn, face forward, and to “smell” the bins. At this point, the elephant stepped up to  
209 the bins and placed its trunk on each holey lid and inhaled the odours from each bucket. As per a  
210 number of previous studies [31-33, 36, 37, 39], each elephant was able to smell or touch each  
211 bucket when presented, but could not open or reach inside them. The elephants had 10 seconds to  
212 touch and smell both buckets on the table. If the elephants smelled both buckets in 10 seconds,  
213 the elephants and the buckets were separated at the 10 s mark and then buckets were re-presented  
214 after 3 s so that the elephants could make a choice. In the case of the savanna elephants, we  
215 instructed them to remove their trunks from the buckets at the 10-second mark, however, due to  
216 the protected-contact requirements associated with the Asian elephants’ environment, we rolled  
217 the table with the buckets away from the elephants instead of instructing them to remove their  
218 trunks. Each elephant indicated which bucket contained the target odour by touching or tapping  
219 on it. After the elephant made its choice, it was rewarded with a food reward if correct. As per

220 [37], the lids and buckets were cleaned with a wet cloth in between each trial to ensure that the  
221 elephants could not use mucus deposited during previous trials.

222 For our second experiment, we investigated the use of olfaction during foraging in a  
223 complex odour environment, and used 1-Nonanol Sigma-Aldrich, purum  $\geq 98\%$ , CAS 143-08-8,  
224 as a masking odour. Nonanol is commonly found in the environment, but is not something that  
225 has a known positive or negative association for either species of elephants. The concentration of  
226 this odour remained constant throughout the experiment. Its concentration was set to 100,000  
227 ppm, which is relatively high [41], to determine how well each species can detect weaker odours  
228 when there are potentially highly concentrated odorants in the environment.

229

### 230 ***Training***

231 Prior to running the experiments, both Asian and savanna elephants were trained to select a high  
232 concentration of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* hidden inside a bucket. To teach the elephants the  
233 nuances of a behavioural choice experiment, they were initially trained to detect a food item in  
234 one of the buckets. When the elephants chose the bucket containing the food item  $\geq 8/10$  times in  
235 two consecutive sessions of ten trials, they moved on to training to detect *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate*.  
236 Chemical detection training consisted of the same setup as testing, although the buckets were  
237 transparent, visually identical, and contained either a vial of 150,000 ppm *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate*,  
238 or the same suspension fluid (i.e., liquid paraffin) with no target odor. Once the elephants  
239 successfully chose the bucket containing the target odour  $\geq 8/10$  times in three consecutive  
240 sessions of ten trials each, they moved onto experimental trials. This rigorous training regime  
241 ensured that the elephants were motivated to participate and delivered consistent results in  
242 detecting olfactory information. The training also allowed the elephants to learn a) the task  
243 procedure to select one of two buckets after first being presented with two options and then  
244 having to make a choice, and b) to locate a 150,000 ppm concentrated solution before we started  
245 testing them on more diluted solutions.

246



247  
248 **Fig. 1.** Panel (A) depicts the testing setup conducted with free-contact savanna elephants while  
249 (B) shows the testing setup conducted with Asian elephants in protected contact. Free contact  
250 allows for direct interaction with the elephants; protected contact means a barrier exists between  
251 humans and the elephants. Panel (C) shows an example of the testing bucket in which a vial of  
252 either the target odour or control odour is hidden and (D) illustrates an Asian elephant smelling  
253 through the holes in the lid during the experimental procedure.

254  
255 **Testing**

256 For both experiments, each elephant was tested six times per session, covering the 10 different  
257 concentrations of the target odour over the course of the study, totalling 20 sessions per elephant.  
258 Only one concentration was presented per session, but the concentrations were presented in a  
259 random order over the course of the study. For both groups of elephants, no more than two  
260 concentrations were tested per day (i.e., two sessions). We used two testing times per day: one at  
261 9 am and the other at 12 pm. Each elephant had a minimum gap of 3 h between testing sessions.  
262 The two experiments were conducted with the savanna elephants over a 10-day period and over

263 the course of 30 days for the Asian elephants. For the savanna elephants, one individual  
264 (elephant #2) refused to participate in two sets of trials for experiment 1 (i.e., 100,000 ppm and  
265 5,000 ppm), and two sets of trials for experiment 2 (i.e., 100,000 ppm and 10,000 ppm). To  
266 ensure hunger levels did not influence diet selection, the elephants were able to forage for one  
267 hour prior to testing.

268

### 269 ***Statistical Models***

270 For both experiments, the elephants were tested against 10 different concentrations of the  
271 target odour six times. The results from all trials from both experiments were analysed using  
272 generalized estimating equations (GEEs). We treated individual elephants as the subjects for  
273 repeated measures in GEEs because of potential non-independence of our data, which could stem  
274 from an individual's growing experience over repeated trials. Furthermore, GEEs use a  
275 population-level approach based on a quasi-likelihood function, which delivers population-  
276 averaged estimates of the parameters. In addition, the coefficients of GEE regressions are  
277 marginal effects (i.e., the effects average across all the subjects in the data [42]). Thus, in our  
278 case, GEEs modelled the number of times the elephants made the correct choice (i.e., selected  
279 the bucket with the target odour) compared to an expected 50% distribution expected under  
280 random selection for a given choice. Our model used an exchangeable correlation matrix and a  
281 binomial error distribution with a logit link function. We ran separate models for each species  
282 and each experiment. To explore whether detection varied across treatments, we considered the  
283 chemical concentration (treatment) as the independent variable, and the successful detection of  
284 the target odour as the dependent variable.

