



Elephant Memories: Thirteen Years in the Life of an Elephant Family

By Cynthia J. Moss

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Cynthia Moss has studied the elephants in Kenya's Amboseli National Park for over twenty-seven years. Her long-term research has revealed much of what we now know about these complex and intelligent animals. Here she chronicles the lives of the members of the T families led by matriarchs Teresia, Slit Ear, Torn Ear, Tania, and Tuskless. With a new afterword catching up on the families and covering current conservation issues, Moss's story will continue to fascinate animal lovers.

"One is soon swept away by this 'Babar' for adults. By the end, one even begins to feel an aversion for people. One wants to curse human civilization and cry out, 'Now God stand up for the elephants!' —Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, *New York Times*

"Moss speaks to the general reader, with charm as well as scientific authority. . . . [An] elegantly written and ingeniously structured account." —Raymond Sokolov, *Wall Street Journal*

"Moss tells the story in a style so conversational . . . that I felt like a privileged visitor riding beside her in her rickety Land-Rover as she showed me around the park." —Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, *New York Times Book Review*

"A prose-poem celebrating a species from which we could learn some moral as well as zoological lessons." —*Chicago Tribune*

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Amboseli National Park, near Mt. Kilimanjaro in southern Kenya, is home ground to some 600 elephants; this herd has been relatively free from human interference and was a major focus for field study. Moss, author of *Portraits in the Wild*, has been involved with the elephants of Amboseli since 1973; she and her colleagues have made a substantial contribution to our knowledge of elephant biology and behavior. Here, she follows one extended family through 13 years of good times and bad times, observing details of their daily lives. The book is organized by year and topic: each chapter begins with a synthesized narrative that introduces a single phase of life such as mating, migration, social behavior, births and calves (this is the first study of elephant newborns and their development) that relates to family history. This is a captivating story of individual animals', rather than the author's, adventures. Moss affirms the old tale about elephants assisting one of their own who is injured or dying; she also reports that they recognize bare and bleached bones of their species. Any reader interested in animals will be captivated. Photos.

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From Library Journal

Moss builds upon earlier elephant studies, such as Iain and Oria Douglas-Hamilton's *Among the Elephants* (1975), by producing a complete census of the elephants in one area, Amboseli National Park in Kenya, and focusing on population dynamics and such little-understood behavior as childbearing and -raising. Moss focuses on a single family and uses semi-fictionalized episodes written from the elephants' point of view to generate sympathy, but also provides detailed and objective information. Her final chapter addresses the problems of elephant control and conservation, arguing pragmatically that ivory dealers have a stake in preserving the species. Suitable for both general libraries and zoological collections. Beth Lewis, S.I.L.S., Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

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About the Author

Cynthia F. Moss is a professor of psychology and member of the Institute for Systems Research at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is the coeditor of *Neuroethological Studies on Cognitive and Perceptual Processes*.

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From reader reviews:

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