

# GOAT, AFRICAN PYGMY

## RANGE:

Originally African plains - now domesticated and worldwide in distribution.

## HABITAT:

Grassy farmlands

## SIZE:

**Weight:** 44-60 lbs

**Height:** 21 inches

## LIFE EXPECTANCY:

Live 10-18 years in captivity, 8-10 years in wild.

## DIET:

Grasses, twigs, leaves, alfalfa hay and grain. Some plants can be poisonous to goats. Many household plant and ornamental garden plants, such as azaleas, are poisonous.

## REPRODUCTION:

- Pygmy goat does (females) can bear 1 to 4 kids every 9 to 12 months. The gestation period of pygmy goats is about 5 months.
- Does are usually bred for the first time at about twelve to eighteen months, although they may conceive as early as two months if care is not taken to separate them early from bucklings.
- Polyestrous sexual behavior means they can cycle year-round as opposed to dairy breeds.

## BEHAVIOR:

- Frequently, pygmy goats are kept as companion animals for other species of livestock and are often found at horse breeding facilities and race tracks.
- These are very social animals which use group strength to protect themselves from predators, usually large carnivores.
- When threatened, the herd will form a ring with the pregnant females and young in the center. Females will actually stimulate pregnancy in order to gain the extra protection that condition invokes from the herd.

## POINTS OF INTEREST:

- African pygmy goats, originally from Africa, were introduced to other areas by whalers who found that they were easily transported, and were a great source of milk and meat on long voyages.
- Colors can range from white and caramel to grey and black — most being a salt-and-pepper pattern called agouti.
- Pygmy goats and Nigerian dairy goats share a common ancestor, the West African Dwarf.

## STATUS:

African pygmy goats are plentiful due to domestication and farming. Largely farmed for milk, and cheeses, with goat milk having a higher butterfat content and a lovely sweet taste. However these ruminants can be destructive pets which can destroy land if overgrazing is allowed.

## REFERENCES:

<http://www.wcpga.org/PygmyInfo.htm>

<http://www.npga-pygmy.com/resources/husbandry/allreasons.asp>

<http://www.hensonrobinsonzoo.org/j001.html>

theZOO  
LOUISVILLE

PHOTO  
COMING  
SOON

Order:	<b>Artiodactyla</b>
Family:	<b>Bovidae</b>
Genus:	<b>Capra</b>
Species:	<b>hircus</b>