

Common Name: African Pygmy Goat

Scientific Name: *Capra hircus*



UCN Red list Status: None

AZA Conservation Program: None

Class: Mammalia

Order: Artiodactyla

Family: Bovidea

Genus: Capra

Habitat: This goat was originally found in African grasslands and semi-desert areas, but are now *domesticated* and live mostly on farms.

Physical Characteristics: An adult varies from 16-23 inches in height and has a small, compact, barrel-shaped body. The female is so barrel-shaped that she always appears pregnant. Their hair is short and smooth and may be silver-white, salt-and-pepper, caramel, gray and black or a combination of these colors. Their pupil is horizontal and rectangular, allowing for greater peripheral vision when compared to the human eye. The tail is hairless on the underside and curls upward. A goat has no upper teeth in the front, but instead has a horny pad. Both males and females have horns. All males have beards, while females may or may not.

Reproduction: They can reproduce year round and can have 1 to 3 young every year. Single and twin births are both common. The gestation period is 145-155 days. The kids weigh 3-4 lbs and are 8-10 inches high at birth. They are weaned at about 12 weeks.

Longevity: 8-12 years.

Diet: Goats both graze and browse, eating leaves and grass. They are used to clear woods and fields of weeds, poison ivy, and brambles. At the Zoo, they are fed hay supplemented with HMS Herbivore Diet.

Miscellaneous: Pygmy goats make good pets and good companions for other livestock. The inside of their hoof is soft and pliable; this leather-like surface is responsible for their great ability to climb and jump. Females produce 4-5 ½ lbs of milk per day, and two can supply the needs of a small family. The milk is sweet and rich, containing from 7-10% butterfat, and has the consistency of a milkshake. The curds are much smaller than those in cow's milk and are much more easily digested by infants and people allergic to cow's milk. Goats are also an important source of meat, cheese, and hides.

Signs of Stress: Kicking, aggression, sudden change in behavior.

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Handling: Always use a collar and lead or head halter. Do not let them graze while walking around the zoo. Behaviors to encourage: back, spin, target, head touch, jump on something. **DO NOT** let them jump on people, pull on the leash, or drag docents/campers/zooteens.

LIKES: Food, scratches between horns, brushing and petting, walking with the herd, loose leads.

DISLIKES: horn grabbing, punishment, the word NO!, collars too tight, not enough rewards, tangled leashes, walking by possible predators (tiger, bear etc...)

Exhibited: Children's Enchanted Forest Contact Yard

Ambassador Animal Specifics: (See goat guide for pictures)

August, F, born 2008

Littlefoot, M, born 2014

Ducky, F, born 2014

Sharptooth, M, born 2014

Petrie, M, born 2014

