

# Primary Worksheets: Capybara

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The capybara is the world's largest rodent that is closely related to the guinea pig and chinchilla. They are a semi-aquatic rodent from South America that weighs around a hundred pounds and is around two feet tall and a meter long.

Capybaras have brown or reddish-brown fur. When they get older, their fur gets thinner. Thin fur can be sunburnt more easily, so they need to stay in the water! Their eyes, ears and nostrils are high on their heads, making it easier for them to breathe and keep above the water when swimming.

They live in grassy wetlands or close to rivers in many parts of South America. They spend the hottest hours of the day in the water, and the rest on land eating grass. Capybaras have webs between their feet that helps them swim. They cannot breathe underwater but can hold their breath for up to 5 minutes at a time.



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Capybaras are not endangered as their population is not increasing or decreasing. Humans can interact with them, but it is not common as it can cause disease. Capybaras can live in towns or zoos.

Many predators like to eat them because of their large size and inability to defend themselves. They are a favourite food for jaguars, eagles, anaconda snakes, and many other animals. Sometimes they hide in the water to get away from their predators, with only their noses sticking out to breathe.

Capybaras are hunted for their meat and sometimes they are raised on farms. Their skin is tough and is sometimes used to make high quality leather, especially for gloves. They can be kept as pets but it's not recommended because of their size and nature.





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Capybaras eat plants, mostly grass. They are herbivores and will eat around 3kgs of plants every day! They are known to be great grass cutters, mowing down lawns for extra snacking! They are also known to eat their own poop as it helps them digest food better.

Their babies are usually born in litters of four at one time. They can start to eat grass once they are about a week old, but they will also keep nursing from their mothers and even from other grown females until they are about four months old.

They live in large groups, usually 10-30 capybaras together. Some groups have even had 100 capybaras. They talk to each other using many sounds like clicks, grunts, whistles, and barks.

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**Answer the questions.**

What is a capybara?

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What do they look like?

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Where do they live?

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**Answer the questions.**

What do they eat?

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Why are they hunted?

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Can we keep them as pets?

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