



Photographing Elephants: 10 Ways to be Creative with Elephants

Description

10 Creative Ways to Photograph Elephants

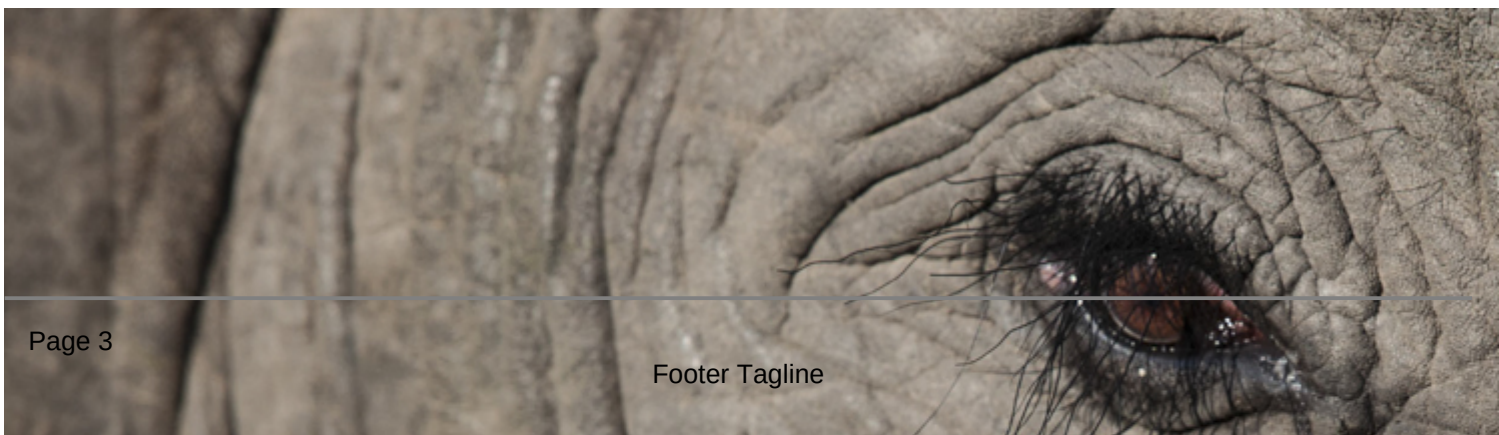
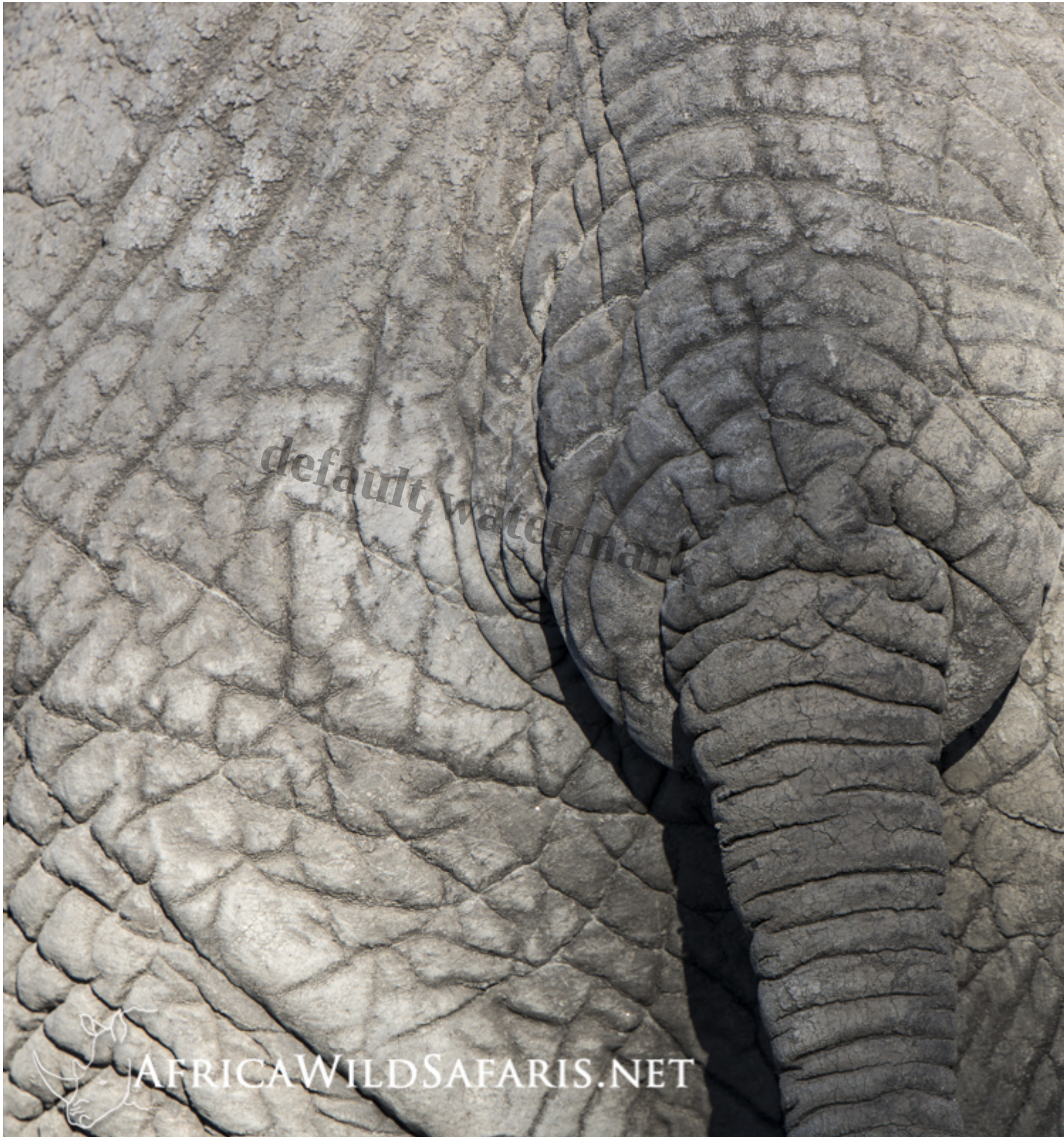
Elephants are frequently our photo subjects while on safari. Their size, shape, intelligence, and trunk are just a few things that make them great subjects and very interesting. There are many opportunities for unique, beautiful, and descriptive images of elephants.

