

# Guanaco ... a spunky South American camel!



## Why exhibit guanacos?

- Highlight the pampas grasslands of South America with this keystone species, as well as other popular sympatric animals such as rheas, burrowing owls, pumas, and mara.
- Compare and contrast this South American species with its much larger and much more familiar Old World relatives: camels!
- Involve guests in reading the body language of guanacos (especially the ears and tail), which is loaded with information that visitors can interpret for themselves!
- Catch visitors' attention with the memorable way guanacos show off their annoyance: by spitting foul-smelling stomach contents up to 6 feet away!
- Use the guanaco's resemblance to the familiar llama (domesticated from the guanaco) as a launching point for sharing conservation threats that domestic animals can pose to wild species.

### MEASUREMENTS

**Length:** 6-7 feet

**Height:** 3-4.5 feet  
at shoulder

**Weight:** 200-300 lbs



Montane grassland



South America

IUCN  
LEAST  
CONCERN  
CITES II

550,000  
in the wild

## Stewardship Opportunities

Partner with the IUCN's South American Camelid Specialist Group to support work in the wild

<http://camelid.org/>

## Care and Husbandry

**Candidate Program:** 34.36.13 (83) in 26 AZA institutions (2017)

**Species coordinator:** Denise Ibarra, Abilene Zoological Gardens  
[denise.ibarra@abilenetx.gov](mailto:denise.ibarra@abilenetx.gov); (325) 437-4696

**Social nature:** Herd-living. Can be housed as a single-sex group (males or females) or a breeding herd with one male and multiple females.

**Mixed species:** Guanaco have been successfully exhibited with tapirs, capybara, mara, rhea, and waterfowl, as well as a variety of other hoofstock from around the world.

**Housing:** Extremely heat and cold tolerant if provided with basic shelter from the elements.

**Medical notes:** A healthy, hardy species. Operant conditioning can be used successfully for minor procedures, but chemical immobilization is recommended for most medical work.

**Special requirements:** Annual shearing is not necessary.

**Keeper resources:** Low workload – the use of latrine spots simplifies daily cleaning.

Please contact the TAG for full husbandry guidelines.

<http://www.azaungulates.org/>