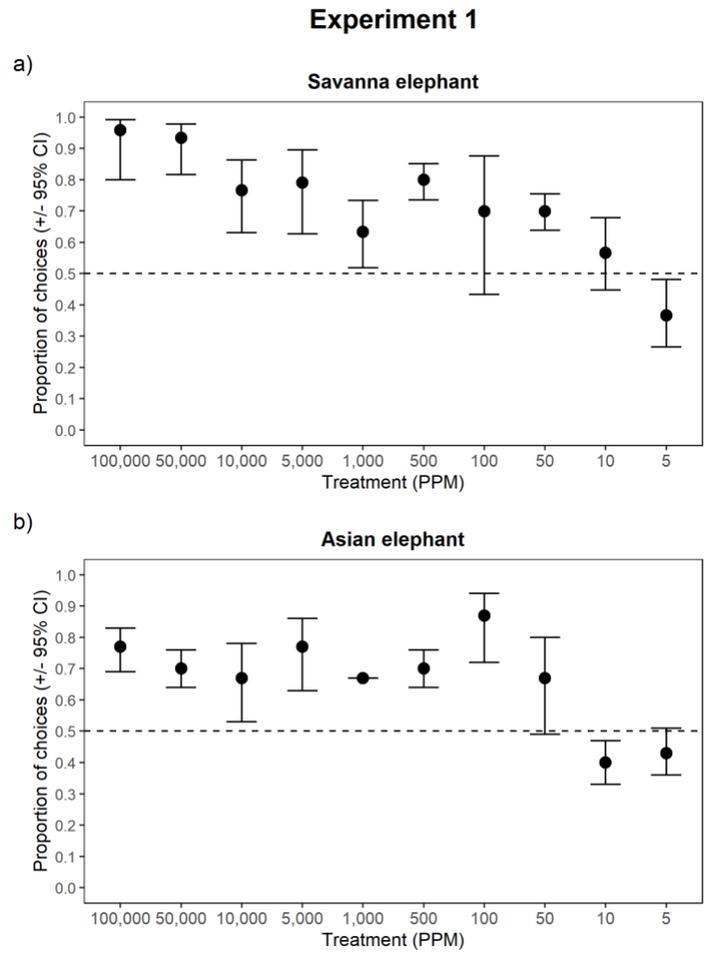
285

## 286 **Results**

### 287 *Experiment 1*

288 The concentration of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* presented to both savanna and Asian  
289 elephants significantly influenced their choice (savanna: GEE:  $\chi^2= 53.291$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , Asian:  
290 GEE:  $\chi^2=101.558$ ,  $P<0.000$ ). Across 7 of the 10 concentrations, both savanna and Asian  
291 elephants correctly detected *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* (Figure 2a and b). Both savanna and Asian  
292 elephants were unable to detect the target odour in the treatments with the weakest  
293 concentrations of the target odour—10 ppm and 5 ppm respectively. However, the two species

294 differed with respect to the third treatment in which they were unable to discern the target odour.  
 295 Savanna elephants were unable to significantly identify the target odour at 100 ppm, but were  
 296 able to detect the target odour at 50 ppm, which is one treatment level more diluted than 100  
 297 ppm. By contrast, Asian elephants were unable to locate the target odour at 50 ppm. While the  
 298 significant detection for this third treatment differed between the two species, the threshold drop-  
 299 off points in detection occurred in treatments that were within the same magnitude of  
 300 concentration (i.e., 50 ppm is half the concentration of 100 ppm).  
 301