Close details





Elephants are very unique in shape and texture. Images showing the whole elephant(s) are great to show the elephant in its environment, but can not describe the all the unique features and details of an elephant. Taking close up images of the trunk in action, tusks, skin, eyes, and ears gives your audience a chance to focus in on details and discover shapes and colors and learn about elephants in more detail.





Using perspective and symmetry



Elephants come in all sizes and travel in herds so highlight these different sizes and ages in a way that gives geometric order and symmetry to your image. Contrast of size creating perspective lines vanishing into the horizon is a pleasing effect. Elephants will often line up and if you are patient you can grab moments when trunks, ear, etc are pleasingly arranged symmetrically.





Interaction with other elephants

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Elephants are social animals and this gives many interaction moments to photograph. Sometimes the golden moment is a hidden detail in a wider image. Cropping can highlight this “picture in a picture” moment between two elephants. Elephants also have greetings, reassuring gestures, and rank showing moves that you can watch and wait for then highlight through cropping and framing the images



A tender moment between mother and calf is hidden inside the wider image



Interaction with other species



An elephant chases zebras out of the watering hole

Showing how elephants interact with other species is capturing their role in their environment. Other species feel safe near elephants and trust their strength, awareness, and intelligence. You can photograph mixed herds, birds that groom elephants, and when they assert their dominance.



Showing scale





Obviously their size is a major feature of elephants. Showing large and small elephants together is not always enough to communicate their size. Try to show other animals such as zebra which are a familiar size to your audience to show how large they are. Manmade objects like vehicles are a good contrast as well.



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Movement / Behavior

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With their unique body form and parts, photographing how the elephant and its parts moves adds another dimension to your illustration of elephants. Also try to isolate and highlight unique behaviors of the elephants such as mock fighting, and the million ways they use their trunks for different things

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Take the usual front view and side views to new levels

Front and 3/4

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¾ is a flattering angle that has been drilled into us for portraits, but a straight on frame filling front view is eye catching. A creative crop creates interesting negative space and also increases the impact





Side

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Elephants have an interesting shape so a side view shows off this shape. Think about negative space and other elements to contrast the rounded lines of the elephant such as straight trees or grass

Rear

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Elephant rears are unique and large with great tails. A nicely framed rear shot shows the elephants in and interacting with their environment. Walking off “into the sunset” communicates that these elephants are wild and free.

