MEET THEM AT PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

DROMEDARY CAMEL

Camelus dromedarius

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · © **2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.**
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Fast facts

ANIMAL GROUP	Mammal (camel family, camelids)
NATIVE REGION	Arabia; now herded from Africa to northern India
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	Up to 40 years
STATUS	Domesticated
OUR CAMELS	Abu and Chloe



Photo: Plumpton Park Zoo

Did you know?

- A dromedary's single hump can weigh up to about 85 pounds, mostly fat.
- A thirsty camel can drink about 26 gallons of water in ten minutes.
- Camels can lose water equal to more than 30 percent of their body weight. Most mammals die at 15 percent.
- FAO counts more than 40 million camels, about 97% of them dromedaries. None are 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.

Where it lives in the wild



Lives in the wild ★ Plumpton Park Zoo, Rising Sun, MD

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.

STANDARDS · GRADES 3–4 **WRITTEN FOR GRADES 3–5**

Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): **4-LS1-1 · 3-LS4-3**
Pennsylvania (STEELS): **3.1.4.A · 3.1.3.G**

Draw here

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/dromedary-camel/ · **Sources:** Köhler-Rollefson, Mammalian Species 375; Animal Diversity Web; FAO; Faye (2020); Kadim & Purchas (2019); Alhaddad et al. (2024); Plumpton Park Zoo records.
Supports Maryland and Delaware (NGSS) and Pennsylvania (STEELS) standards: 4-LS1-1 (3.1.4.A) · 3-LS4-3 (3.1.3.G)
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DROMEDARY CAMEL

Before and after your visit

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Before you visit · 5 minutes

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Predict: where in the wild does the dromedary camel live?

Circle one (or more if it lives on more than one):

Africa | Asia | Australia | Europe | North America | South America

2. Predict: what does it eat?

☐ plants ☐ other animals ☐ both

3. Word hunt: find these words on page 1. Put a check by each one you already know.

☐ Herbivore ☐ Cud ☐ Domesticated ☐ Feral

Pick one word and write what it means in your own words:

_____

_____

4. My question: one thing I want to find out when I see the dromedary camel.

_____

_____

At the zoo · look closely

Watch for one minute. What is it doing?

☐ resting ☐ eating ☐ moving ☐ watching ☐ with others

Draw or describe one body part that helps it survive, and say how it helps.

Draw here

After your visit · talk it over

1. Check your prediction. Native region: Arabia; now herded from Africa to northern India. Was your guess right?

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ partly

2. Diet check. The fact sheet says: Grasses, leaves and twigs, even thorny, salty plants. What did you learn about how it finds or eats food?

_____

_____

3. Discuss with a partner, then write your best answer.

• Why does a camel not start sweating until it gets very hot?

_____

• Name two features that protect a dromedary from blowing sand.

_____

4. Exit ticket.

One thing I learned: _____

One thing I still wonder: _____

ADJUST IT

Grades K–2: talk and draw instead of writing; read the questions aloud. **Grades 6–8:** add evidence from the fact sheet and the animal page to every answer.

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/dromedary-camel/ · Fact sheet page 1 has the fast facts, map and vocabulary this page refers to.

Grades 3–4 · Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): **4-LS1-1 · 3-LS4-3** · Pennsylvania (STEELS): **3.1.4.A · 3.1.3.G**