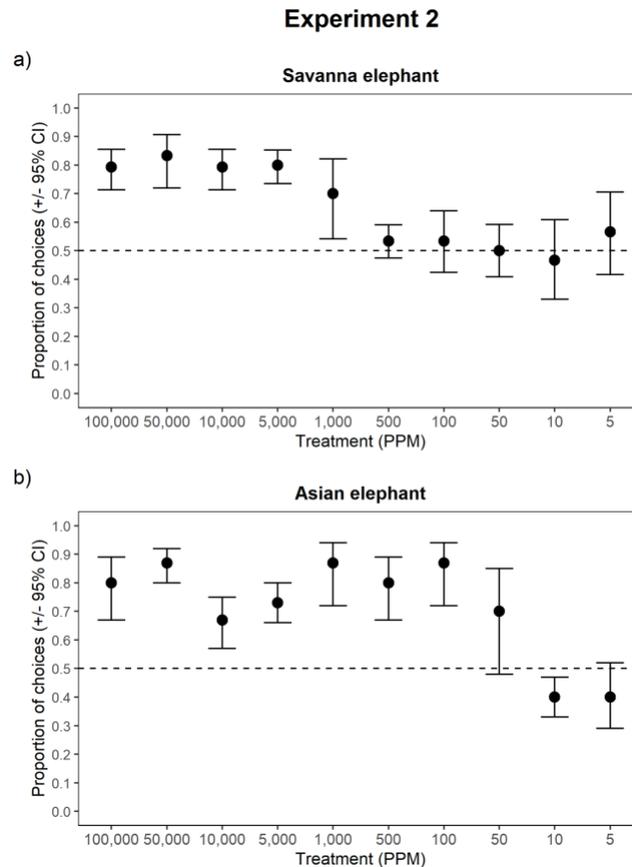


302  
 303 **Fig. 2.** Proportion of choices in which the target odour was selected as a function of diminishing  
 304 concentration (ppm) of the target odour. Panel (a) reflects savanna elephant detection abilities  
 305 while panel (b) reflects Asian elephant detection abilities. Marginal means ( $\pm 95\%$  Confidence  
 306 Intervals) of the proportion of selection of a given treatment are plotted. If there is no overlap of  
 307 the 95% CI with the 0.5 expectation (i.e., random selection), this indicates significant selection

308 for the target odour. If there is overlap with the 0.5 expectation (i.e., random selection), this  
309 indicates no significant selection for the target odour.

310  
311 *Experiment 2*

312 The concentration of *cis-3-Hexenyl acetate* presented to both savanna and Asian  
313 elephants when in the presence of a masking odour significantly influenced detection (savanna:  
314 GEE:  $\chi^2= 50.273$ ,  $P<0.0001$ , Asian: GEE:  $\chi^2 910.313$ ,  $P<0.0001$ ). Savanna elephants were able  
315 to detect the target odour in 5/10 treatments, while Asian elephants maintained their ability to  
316 detect the target odour in 7/10 treatments (Figure 3a and b). The detection threshold for savanna  
317 elephants was 1000 ppm, while for Asian elephants it remained 100 ppm.  
318



319  
320 **Fig. 3.** Proportion of choices in which the target odour was selected as a function of diminishing  
321 concentration (ppm) of the target odour in the presence of a masking odour. Panel (a) reflects  
322 savanna elephant detection abilities while panel (b) reflects Asian elephant detection abilities.  
323 Marginal means ( $\pm 95\%$  Confidence Intervals) of the proportion of selection of a given treatment

324 are plotted. If there is no overlap of the 95% CI with the 0.5 expectation (i.e., random selection),  
325 this indicates significant selection for the target odour. If there is overlap with the 0.5 expectation  
326 (i.e., random selection), this indicates no significant selection for the target odour.

327

## 328 **Discussion**

329 While savanna and Asian elephants have historically been categorized as similar species  
330 both morphologically and behaviourally, our study is the first, to our knowledge, to make a direct  
331 comparison between their olfactory sensory abilities. We have shown that elephants have an  
332 olfactory sensitivity limit lower than previously determined,  $\geq 50$  ppm for savanna elephants and  
333  $\geq 100$  ppm for Asian elephants. When analysed in a complex odour environment, these limits  
334 have disparate fluctuations for each species. The addition of a complex odour environment  
335 decreased savanna elephant's sensitivity and discrimination ability for odour detection by an  
336 order of magnitude (from  $\geq 50$  ppm up to  $\geq 1,000$  ppm). The addition of a complex odour  
337 environment for Asian elephants did not impact their ability to discriminate the target odour. The  
338 similar initial sensitivity of 50 ppm and 100 ppm could be due to savanna and Asian elephant's  
339 shared ancestry. The differential results in experiment 2 could reflect their different ecological  
340 and socio-environmental situations.

341 Our results suggest that both savanna and Asian elephants have a sensitivity limit to their  
342 olfactory capabilities  $\geq 100$  ppm, which extends the lower limit for both species further than  
343 previously determined [30, 40]. This highlights the importance of olfaction as a key sense that  
344 both savanna and Asian elephants use to locate resources that vary both spatially and temporally.  
345 For all herbivores, the ability to detect a salient cue in their environment can be integral to their  
346 foraging success [43-45]. Each bite a herbivore takes represents a decision about what plant or  
347 plant part to eat [46]. Thus, olfactory cues can be a key indicator that herbivores use to inform  
348 their decisions. For species such as savanna and Asian elephants that forage for a majority of a  
349 24-hour cycle [47], live in ecosystems containing hundreds or thousands of different species of  
350 plants (Kier et al. 2005), and consume vast quantities of vegetation [22, 23], enhanced  
351 localization can have a multiplicative benefit on the animal's time budget.

352 The greater the level of sensory evidence available to an animal, the faster they can  
353 decide whether to ingest a food item or not [48, 49]. Thus, enhanced detection down to 100 ppm  
354 of a target odour could provide elephants with additional olfactory evidence on which to base

355 their foraging decisions. Plant species vary not only in their abundance, but also in their  
356 nutritional quality, and both of these factors can vary across a seasonal cycle [21, 50, 51]. Thus,  
357 for herbivorous mammals, olfaction can be a useful tool to locate and assess variable resources  
358 [33, 37, 52-57]. For example, reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*) were able to distinguish good and  
359 poor lichen sources via olfactory cues below 90 cm of snow [43], and savanna elephants can  
360 detect differences in sugar content of fruits from marula trees, *Sclerocarya birra* [34]. Moreover,  
361 Bester et al. [37] demonstrated that savanna elephants show varied responses (i.e., neutral vs.  
362 deterrent) to differing concentrations of volatile monoterpenes that are found in the plants in their  
363 environment, indicating the importance of olfactory sensitivity for foraging decision-making.  
364 Beyond making decisions at a patch scale, herbivores also make foraging decisions at larger  
365 spatial scales [58]. For example, both swamp wallabies (*Wallabia bicolor*) and greater sage-  
366 grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) use olfactory cues emitted from target plant species to  
367 locate resources across the landscape [55, 56, 59, 60]. Consequently, being able to detect 100  
368 ppm of a target odour could help an herbivore identify important Volatile Organic Compounds  
369 (VOCs) that are further away [61, 62], particularly in seasonal environments, such as African  
370 savannas, where resource quality and quantity varies dramatically.

