

DROMEDARY CAMEL

Camelus dromedarius

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Fast facts

ANIMAL GROUP	Mammal (camel family, camelids)
NATIVE REGION	North Africa, the Middle East and Arabia
HABITAT	Hot, dry deserts
DIET	Grasses, leaves and twigs, even thorny, salty plants
HEIGHT	About 6 ft at the shoulder; 7 ft at the hump
WEIGHT	900 to 1,300 lb
LIFESPAN	40 to 50 years
STATUS	Domesticated
OUR CAMELS	Abu and Chloe



Photo: Plumpton Park Zoo

Did you know?

- A dromedary's single hump can hold up to about 80 pounds of fat.
- A thirsty camel can drink about thirty gallons in a quarter of an hour.
- Camels can lose water equal to more than 30 percent of their body weight. Most mammals die at 15 percent.
- More than 15 million dromedaries live today, but none are truly wild in their native range.
- A calf weighs about 77 pounds at birth and walks soon after.

Words to know

Herbivore: An animal that eats only plants.

Cud: Food a camel brings back up to chew again.

Domesticated: Tamed and raised by people over many generations.

Feral: Once domestic, now living wild.

Think about it

1. How many humps does a dromedary have, and what is inside?
2. Why does a camel not start sweating until it gets very hot?
3. Name two features that protect a dromedary from blowing sand.
4. Do camels really spit? What are they actually doing?
5. Why are dromedaries listed as domesticated instead of getting a wild conservation status?

Draw it

Draw a dromedary next to a Bactrian camel. Label the one hump and the two humps, the eyelashes, the nostrils and the broad two-toed feet.

Draw here