



HIPPOPOTAMUS

Hippopotamus amphibius

SPECIES QUICK FACTS

SIZE

The average hippopotamus will stand between 52 and 70 inches tall.

WEIGHT

A male hippopotamus will average between 3,530 and 7,040 pounds. Females are smaller, weighing between 1,440 and 5,160 pounds.

FOOD HABITS

The hippopotamus is a herbivore, eating only fruits, vegetables, leaves, and grasses.

HABITAT

The preferred habitat of this species is deep water with adjacent reed beds and grasslands.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Today most hippopotamuses are found in national parks and reserves. Some are still located in major rivers and swamps throughout Africa.

FUN FACTS

Calves nurse underwater and are frequently seen riding upon their mothers' backs while the mother is in the water. The hippo's sweat contains a red pigment, which has led to stories that hippos can sweat blood.



Hippos may occur singly or in groups of up to 30 animals. Most groups consist of females and their dependent offspring. The hippopotamus is an aggressive and territorial animal, and they are among the most feared animals in Africa. Hippos use their long canine teeth as weapons, and death often results from fighting between males. Most adult male hides are covered with scars from injuries incurred during such fights. While adult hippos do not have any predators, the young calves are vulnerable prey for lions, spotted hyenas, and crocodiles.

