

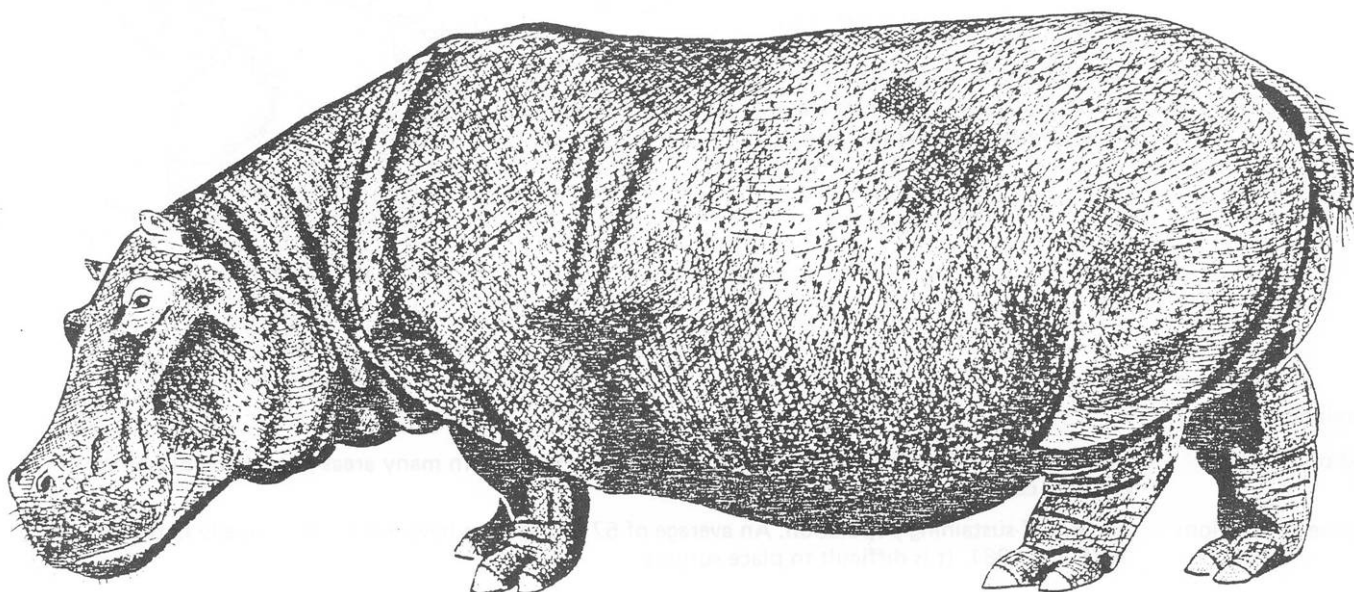


Hippopotamus amphibius

Linné, 1758

Common names:
engl.: Hippopotamus
esp.: Hipopótamo anfibio
fr.: Hippopotame amphibien
de.: Flusspferd, Nilpferd
ital.: Ippopotamo
dutch: Nijipaard
swah.: Kiboko

Scientific synonyms: None



Characteristics:

Adult:

General appearance: The hippopotamus has a barrel-shaped body, with short, stumpy legs and a large head adapted for an aquatic life. Eyes, ears and nostrils are placed on the same level at the top of the head.

Measurements: Head-body length 320-420 cm in males, 280-370 cm in females, height 130-165 cm, tail length 35-50 cm.

Weight: 1500-3200 kg in males, 1350-2500 kg in females.

Skin: Upper part of body grey-brown to blue-black, lower part pinkish. The skin is adapted to aquatic life and the rate of water loss on land is considerably higher than in other mammals.

Sexual dimorphism: Males are bigger than females.

Reproduction: Gestation lasts eight months. Litter size is one or rarely two. The female has one pair of mammae.

Juvenile: Birth underwater, weight 35-55 kg, length not recorded.

Distribution:

Rivers, lakes, pools of Africa south of the Sahara to north-eastern South Africa: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central A fr. Rep., Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea (unknown), Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia (probably extinct), Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia Niger, Nigeria (probably extinct), Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**Population:**

Wild population:

Numbers unknown. Extinct in northern and southern Africa. In many areas population higher than carrying capacity.

Captive population:

Large, self-sustaining population. An average of 57 young ones have been bred annually between 1979 and 1981. It is difficult to place surplus.

Trade:

Trade in living wild-caught specimens is nil because captive-bred ones are much cheaper. 1 live specimen recorded by CITES Parties from 1982 to 1984

Intraspecific variation:

H.a. amphibius: Sudan, Ethiopia.

H.a. capensis: South Africa.

H.a. constrictus: Zaire, Angola.

H.a. kiboko: Kenya, Somalia.

H.a. tschadensis: Chad, Nigeria, Central Africa.

Similar species:

The much smaller pygmy hippopotamus (sheet A-119.003.001.001).

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