Personality / Cute Babies



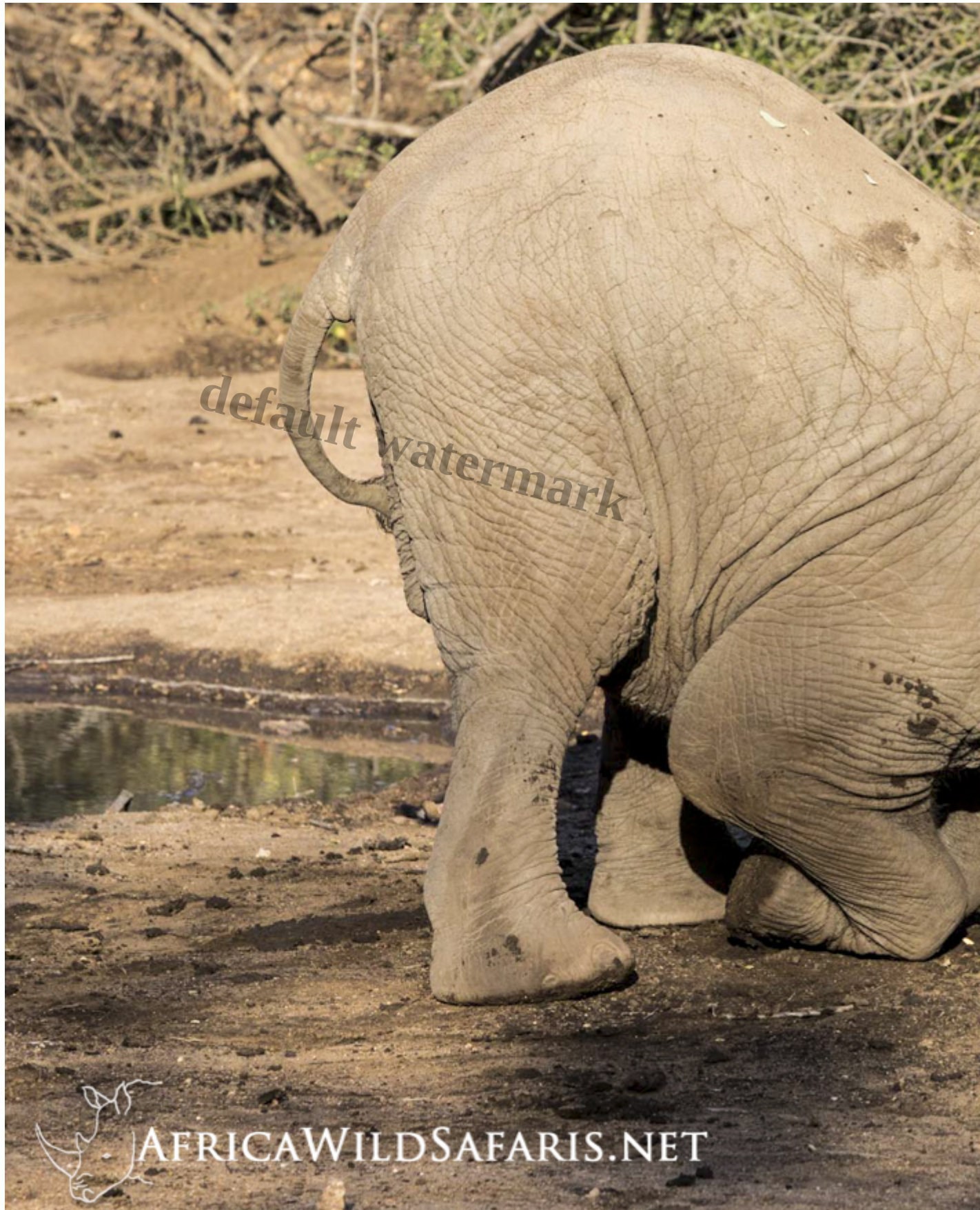
Elephants appear to have individual personalities and we often can see some of ourselves in their movement, behavior, and interaction. Anytime we can photograph this connect to ourselves it makes a more impactful image. They show happiness, companionship, nervousness, and aggravation through

their actions and interactions. Capture moments of joy when they are in the water or doing something crazy.





You can see the joy when elephants get into the water



This elephant is using a very short scratching post – we had a good laugh at this

Elephant babies are very cute and are well looked after by their mothers and other herd members: it is not hard to capture intimate moments between mothers and babies.





Shape Silhouette



Sometimes lighting on a safari is challenging, but taking bad lighting and turning it into a silhouette shot can give you a special image. Elephants' unique shape works very well against a sunset.

When you get out on safari and see elephants, get to know them and capture some images that illustrate everything that is fun, interesting, and unique about them. There are not many subjects so expressive and charismatic.

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Author

africawildsafaris

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