



Photo: Alvaro Keding/© AMNH

Big Ears, Big Feet, Big Secrets—Elephants Stomp into Fernbank this October

ATLANTA, GA (Aug. 18, 2026)— How do elephants “hear” with their feet, use the 16 muscles in their trunks, play important roles in culture, rely on their remarkable memories and reshape the forests and savannas they live in? Fernbank Museum invites visitors to uncover these answers and more in “The Secret World of Elephants,” on view Oct. 10, 2026, through Jan. 3, 2027.

Guests will gain a deeper appreciation for the fascinating world of elephants, from their prehistoric relatives to the living species of today—the African bush elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), the African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*), and the Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*). The exhibit reveals the extraordinary intelligence, complex communication techniques, and vital roles that these intelligent animals have played throughout history.

“A keystone species and a cultural symbol, elephants have long been a source of fascination for us,” said Cara Martinez, School Programs Manager and Education Specialist for Fernbank. “In this exhibit, guests can explore the ways our ancestors depended on ancient elephant relatives and trace that shared journey to modern day, where we study their amazing physiology and explore ways that we still depend on the strength and wisdom of these giants.”

“The Secret World of Elephants” unfolds the full story of these gentle giants, including their evolution, anatomy, habitat, cultural influence, threats, conservation, and more. Along the way, guests will encounter a variety of models, experiences and interactives, including:

- a full-scale woolly mammoth model
- stations to experience elephant vocalizations and the low-frequency sounds elephants use to communicate
- a touchable mammoth tooth cast
- elephant dung model and interactive that helps scientists learn about how much food they consume per day
- life-size models of an adult dwarf elephant and its calf
- a life-size African elephant model with a video projection that reveals the innerworkings of its body

- an ear-flapping activity to demonstrate how elephants regulate their body temperature
- an interactive mammoth tusk model that demonstrates how scientists use isotope “fingerprints” to reveal how prehistoric mammoths traveled
- an activity to explore elephant vocalizations
- a large screen video showing the many ways elephants alter their environment

The interaction between elephants and humans has been prevalent throughout history, as seen various cultural traditions in Africa and Asia. Some cultural objects on display in “The Secret World of Elephants” include puppets from Vietnam that depict the local history of the Tru’ng sisters, who rode elephants into battle some 2,000 years ago, and a large figure of the Hindu god Ganesh, who had an elephant’s head and a human-like body.

Additional elements include conservation-themed interactives, including threats from the ivory trade, climate change and conflict from human-and-elephant encounters. “The Secret World of Elephants” encourages visitors to learn more of the ways that humans and elephants can share the planet and reduce human and elephant conflict.

“Elephants are great ambassadors and highlight the intersection between science, nature and culture which are all pillars of Fernbank’s mission,” said Bobbi Hohmann, VP of Programming and Collections. “Their fascinating stories connect across topics like evolution, biology, ecosystems, and human culture, deepening our understanding of these incredible animals.”

More information can be found at FernbankMuseum.org

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The Secret World of Elephants is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (amnh.org). *The Secret World of Elephants* is sponsored locally by Isdell Family Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Frances Wood Wilson Foundation.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

Fernbank will host the family-friendly Discovery Day, “Elephant Extravaganza,” from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 10, to celebrate the opening of “The Secret World of Elephants.” This event invites guests to discover the amazing world of elephants through hands-on activities, family-friendly crafts and engaging experiences; it is included with general admission and is free with CityPASS. For more information, please visit FernbankMuseum.org

TICKETS

General admission tickets include three floors of exhibits in the natural history museum, choice of one giant screen film, and 75 acres of nature explorations in Fernbank Forest and WildWoods. Fernbank After Dark and other Museum Nights events are available at a separate ticket price. Fernbank is located at 767 Clifton Road NE in Atlanta, minutes from midtown Atlanta and downtown Decatur.

General admission tickets are \$25.95 for adults, \$24.95 for seniors, \$23.95 for children ages 3-12, free for children ages 2 and younger, and free for Fernbank Members. These prices are for tickets purchased online at

[FernbankMuseum.org](https://www.FernbankMuseum.org). Weekend ticket pricing differs from weekday ticket pricing. Museum Nights tickets vary by event. Tickets not purchased in advance are offered onsite, if available, at a higher price. More information is available at [FernbankMuseum.org](https://www.FernbankMuseum.org).

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ABOUT FERNBANK

Fernbank is one of the most popular and iconic cultural destinations in Atlanta. Known as Atlanta's Science and Nature Experience, Fernbank invites guests to discover a World of Wow through an expansive natural history museum, 4-story giant screen theater, and 75 acres of nature adventures in WildWoods and Fernbank Forest. One of the oldest not-for-profit conservation organizations in the country, Fernbank was founded in 1939 to preserve Fernbank Forest, the largest urban, old growth, Piedmont forest in the United States. The museum and giant screen theater opened as "a school in the woods for nature studies" on Oct. 5, 1992, and is today known for its giant dinosaurs, hands-on STEAM* programming, immersive experiences, and year-round nature exploration. Visit [FernbankMuseum.org](https://www.FernbankMuseum.org) for more information and join the conversation on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and TikTok.

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