

Common Name: African pygmy goat	Scientific Name: <i>Capra hircus</i>
Class: Mammalia Order: Artiodactyla Family: Bovidae	Feeding Type: Herbivore Statistics: Height: 1 to 1.5 ft Weight: 70 to 90 lbs

DESCRIPTION: Color combinations vary; for example, black with white markings, white with black markings, and smoky gray; hair is short and fine during the summer, but can adapt to colder climates by producing a thick, wooly undercoat. It is a hardy goat, thriving in heat and humidity, as well as extreme cold. It has very strong hooves, meant primarily for climbing.

Males and females may, or may not, have horns. Both sexes may have two skin appendages at the throat, called wattles. Females are slightly smaller than males, and udders have only two nipples. Both males and females can have beards.

RANGE: Originally from west Africa, but domesticated worldwide

HABITAT: Wooded pastures

ADAPTATIONS: Pygmy goats are very clean and particular animals who test their food for taste and scent.

In Africa, they are often herded long distances due to scarce pasture land. Like their relative, the domestic/wild goat, they like steep slopes and are agile climbers, due in part to the hair which grows between the hooves to give traction on smooth surfaces.

Although they are very independent, they enjoy the company of other animals and do not like to be alone.

REPRODUCTION/GROWTH: Pygmy goats give birth to one or two young; however, in rare cases, three may be born. Births normally occur in April or May, but this may vary, depending upon the region. Young goats will often give birth to their first offspring very early, sometimes at the age of one year. A young goat is referred to as a kid.

LONGEVITY: 8-12 years

PREY/PREDATOR: Prey to large carnivores and humans
Predator to none

DIET: WILD: Vegetation
SZ: Hay, alfalfa, and herbivore diet

STATUS: The African pygmy goat exists in small numbers worldwide. Older breeds of livestock such as this one have almost been phased out due to changing agricultural practices. The few breeds of livestock animals used today, have been bred especially for increased production, whether for dairy, meat, or fibers.

The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy is an organization dedicated to saving these "minor" breeds of animals, therefore protecting the genetic diversity and viability of these heritage creatures. The African pygmy is listed as Rare under this organization, meaning there are fewer than 1,000 annual North American registrations,

and estimated fewer than 5,000 globally. Many domestic animals, such as the African pygmy goat, are rare or in danger of extinction, just like wild animals.

SPECIAL NOTES: African pygmy goats are a race of the domestic goat. They came from Africa and were originally called the Camaroon dwarf goat.

The pygmy goat is bred and kept by Africans for milk and meat. The African pygmy is a miniature dairy goat with milk production quite generous for its small size. It will produce as much as a quart and a half per day for up to ten months.

Although domestic goats, in general, originated in Asia, the African Pygmy is one of four types of dwarf goats from Africa. There are many local variations, but the four basic types are West African, Southern Sudanese, Somali, and Small East African. The type that is most widely distributed throughout Europe and the United States is the West African, commonly called the African Pygmy.

Because of its small size, this goat is economically raised and easy to care for. Its docile temperament and fun loving actions make it a good contact corral animal.



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