371 Target plant species can also be hidden among an array of other plant structures or within  
372 an environment with a diversity of species, making desired items difficult to locate visually.  
373 However, herbivores can use olfactory cues emitted from target species to locate them in  
374 complex odour environments [33, 55, 56]. Interestingly, when we tested whether the threshold of  
375 detection for both Asian and savanna elephants varied when a masking odour was present, we  
376 found disparate results between the two species. The presence of a masking odour did not impact  
377 the ability of Asian elephants to detect the target odour, however, its presence shifted the  
378 detection threshold for savanna elephants by an order of magnitude, whereby they could only  
379 now detect the target odour when it was 1,000 ppm instead of 100 ppm. Our results suggest that  
380 a complex odour environment does not affect the ability of Asian elephants to discriminate,  
381 while it does appear to influence the discrimination abilities of savanna elephants, which may be  
382 a result of differences in their natural history and foraging environment. Dense forests with  
383 covered canopies, where Asian elephants are naturally found [63], have between 1000 - >5000  
384 species of vascular plants [12]. Several studies have demonstrated that forest canopies have  
385 reduced VOC diffusion [64, 65] and trap odours below the canopy [66]. This incubator effect,

386 coupled with high vegetation cover and high species diversity that characterize the habitats  
387 where Asian elephants occur [67-69], could result in habitats with highly complex odour  
388 environments. Therefore, Asian elephants may need to be able to distinguish trace amounts of a  
389 target odour among many other odours while foraging, explaining their performance in the  
390 discrimination experiment. While both savanna and Asian elephants forage selectively [i.e., they  
391 do not eat everything that is available to them – 18, 70], it is likely that Asian elephants perform  
392 better with complex background odours compared to savanna elephants as a result of their high  
393 biodiversity, high odour complexity environment. Thus, each species' performance is likely  
394 indicative of a more adaptive fit to their environments.

395         Our experimental setup for both groups of elephants had two slight differences resulting  
396 from the free-contact vs. protected-contact environments in which the savanna and Asian  
397 elephants were kept, but were unlikely to have influenced our findings. The first difference in  
398 experimental procedures was the fact that the buckets presented to the Asian elephants were  
399 nested inside a bucket of the same size that was bolted to the table, while the buckets were held  
400 in place on the table by handlers when presented to the savanna elephants. This difference is  
401 unlikely to have influenced our results for a few reasons. First, airflow and accessibility to the  
402 buckets were not impacted by either method. The bucket bolted to the table in the Asian elephant  
403 experiments acted simply as a brace and did not hinder airflow to the top of the bucket in which  
404 the odorants were placed. In the case of the savanna elephants where handlers held the buckets in  
405 place, handlers never touched the target odours, could not contaminate the buckets and were  
406 rotated randomly to ensure that the elephants could not cue off of them. Moreover, all buckets in  
407 both settings were wiped down in between trials to limit differences in external odours that  
408 potentially could influence the elephants' choices. The second difference was the manner in  
409 which the elephants were presented with the buckets. The savanna elephants were instructed to  
410 walk up to the table, while the Asian elephants were presented the buckets on a table that rolled  
411 up to them. It is unlikely that this minor difference in procedure would influence the elephant's  
412 abilities to identify the target odours because they were both able to touch and interact with the  
413 buckets with their trunks for the same amount of time and in the same way.

414         Both experiments were run with a single group of savanna elephants (n=5) and a single  
415 group of Asian elephants (n=5). Our work is the first step towards comparing the olfactory  
416 capabilities of two distantly related elephant species. However, it is possible that some of the

417 variability seen at 50 ppm for Asian elephants and 100 ppm for savanna elephants is a result of  
418 our relatively small sample size. This variation in individual abilities highlights the effect of an  
419 individual's choices and behaviours in shaping the pattern we see across a system. Olfactory  
420 sensitivity and discrimination accuracy can fluctuate within a subject [71], and subjects can have  
421 different baseline sensitivities, leading to a single subject's choices impacting the overall results  
422 when sample sizes are small. While cognitive studies with elephants typically have a small  
423 sample size, we recognize that more research is needed here. For example, studies that  
424 investigate a direct comparison between extant species of elephants can provide further evidence  
425 about the degree to which the species differ. In addition, future work should explore the olfactory  
426 abilities of forest elephants, which are more closely related to savanna elephants but live in  
427 environments more similar to Asian elephants.

