



MAMMALS <http://www.peoriazoo.org/mammals.html>

Capybara

Hydrochaeris hydrochaeris

Peoria Zoo Exhibit

Habitat: Swamps, marshes and forests located near ponds, lakes, rivers and streams

Range: Central and South America

Activity Cycle: Crepuscular-more active at dawn and dusk

Size: Length: more than 4 feet, weight: up to 150 pounds, height: over 1.5 feet tall

Social Structure: Social animals that live in groups controlled by a dominant male with a distinct pecking order. The dominant male has a large shiny gland on the bridge of his nose, used to scent mark. They can be found in groups that average 10-30 individuals.

Distinguishing Features: Heavy barrel shaped bodies with coarse brown hair. Slightly webbed feet help move them through water. Eyes, nostrils, and ears are on top of their head, allowing them to be in the water with just the top of their head exposed.

Diet: Grasses, aquatic plants, fruits, tree bark

Life Span: 8-15 years

Did you know?

Capybaras are excellent swimmers and can remain underwater for 5 minutes.