



26th July to 2nd August 2008

www.essexscouts.org.uk/jamboree

Join in the Jamboree



Pygmy Hippo

The Pygmy Hippo Subcamp have sponsored Venus at Colchester Zoo!



Animal Pygmy Hippopotamus

Latin name (*Hexaprotodon Liberiensis*)

Distribution Western Africa, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone.

Habitat Lowland rainforest and swamps.

Diet Leaves, shoots, roots and fruit.

Gestation 190-200 days (around 7 months).

Longevity Between 30 - 50 years.

Status in the wild Listed as vulnerable by the IUCN and in Appendix II of CITES.

General characteristics The Pygmy Hippo, as its name suggests, is much smaller than its larger cousin, the African hippo. It is only a metre at the shoulder and weighs up to 272kg. It has a smooth hairless skin which is browny black in colour. It secretes a pinkie coloured fluid from its skin, which acts as a sun block and also keeps the skin moist. The toes of the pygmy Hippo are not webbed like it's larger relative, as it spends less time in the water and more time walking around on land. Unlike the African hippo, if threatened, the Pygmy hippo will retreat into the cover of the forest rather than into the water.

Despite their cute appearance, Pygmy hippos can be remarkably grumpy and aggressive. They are not social animals, preferring to live alone or in pairs avoiding other hippos. The only time a pygmy hippo will seek the company of another is during the breeding season. Females give birth usually to one offspring, the young are born on land or in shallow water. They are nursed two to three times during the day. After birth, the young will lie concealed for more than three weeks as they are easy prey for predators such as Leopards. Pygmy hippos have large territories. Males cover 400 acres, females 100-150 acres. They have several resting places, which they exclusively use for sleeping. They are active between 6pm and midnight usually looking for food on higher ground.

Pygmy hippos are extremely rare in the wild, mainly due to deforestation for the timber trade. They have been hunted for food and their teeth are used as trophies.





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Beavers & Rainbows

- * Make a swamp mural – include pictures of the pygmy hippo and all his friends in the swamp – use books from the library / pictures from the internet for inspiration
- * Have a hippo party – play hungry hippos, make hippo biscuits and decorate them, and make hippo masks – you could use the template on this webpage

<http://www.gapp.me.uk/Activities/Animal/animal%20masks.pdf>

Cubs & Brownies

- * When foraging in tropical forests, pygmy hippos make deep paths similar to tunnels within the dense brush – try building your own network of tunnels using cardboard boxes
- * Design a stamp or coin with the Pygmy Hippo on it – this website shows examples -

<http://www.pibburns.com/cryptost/pygmyhip.htm>

Scouts & Guides

- * Pygmy Hippos are excellent swimmers and can even walk on the river bottom – try holding a swimming night with your unit and seeing who can walk the furthest on the bottom of the swimming pool
- * Put your wellies on and visit a local marsh or wetland to see what hippo habitat looks like – learn about what animals live in this environment in the UK and compare it to the swamps of West Africa.

Explorers & SS

- * Pygmy Hippos are notoriously shy and only come out at night – go to a local wooded area, build a shelter and see what animals you can spot on an overnight bivvy
- * Visit a zoo which keeps Pygmy Hippos to see one in the flesh – London Zoo, Colchester Zoo, Edinburgh Zoo, Marwell Zoo - and see if you can take part in a project to support their welfare

Network & SS

- * Create your own wetland – Contact the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust for advice -

http://www.wwt.org.uk/text/250/wetland_habitats.html

- * Visit the Eden Project in Cornwall to experience the rainforest environment and see

All sections

- * Fundraise to adopt a Pygmy Hippo at your local zoo or to make a contribution to a charity which works to protect them.

Web Info

<http://www.wwt.org.uk/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pygmy_Hippopotamus

<http://nationalzoo.si.edu/Animals/AsianElephants/factpygmyhippo.cfm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7286860.stm>

<http://www.pibburns.com/cryptost/pygmyhip.htm>

<http://www.gapp.me.uk/Activities/Animal/animal%20masks.pdf>

