



African Elephant Crossing

at a glance

Construction is well under way on a world-class elephant habitat and education center at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. To be known as African Elephant Crossing, the state-of-the-art facility will become the Zoo's largest capital project since The RainForest opened in 1992, and it will serve as a model for other zoos nationwide.

African Elephant Crossing will more than quadruple the amount of indoor and outdoor space dedicated to elephants at the Zoo and provide the elephants with two sprawling yards to roam, deep pools for swimming, mud wallows for basking, expanded indoor sleeping quarters and a heated outdoor range to allow for sleeping under the stars.

Modeled after African savannas, African Elephant Crossing will offer a naturalistic habitat for a multi-generational herd of up to 10 elephants. In addition to female elephants, the new habitat will be suitable for housing bull elephants and calves, as the Zoo hopes to one day breed African elephants. African Elephant Crossing highlights the Zoo's more than 100-year commitment to caring for elephants and showcases its place as a national leader in efforts to protect these endangered animals.

Grand Opening:	Spring 2011
Size:	5 acres
Projected Cost:	\$25 million
Funding Sources:	Cleveland Metroparks and Cleveland Zoological Society

African Elephant Crossing will be located near the Zoo's front entrance, expanding and significantly improving upon the former Pachyderm Building and yard. The Zoo broke ground on the mammoth construction project in the fall of 2008, and the Zoo's three female elephants are staying at the Columbus Zoo along with two of their keepers from Cleveland during construction. Plans are for Moshi, Jo and Martika to return to Cleveland before the opening of African Elephant Crossing.

"Blackie," the Zoo's 55-year-old Nile hippo, also moved from the Pachyderm Building to an off-exhibit "retirement condo" that was built as an addition to the Zoo's giraffe barn. Blackie, the second oldest hippo in North America, came to the Zoo from Africa in 1955 and is a longtime favorite among Zoo visitors.

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Special Features Include:

- A multi-generational, socially complete herd of up to 10 African elephants including at least one bull and eventually elephant calves.
- Two sprawling ranges where the elephants can roam and forage, deep ponds for swimming and expanded sleeping quarters with a heated outdoor "Night Range."
- Meerkats, naked mole rats, African rock pythons and colorful birds.
- An education center that immerses visitors into a realistic African village setting and features interactive displays and programs for all ages.
- An innovative on-site learning program with a curriculum developed in conjunction with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.
- Environmentally friendly design meeting federal "green" standards and aimed at promoting energy and water conservation.
- "Nose-to-trunk" viewing areas, an elevated feeding station and a gated crossing where the elephants can migrate from one yard to another.

The population of African elephants in the wild has plummeted from 1.5 million to fewer than 500,000 in just the past 20 years. These majestic animals are in need of help, and the Zoo's African Elephant Crossing aims to connect people to elephants and teach them about the things they can do in their daily lives to help prevent elephants from becoming extinct.

For the latest updates on African Elephant Crossing, visit clemet zoo.com/elephants or call the Zoo's Marketing & Public Relations office at (216) 661-6500.