Feeding Habits of Elephants in Ngorongoro Crate, Tanzania

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Abstract

Observations on the feeding habits of elephants were made from June 1984 to May 1985. The elephants' diet comprised at least thirty-six plant species ranging in size from big trees to small herbs. Elephants ate mostly sedges and tree browse during the dry season, and forbs and grass during the wet season. Elephants browsed on and damaged Acacia xanthophloea Benth. Greatest damage occurred to saplings and was mostly done in the dry season when elephants ate significant amounts of this species. It is concluded that since elephant damage was seasonal, most saplings would recover during the wet season. The study concludes with a recommendation for continued monitoring of the forest so that proper management can be taken to conserve it.