428         Our findings highlight the fact that these species have similar olfactory sensitivity, which  
429 likely evolved in a shared ancestor and persisted due to both species' social and foraging needs  
430 for olfactory detection. However, our results suggest that they have divergent olfactory  
431 discrimination abilities, which are potentially a result of variation in both the woody density and  
432 the vegetation species diversity of the habitats in which the two species live. These data suggest  
433 that millions of years of independent evolution may have shaped yet unknown behavioural and  
434 physiological variation within the elephant taxon.

435

## 436 **Acknowledgements**

437 We would like to thank S. Hensman and the staff at Adventures with Elephants for allowing us  
438 to conduct our research at the facility, as well as the Rory Hensman Conservation and Research  
439 Unit (RHCRU) for their support. Additionally, we would like to thank the staff at the Rosamond  
440 Gifford Zoo, including Ashley Sheppard and Ted Fox, who were instrumental to the success of  
441 this project.

442

## 443 **References**

444

445 [1] Prüfer, K, Munch, K, Hellmann, I, Akagi, K, Miller, JR, Walenz, B, Koren, S, Sutton, G,  
446 Kodira, C & Winer, R. 2012 The bonobo genome compared with the chimpanzee and human  
447 genomes. *Nature* **486**, 527-531. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1038/nature11128>).

448 [2] Boesch, C, Hohmann, G & Marchant, L. 2002 *Behavioural diversity in chimpanzees and*  
449 *bonobos*. Oxford, UK, Cambridge University Press.

450 [3] de Waal, FB. 2013 Behavioral contrasts between bonobo and chimpanzee. In *Understanding*  
451 *Chimpanzees* (eds. P.G. Heltne & L.A. Marquardt), pp. 154-175. Cambridge, USA, Harvard  
452 University Press.

453 [4] Rohland, N, Reich, D, Mallick, S, Meyer, M, Green, RE, Georgiadis, NJ, Roca, AL &  
454 Hofreiter, M. 2010 Genomic DNA sequences from mastodon and woolly mammoth reveal deep  
455 speciation of forest and savanna elephants. *PLoS biology* **8**, e1000564.  
456 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.1000564>).

457 [5] de Silva, S, Schmid, V & Wittemyer, G. 2017 Fission–fusion processes weaken dominance  
458 networks of female Asian elephants in a productive habitat. *Behavioral Ecology* **28**, 243-252.  
459 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/beheco/arw153>).

460 [6] de Silva, S & Wittemyer, G. 2012 A comparison of social organization in Asian elephants and  
461 African savannah elephants. *International Journal of Primatology* **33**, 1125-1141.  
462 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10764-011-9564-1>).

463 [7] Grubb, P, Groves, CP, Dudley, JP & Shoshani, J. 2000 Living African elephants belong to  
464 two species: *Loxodonta africana* (Blumenbach, 1797) and *Loxodonta cyclotis* (Matschie, 1900).  
465 *Elephant* **2**, 3. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.22237/elephant/1521732169>).

466 [8] Fernando, P, Wikramanayake, ED, Janaka, H, Jayasinghe, L, Gunawardena, M, Kotagama,  
467 SW, Weerakoon, D & Pastorini, J. 2008 Ranging behavior of the Asian elephant in Sri Lanka.  
468 *Mammalian Biology* **73**, 2-13. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mambio.2007.07.007>).

469 [9] Evans, LJ, Goossens, B, Davies, AB, Reynolds, G & Asner, GP. 2020 Natural and  
470 anthropogenic drivers of Bornean elephant movement strategies. *Global Ecology and*  
471 *Conservation* **22**, e00906. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gecco.2020.e00906>).

472 [10] de la Torre, JA, Wong, EP, Lechner, AM, Zulaikha, N, Zawawi, A, Abdul-Patah, P, Saaban,  
473 S, Goossens, B & Campos-Arceiz, A. 2021 There will be conflict—agricultural landscapes are  
474 prime, rather than marginal, habitats for Asian elephants. *Animal Conservation* **24**, 720-732.  
475 (doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/acv.12668>).

476 [11] Cramer, W, Kicklighter, DW, Bondeau, A, Iii, BM, Churkina, G, Nemry, B, Ruimy, A,  
477 Schloss, AL & Intercomparison, TPOTPNM. 1999 Comparing global models of terrestrial net  
478 primary productivity (NPP): overview and key results. *Global Change Biology* **5**, 1-15.  
479 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2486.1999.00009.x>).

480 [12] Kier, G, Mutke, J, Dinerstein, E, Ricketts, TH, Küper, W, Kreft, H & Barthlott, W. 2005  
481 Global patterns of plant diversity and floristic knowledge. *Journal of Biogeography* **32**, 1107-  
482 1116. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2699.2005.01272.x>).

483 [13] Scholes, R, Bond, W & Eckhardt, H. 2003 Vegetation dynamics in the Kruger ecosystem. In  
484 *The Kruger experience: Ecology and management of Savanna heterogeneity* (eds. J. Du Toit,  
485 K. Rogers & H. Biggs), pp. 242-262. Washington DC, USA, Island Press.

486 [14] Anderson, TM, White, S, Davis, B, Erhardt, R, Palmer, M, Swanson, A, Kosmala, M &  
487 Packer, C. 2016 The spatial distribution of African savannah herbivores: species associations  
488 and habitat occupancy in a landscape context. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*  
489 *B: Biological Sciences* **371**, 20150314. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2015.0314>).

