
Llama

Lama glama

Class: *Mammalia*

Order: Artiodactyla

Family: *Camelidae*

Characteristics: Adult llamas are around 6 feet tall from head to toe. They have two hooved toes with a thick leathery pad on the bottom. They have long shaggy hair that can be brown, white, grey, or black in color. Like other ungulates (cattle, camels, deer, etc...), they have three stomachs and regurgitate food as cud for further chewing. They lack upper-front teeth (incisors) but will clip grass using their bottom incisors and hardened upper gums. They also have sharp upper teeth used for fighting (ADW).

Behavior: Llamas are social animals living in groups of up to 20 individuals with one dominant male. Domestic and wild groups will lay claim to a large area of ground and defend it vigorously. They will also designate an area for defecation, possibly as marking their territory. The groups use a variety of tactics to defend themselves against predation. They will first vocalize to the entire group of potential predators. They will then either flee or fight. When they fight, they are known to spit cud, kick and bite. The lead male will protect their groups in a similar fashion from other intruding males (ADW).

Reproduction: Mating usually occurs late summer, early fall. The act of mating induces ovulation within 24 to 36 hours. Gestation lasts 360 days. Llamas will give birth to one cría (Spanish for baby animal). The cría will be walking around an hour after birth and become independent from their moms by 4 months of age.

Diet: Wild: Shrubs, grasses and lichens

Zoo: Hay, llama pellets, occasional treats such as fruits & vegetables.

Access to salt licks.

Conservation: Not Evaluated.

FYI:

- Llamas will accept other animals into their group and protect them vigorously. The zoo used to place baby camels with the llama for socialization.
- Domesticated cousins of the guanaco and vicuñas ([National Geographic](#)).
- Copulation can last up to 65 minutes ([England et al 1971](#)).



Range & Habitat:

Peru, Bolivia, Chile & Argentina
High Mountains



Lifespan: up to 20 years in captivity, 20 years in the wild.

Special Adaptations:
High blood hemoglobin content.

IUCN Conservation Status:

Not evaluated

