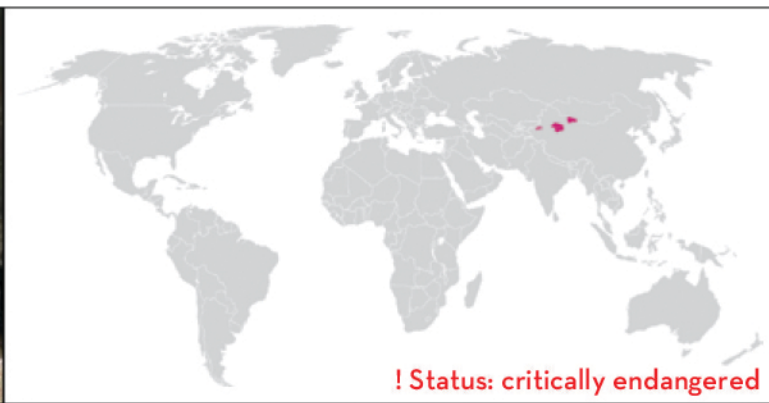


BACTRIAN CAMEL

updated March 2017



Range	Primarily in the central Asian deserts of the north Himalayas
Habitat	Steppe grasslands and rocky deserts with temperatures ranging over 100° F (38° C) in the summer to -20° F (-29° C) in the winter
Diet (wild)	Herbivores (grass, leaves and grain) that prefer vegetation that is prickly, dry, salty, and/or bitter
Diet (captivity)	Hay and grain
Description	Height: 7 feet; length: 7–10 feet; weight: 1,000–1,500 pounds. Bactrian camels have two humps with a thick, shaggy beige coat that falls away as the temperature rises. To protect themselves from sand and harsh conditions they live in, camels have bushy eyebrows, a double row of long eyelashes, hair inside the ears, and they can tightly close their nostrils and lips to keep out flying sand. They have wide padded feet and calloused knees.
Lifespan	30–50 years
Reproduction	After a gestation period of 12–14 months, the female will give birth to a single (sometimes double) offspring every other year in March or April. Young camels are able to stand and walk when they are a few hours old. The young will nurse for about one year. Female Bactrian camels become sexually mature at about three to four years of age. Female can reproduce once every two years. Males are sexually mature at five or six years of age. During mating season, male camels will become aggressive and often bite, spit and try to sit on other males.
Behavior	Bactrian camels travel the deserts in caravans of six to 20 individuals. The groups will be composed of adolescent males, females and their young and are lead by a single adult male. Bactrian camels rarely sweat, helping them conserve fluids for long periods of time. Their two humps store fat and convert it to water and energy. The fat helps them survive the tough conditions of the desert. As the stored fat is used up, the humps become floppy and lean to one side. Bactrian camels move slowly, but can reach up 40 mph when they need to.
Our animals	1 female, 1 male. Born: 03/1998 (female); 05/2010 (male). Birth place: St. Louis Zoological Park (female); Minnesota Zoological Gardens (male)
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camels can drink up to 30 gallons of water in 10 minutes and store it in special sacks around their stomach. • An easy way to remember which camel has one or two humps: Bactrian camels have two humps—the letter “B” has two humps; Dromedary camels have one hump—the letter “D” has one hump. • The first time food is swallowed it is not fully chewed. The partly masticated food (called cud) goes into the stomach and later is brought back up for further chewing. • Camel races are a popular sport in Morocco. The camels go at paces similar to race horses. • Each hump can hold up to 80 pounds of fat. • Wild camels were tamed and domesticated 3,500 years ago; now almost all are domestic. Camels will take voice commands from their owner. Humans also use many of the camel’s by-products, especially the meat and milk. • Bactrian camels were thought to be extinct in the wild until an expedition found some in the Gobi desert in 1957. These wild groups are in the severe danger of going extinct and little is known about them. The estimated number of wild camels ranges from 400 to 700 animals in Mongolia and 200 in China.

Phylum
ChordataClass
MammaliaOrder
ArtiodactylaFamily
CamelidaeGenus
Camelusspecies
C. bactrianus