490 [15] Young, K, Ferreira, S & Van Aarde, R. 2009 Elephant spatial use in wet and dry savannas  
491 of southern Africa. *Journal of Zoology* **278**, 189-205. (doi: [https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7998.2009.00568.x)  
492 [7998.2009.00568.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7998.2009.00568.x)).

493 [16] Skidmore, AK, Ferwerda, JG, Mutanga, O, Van Wieren, SE, Peel, M, Grant, RC, Prins, HH,  
494 Balciik, FB & Venus, V. 2010 Forage quality of savannas—Simultaneously mapping foliar protein  
495 and polyphenols for trees and grass using hyperspectral imagery. *Remote sensing of*  
496 *environment* **114**, 64-72. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rse.2009.08.010>).

497 [17] Davies, AB, Levick, SR, Robertson, MP, van Rensburg, BJ, Asner, GP & Parr, CL. 2016  
498 Termite mounds differ in their importance for herbivores across savanna types, seasons and  
499 spatial scales. *Oikos* **125**, 726-734. (doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/oik.02742>).

- 500 [18] Owen-Smith, N & Chafota, J. 2012 Selective feeding by a megaherbivore, the African  
501 elephant (*Loxodonta africana*). *J Mammal* **93**, 698–705. (doi:[https://doi.org/10.1644/11-mamm-  
503 a-350.1](https://doi.org/10.1644/11-mamm-<br/>502 a-350.1)).
- 503 [19] Shrader, AM, Bell, C, Bertolli, L & Ward, D. 2012 Forest or the trees: At what scale do  
504 elephants make foraging decisions? *Acta Oecologica* **42**, 3–10.  
505 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actao.2011.09.009>).
- 506 [20] Koirala, RK, Raubenheimer, D, Aryal, A, Pathak, ML & Ji, W. 2016 Feeding preferences of  
507 the Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) in Nepal. *BMC ecology* **16**, 1-9.  
508 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12898-016-0105-9>).
- 509 [21] Schmitt, MH, Shuttleworth, A, Shrader, AM & Ward, D. 2020 The role of volatile plant  
510 secondary metabolites as pre-ingestive cues and potential toxins dictating diet selection by  
511 African elephants. *Oikos* **129**, 24-34. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/oik.06665>).
- 512 [22] Wyatt, JR & Eltringham, SK. 1974 The daily activity of the elephant in the Rwenzori  
513 National Park, Uganda. *African Journal of Ecology* **12**, 273–289. (doi:  
514 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2028.1974.tb01037.x>).
- 515 [23] Vancuylenberg, B. 1977 Feeding behaviour of the Asiatic elephant in south-east Sri Lanka  
516 in relation to conservation. *Biological Conservation* **12**, 33-54. (doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/0006-  
518 3207\(77\)90056-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/0006-<br/>517 3207(77)90056-8)).
- 518 [24] Sukumar, R. 2006 A brief review of the status, distribution and biology of wild Asian  
519 elephants *Elephas maximus*. *International Zoo Yearbook* **40**, 1-8. (doi:  
520 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-1090.2006.00001.x>).
- 521 [25] Delsink, A, Vanak, AT, Ferreira, S & Slotow, R. 2013 Biologically relevant scales in large  
522 mammal management policies. *Biological conservation* **167**, 116-126.  
523 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2013.07.035>).
- 524 [26] Loarie, SR, van Aarde, RJ & Pimm, SL. 2009 Elephant seasonal vegetation preferences  
525 across dry and wet savannas. *Biological Conservation* **142**, 3099-3107.  
526 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2009.08.021>).
- 527 [27] Loarie, SR, Van Aarde, RJ & Pimm, SL. 2009 Fences and artificial water affect African  
528 savannah elephant movement patterns. *Biological conservation* **142**, 3086-3098.
- 529 [28] Rasmussen, L & Wittemyer, G. 2002 Chemosignalling of musth by individual wild African  
530 elephants (*Loxodonta africana*): implications for conservation and management. *Proceedings of*  
531 *the Royal Society of London. Series B: Biological Sciences* **269**, 853-860.  
532 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2001.1933>).
- 533 [29] Hollister-Smith, JA, Alberts, SC & Rasmussen, L. 2008 Do male African elephants,  
534 *Loxodonta africana*, signal musth via urine dribbling? *Animal Behaviour* **76**, 1829-1841.  
535 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2008.05.033>).
- 536 [30] Arvidsson, J, Amundin, M & Laska, M. 2012 Successful acquisition of an olfactory  
537 discrimination test by Asian elephants, *Elephas maximus*. *Physiology & behavior* **105**, 809-814.  
538 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2011.08.021>).
- 539 [31] Plotnik, JM, Shaw, RC, Brubaker, DL, Tiller, LN & Clayton, NS. 2014 Thinking with their  
540 trunks: Elephants use smell but not sound to locate food and exclude nonrewarding alternatives.  
541 *Animal Behaviour* **88**, 91–98. (doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2013.11.011>).
- 542 [32] Plotnik, JM, Brubaker, DL, Dale, R, Tiller, LN, Mumby, HS & Clayton, NS. 2019 Elephants  
543 have a nose for quantity. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* **116**, 12566-12571.  
544 (doi:  
545 <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1818284116>).
- 546 [33] McArthur, C, Finnerty, PB, Schmitt, MH, Shuttleworth, A & Shrader, AM. 2019 Plant  
547 volatiles are a salient cue for foraging mammals: elephants target preferred plants despite  
548 background plant odour. *Animal Behaviour* **155**, 199-216.  
549 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2019.07.002>).

