

updated March 2017



<b>Range</b>	Native range all along the Andes mountains, but are not found in the wild. An indispensable pack animal, herds are maintained extensively by the native human populations in Argentina, Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia and Peru
<b>Habitat</b>	Alpine grass and shrub land
<b>Diet (wild)</b>	Grass and shrubs
<b>Diet (captivity)</b>	Grain and hay
<b>Description</b>	Height: 4 feet (shoulder); Length: 5–6 feet; weight: 200–450 pounds. Coats may be solid, spotted, or marked in a variety of patterns. Wool colors range from white to black and many shades of gray, beige, red and roan. Two-toed foot with a thick leathery pad on each foot's sole to assist on rocky trails and gravel slopes. Front of each toe has a sharp nail used for traction and defense.
<b>Lifespan</b>	15–29 years
<b>Reproduction</b>	After a gestation period of 11 months, one offspring (called a cria) is born weighing 20–35 pounds. The mother neither licks the newborn nor eats the afterbirth, but the young will stand and follow its mother 15–30 minutes after birth. The female comes into estrous 24 hours after giving birth but will not breed for another two weeks. Breeding occurs seasonally and mating takes place while lying down on their chests. Copulation may last 10–20 minutes; females are induced to ovulate once breeding occurs.
<b>Behavior</b>	Llamas are diurnal herbivores, with three-compartment stomachs, that live in groups or herds. They are gentle and curious with a calm nature. Some evidence suggests a territorial system, with males maintaining a harem of breeding females. Head and ear position is important in communication. Llamas will first run from danger, but if cornered can strike with their front feet. Llamas have an unusually high content of hemoglobin in their bloodstream and oval shaped red blood corpuscles, both of which are adaptations for surviving in an oxygen-poor, high altitude environment.
<b>Our animals</b>	2 females, 1 male. Born: 03/1999, 06/1999 (females); 09/1996 (male)
<b>Cool stuff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Llamas don't bite (they lack upper incisors), but are accurate spitters, hitting objects as far as 6 feet away.</li> <li>• Llamas which are well-socialized and halter-trained after weaning are very friendly and pleasant to be around. They are extremely curious and most will approach people easily. However, llamas that are bottle-fed or over-socialized and over-handled as youth will become extremely difficult to handle when mature and they will begin to treat humans as they treat each other, which is characterized by bouts of spitting, kicking and neck wrestling.</li> <li>• Llamas will lay their ears back when agitated.</li> <li>• Llamas were first domesticated 4,000–5,000 years ago and are prized for their meat, milk and wool production. Llama wool is very soft and lanolin-free.</li> <li>• When carrying a pack, llamas can carry up to 30 percent of their body weight for 5–8 miles</li> <li>• Llamas are used as guard animals in the sheep industry. Predation losses drop significantly when llamas are used. Research suggests the use of multiple guard llamas is not as effective as one. Multiple males tend to bond with one another, rather than with the livestock, and may ignore the flock.</li> <li>• Guanacos and vicuñas live in the wild, while llamas, as well as alpacas, exist only as domesticated animals.</li> <li>• Llamas are in the same family as camels.</li> </ul>

Phylum  
ChordataClass  
MammaliaOrder  
ArtiodactylaFamily  
CamelidaeGenus  
Lamaspecies  
*L. glama*