

Species Fact Sheet



MAMMALS

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

Sheep

Ovis aries

Peoria Zoo Exhibit Contact Area

<http://www.peoriazoo.org/exhibits.html>

Habitat: Domesticated— found all over the world

Range: Most likely descended from the wild mouflon flocks from Sardinia and Corsica

Activity Cycle: Diurnal— active during the day

Size: Can range in weight from 44-400 pounds depending on the breed.

Social Structure: They live in herds and have a well-developed flocking instinct, moving over an area in groups rather than individuals.

Distinguishing Features: They come in all different sizes and colors depending on the breed. Most have crimped hair that is called wool.

Features: They are ruminants—a complex digestive system composed of four chambers. This allows them to break down cellulose from stems, leaves, and seed hulls into simpler carbohydrates.

Diet: Strictly herbivorous eating grassy plants

Life Span: Average 10-15 years

Did you know?

Domestication of sheep occurred 9000-11000 years ago and since then there have been more than 1200 breeds developed.