550 [34] Nevo, O, Schmitt, MH, Ayasse, M & Valenta, K. 2020 Sweet tooth: Elephants detect fruit  
551 sugar levels based on scent alone. *Ecology and Evolution* **10**, 11399-11407.  
552 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.6777>).

553 [35] Valenta, K, Schmitt, MH, Ayasse, M & Nevo, O. 2021 The sensory ecology of fear: African  
554 elephants show aversion to olfactory predator signals. *Conservation Science and Practice* **n/a**,  
555 e306. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.306>).

556 [36] Schmitt, MH, Shuttleworth, A, Ward, D & Shrader, AM. 2018 African elephants use plant  
557 odours to make foraging decisions across multiple spatial scales. *Animal Behaviour* **141**, 17-27.  
558 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anbehav.2018.04.016>).

559 [37] Bester, T, Schmitt, MH & Shrader, AM. 2023 The deterrent effects of individual  
560 monoterpene odours on the dietary decisions of African elephants. *Animal Cognition* **26**, 1049-  
561 1063. (doi:10.1007/s10071-023-01755-4).

562 [38] Wood, M, Chamailé-Jammes, S, Hammerbacher, A & Shrader, AM. 2022 African  
563 elephants can detect water from natural and artificial sources via olfactory cues. *Animal*  
564 *Cognition* **25**, 53-61. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10071-021-01531-2>).

565 [39] Plotnik, JM, Pokorny, JJ, Keratimanochaya, T, Webb, C, Beronja, HF, Hennessy, A, Hill, J,  
566 Hill, VJ, Kiss, R, Maguire, C, et al. 2013 Visual cues given by humans are not sufficient for asian  
567 elephants (*Elephas maximus*) to find hidden food. *PLOS ONE* **8**, e61174.  
568 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0061174>).

569 [40] Rizvanovic, A, Amundin, M & Laska, M. 2013 Olfactory discrimination ability of Asian  
570 elephants (*Elephas maximus*) for structurally related odorants. *Chemical senses* **38**, 107-118.  
571 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/chemse/bjs097>).

572 [41] Peixoto, L, Salazar, LTH & Laska, M. 2018 Olfactory sensitivity for mold-associated  
573 odorants in CD-1 mice and spider monkeys. *Journal of Comparative Physiology A* **204**, 821-  
574 833. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00359-018-1285-x>).

575 [42] Wang, M. 2014 Generalized Estimating Equations in Longitudinal Data Analysis: A Review  
576 and Recent Developments. *Advances in Statistics* **2014**, 303728.  
577 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1155/2014/303728>).

578 [43] Helle, T. 1984 Foraging behaviour of the semi-domestic reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus* L.) in  
579 relation to snow in Finnish Lapland. In *Report from Kevo Subarctic Research Station* (pp. 35-47,  
580 Kevo Subarctic Research Station, Utsjoki, Finland).

581 [44] Bedoya-Pérez, MA, Isler, I, Banks, PB & McArthur, C. 2014 Roles of the volatile terpene, 1,  
582 8-cineole, in plant-herbivore interactions: a foraging odor cue as well as a toxin? *Oecologia*  
583 **174**, 827-837. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00442-013-2801-x>).

584 [45] Bedoya-Pérez, MA, Issa, DD, Banks, PB & McArthur, C. 2014 Quantifying the response of  
585 free-ranging mammalian herbivores to the interplay between plant defense and nutrient  
586 concentrations. *Oecologia* **175**, 1167-1177. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00442-014-2980-0>).

587 [46] Senft, R, Coughenour, M, Bailey, D, Rittenhouse, L, Sala, O & Swift, D. 1987 Large  
588 herbivore foraging and ecological hierarchies. *BioScience* **37**, 789-799.  
589 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/1310545>).

590 [47] Owen-Smith, N. 1988 *Megaherbivores: The Influence of Very Large Body Size on Ecology*.  
591 Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press.

592 [48] Castellano, S & Cermelli, P. 2015 Preys' exploitation of predators' fear: when the caterpillar  
593 plays the Gruffalo. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* **282**, 20151786.  
594 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2015.1786>).

595 [49] Sulikowski, D. 2017 From sensory to social: the information that impacts animal foraging  
596 decisions. *Current opinion in behavioral sciences* **16**, 93-99.  
597 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2017.04.003>).

598 [50] Stears, K & Shrader, AM. 2020 Coexistence between wildlife and livestock is contingent on  
599 cattle density and season but not differences in body size. *PLOS ONE* **15**, e0236895.  
600 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236895>).

601 [51] Owen-Smith, N. 1994 Foraging responses of kudu to seasonal changes in food resources:  
602 elasticity in constraints. *Ecology* **75**, 1050-1062. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/1939429>).

603 [52] McNaughton, S, Ruess, R & Seagle, S. 1988 Large mammals and process dynamics in  
604 African ecosystems. *BioScience* **38**, 794-800. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/1310789>).

