

ZOO BABY IS BLAST FROM THE PAST

The stork got its orders mixed up for Edinburgh Zoo's latest arrival - a baby Asian elephant which looks more like something from a prehistoric monster movie than any friend of Mowgli and Bagheera. The bouncing baby weight in at 215 pounds and is the spitting image of an ice age mammoth.

The unusual newborn has a thick covering of red hair and a fatty hump on her shoulders - both features which have been found in [frozen mammoths from Siberia](#), but are not typical of Asian elephants.

"Baby elephants often have some hair," stated Elephant House Keeper Danny Cade, "But this is the first time in 25 years I've seen a calf with fur so thick or such a striking colour. I think she is a throwback to some mammoth-like ancestor. Maybe Edinburgh is too nippy for regular Asian elephants!" The Zoo has decided to name her Squeaky, after the mammoth in the 'Little Nose' series of children's books.

Experts from Herriot Watt University agree Squeaky's resemblance to extinct mammoths is remarkable, but were quick to point out she was not a real prehistoric monster. "Genetics plays some funny tricks sometimes," said Dr Robertson of the Biology Department. "Ancestral characters can sometimes reappear unexpectedly. For instance hens do very rarely have teeth. It is only Squeaky's hair which is unusual - the rest of her is normal. The hair will probably disappear as she gets older."

Mammoth or not, mother and baby are doing well and will be on public display from the beginning of next month. Other unusual babies at Edinburgh Zoo include a trio of albino pythons, a jet black fallow deer fawn and [twin panda cubs](#).

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