

AZA Pig Peccary & Hippo TAG SPECIES MANAGEMENT AND HUSBANDRY GUIDELINES

Species Description:

Common Name: European Wild Boar

Taxonomic Name: *Sus Sus scrofa*

Legal Status: Vulnerable according to IUCN. No special status according to CITES. Reintroduction programs in Scandinavia have been successful.

Distribution: Originally occurred in Europe, Asia, North Africa and the Malay Archipelago. Later introduced throughout the world as domesticated animals by humans.

Habitat: Found in a wide variety of habitats as a result of domestication and introduction to new areas. Typically found in moist forests and shrublands, especially oak forests and areas where reeds are abundant.

Habits: Wild pigs are generally active at dusk, dawn and at night, and may travel 2-15 km within an area of 20-150 hectares. Their diet includes fungi, tubers and bulbs, vegetation, grains and nuts, fruit, eggs, small vertebrates, invertebrates and carrion. They form "sounders" or herds consisting of 20 individuals on average. These are generally several older females with young offspring. Males are solitary.

Physical Characteristics :

Weight:

Adults: 80-300kg
Young: 500-1,500g

Size:

Body Length: 90-180 cm
Shoulder Height: 55-110 cm

Males are generally larger than females.

Color:

Body is usually covered with stiff bristles and usually some finer fur ranging from dark gray to brown or black. Many individuals have side whiskers and a mane on the nape.

Other:

They are strong swimmers, have an excellent sense of smell, are intelligent and vocalize by squealing or grunting. Females have 6 pairs of mammae. Lifespan is about 10 years in the wild, although the record is about 27 years.

Husbandry

Housing Requirements:

Facility perimeter/barriers-

- Materials:** Rock moats and walls, recycled plastic stockade fence and chain link in concrete footing. Height should be a minimum of 5 ft.
- Special Considerations:** Animals should not be able to chew on or lift barriers.
- Substrate recommendations:** All substrates should be natural, cushion and be non-abrasive to animals feet, such as mulch, grass or sandy soil.
- Size of Exhibit:** This can be subjective based on the group size and exhibit components. Animals enjoy variety within the exhibit and room to run. For specific concerns please consult with San Diego Zoo.
- Temperature tolerances:** Can tolerate cool to cold temperatures. Will rest in mud wallows and seek out sprinklers or other water sources to cool off. Young animals require a heat source, besides bedding, if ambient temperature falls below 5C (40F).
- Shade requirements:** Needed to provide relief from direct sunlight during hotter portions of the year.

Indoor/holding facilities:

- Materials:** Multiple (1-1.2m wide) gates operated by pulley systems with the controls situated in such a way that the caretaker is concealed and away from the entrance of the holding pen when trying to trap animals in holding. At least two holding pens are recommended with several entrances and exits, creating a "round-about" allowing subordinate animals to easily escape from dominant animals.
- Size:** Minimum size is 150 square feet per animal, adding at least 50 square feet for each additional animal.
- Gate Recommendations:** Rope or chain pulls/controls need to be out of animals' reach or protected to prevent animals from having access to them.

Daily Care and Maintenance:

- Water Delivery/Placement:** Standard livestock tanks, automatically refilling livestock drinkers etc, situated in such a way as to minimize contamination, animals have a tendency to climb in and contaminate drinker.
- Food Delivery/Placement:** Ground feeders, stock troughs. Feeders should have smooth surfaces. Multiple feeding stations are recommended to prevent food-related aggression. Areas around feeders should be kept clean to prevent excess ingestion of dirt.
- Appearance of normal Feces:** Greenish-brown, pelleted to slightly clumped.

Hoof trim Requirements: Will vary depending on activity level and individual. Trim as needed during chemical immobilizations. Hooftrims have been infrequent.

Weight Measurement: Bar scales with platform on top, at the end of a corridor. Animals are moved to the platform using a secure push board/door or using food incentives. Weights are also taken when a specimen has been crated and/or immobilized.

Social Groupings: Several adult females with female offspring, and male offspring no older than 8-10 months. An adult male can be introduced if the female(s) seem(s) receptive. However, the adult male needs to be separated from female group if one of the females is suspected to be pregnant.

Behavior: The snout is used as a plow to move soil and uproot vegetation. The tusks are sometimes used to mark trees. Enrichment items can be used to lessen rooting behavior.

Reproduction:

Sexual Maturity: For both sexes is 8-10 months, however, females generally do not mate until 18 months of age. Males usually are not able to compete for mating privileges until they reach full size at approximately 5 years.

Gestation: 105-125 days

Breeding behavior: Breeding season is dependant on regional climate. In warmer climates, females can have several litters per year. Females have an estrus cycle of 21 days, are receptive for 2-3 days and generally produce one litter annually.

Parturition: Signs of: Increased girth, enlarged udder, distended vulva, pacing and restlessness.

Females: Nesting behavior will increase a few days before birth. Will become less tolerant of conspecifics.

Birth of Young: Usually 4-8 per litter. Young are born with light-colored longitudinal stripes which fade and disappear between 4-6 months. Weaned after 3-4 months.

Neonatal Care Preparations: Dam's preparations: Provide sow with as much space as possible. Provide various types of nesting material in adequate quantities to accommodate nesting behavior. Pine shavings or similar materials should be avoided, as they may clump onto neonates and their mucus membranes.

Keeper Preparations: Installation of "creep" (area only accessible to youngest offspring) or other method to enable young to investigate and eat solid food undisturbed by adults or older siblings. Create low-stress environment, monitoring behavior of adults closely after parturition; it is not uncommon for the dam to cannibalize her young

Diet:

See attached diet sheets. Folivore biscuits can be used to train and reinforce behaviors. Vegetables such as apples and bananas can be used to administer medications.

Medical Concerns/Problems:

Ivermectin is given, as per veterinary instructions, to reduce internal parasite load. Litterguard has been given to pregnant females, as per veterinary instructions, to vaccinate against E. coli in order to have antibodies passed on to offspring through colostrum. At about five weeks of age an exam is performed and the young receive a microchip for identification purposes. Weights are obtained and general health is determined. The animal is then returned to the mother as soon as possible. The exam should be given far enough away so that the piglets cannot be heard by her.

Transportation and handling

Level of handling depends on amount of conditioning and desensitization animal has been exposed to, as well as animal's temperament. Otherwise chemical immobilization is recommended.

Animals can be transported in well ventilated crates, singly and by group in a livestock trailer.