605 [53] Rode, KD, Chiyo, PI, Chapman, CA & McDowell, LR. 2006 Nutritional ecology of elephants  
606 in Kibale National Park, Uganda, and its relationship with crop-raiding behaviour. *Journal of*  
607 *tropical ecology* **22**, 441-449. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266467406003233>).

608 [54] Kos, M, Hoetmer, AJ, Pretorius, Y, de Boer, WF, de Knegt, H, Grant, C, Kohi, E, Page, B,  
609 Peel, M & Slotow, R. 2012 Seasonal diet changes in elephant and impala in mopane woodland.  
610 *European journal of wildlife research* **58**, 279-287. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10344-011-0575-1>).

611 [55] Stutz, RS, Banks, PB, Dexter, N & McArthur, C. 2015 Herbivore search behaviour drives  
612 associational plant refuge. *Acta Oecologica* **67**, 1–7.  
613 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actao.2015.05.004>).

614 [56] Stutz, RS, Banks, PB, Proschogo, N & McArthur, C. 2016 Follow your nose: Leaf odour as  
615 an important foraging cue for mammalian herbivores. *Oecologia* **182**, 643-651.  
616 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00442-016-3678-2>).

617 [57] Finnerty, PB, McArthur, C, Banks, P, Price, C & Shrader, AM. 2022 The olfactory landscape  
618 concept: a key source of past, present, and future information driving animal movement and  
619 decision-making. *BioScience* **72**, 745-752. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biac039>).

620 [58] Ritchie, ME & Olff, H. 1999 Spatial scaling laws yield a synthetic theory of biodiversity.  
621 *Nature* **400**, 557-560. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1038/23010>).

622 [59] Frye, GG, Connelly, JW, Musil, DD & Forbey, JS. 2013 Phytochemistry predicts habitat  
623 selection by an avian herbivore at multiple spatial scales. *Ecology* **94**, 308–314.  
624 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1890/12-1313.1>).

625 [60] Finnerty, PB, Stutz, RS, Price, CJ, Banks, PB & McArthur, C. 2017 Leaf odour cues enable  
626 non-random foraging by mammalian herbivores. *Journal of Animal Ecology* **86**, 1317-1328.  
627 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2656.12748>).

628 [61] Tigney, D. 1991 Factors controlling the emissions of monoterpenes and other volatile  
629 organic compounds. *Trace gas emission by plants*, 93-119.

630 [62] Fall, R. 1999 Biogenic Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds from Higher Plants. In  
631 *Reactive Hydrocarbons in the Atmosphere* (ed. C.N. Hewitt), pp. 41-96. San Diego, USA,  
632 Academic Press.

633 [63] Blake, S & Hedges, S. 2004 Sinking the flagship: the case of forest elephants in Asia and  
634 Africa. *Conservation Biology* **18**, 1191-1202. (doi: [https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1523-](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1523-1739.2004.01860.x)  
635 [1739.2004.01860.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1523-1739.2004.01860.x)).

636 [64] Denmead, O. 1984 Plant physiological methods for studying evapotranspiration: problems  
637 of telling the forest from the trees. In *Developments in Agricultural and Managed Forest Ecology*  
638 (pp. 167-189, Elsevier).

639 [65] Denmead, O & Bradley, E. 1985 Flux-gradient relationships in a forest canopy. In *The*  
640 *forest-atmosphere interaction* (eds. B.A. Hutchison & B.B. Hicks), pp. 421-442. Dordrecht,  
641 Netherlands, Springer.

642 [66] Raupach, M. 1989 A practical Lagrangian method for relating scalar concentrations to  
643 source distributions in vegetation canopies. *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological*  
644 *Society* **115**, 609-632. (doi: <https://doi.org/10.1002/qj.49711548710>).

645 [67] Letourneau, DK. 1987 The enemies hypothesis: tritrophic interactions and vegetational  
646 diversity in tropical agroecosystems. *Ecology* **68**, 1616-1622.  
647 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/1939853>).

648 [68] Thomas, SC, Halpern, CB, Falk, DA, Liguori, DA & Austin, KA. 1999 Plant diversity in  
649 managed forests: understory responses to thinning and fertilization. *Ecological applications* **9**,  
650 864-879. (doi:[https://doi.org/10.1890/1051-0761\(1999\)009\[0864:PDIMFU\]2.0.CO;2](https://doi.org/10.1890/1051-0761(1999)009[0864:PDIMFU]2.0.CO;2)).

651

- 652 [69] Wiesmair, M, Otte, A & Waldhardt, R. 2017 Relationships between plant diversity,  
653 vegetation cover, and site conditions: implications for grassland conservation in the Greater  
654 Caucasus. *Biodiversity and Conservation* **26**, 273-291. (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10531-016-1240-5>).
- 656 [70] Sukumar, R. 1990 Ecology of the Asian elephant in southern India. II. Feeding habits and  
657 crop raiding patterns. *Journal of Tropical Ecology* **6**, 33-53.  
658 (doi:<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266467400004004>).
- 659 [71] Phillips, PD & Vallowe, HH. 1975 Cyclic fluctuations in odor detection by female rats and  
660 the temporal influences of exogenous steroids on ovariectomized rats. In *Proceedings of the*  
661 *Pennsylvania Academy of Science* (pp. 160-164, JSTOR).
- 662