

➤ **ORDER: ARTIODACTLA.**

GENERAL TAXONOMIC CHARACTERS:

- Even – teed ungulates
- Toes or digits normally two or four-except in the family Tayassuidae (Peccaries) in which there are four toes in front, three in hind foot
- Elongated legs
- Legs supported by 3rd and 4th digits (E.P. Walker – 1355) i.e. body of animal supported by 3rd and 4th digits on the legs.
- Remaining or laterals digits rudimentary or reduced.
- Horns, when present are paired and are permanent in Africa species, unlike in the temperate spp where antlers are shed off in winter.
- Size very variable – from the small Chevrotains (HB-46-56cm) to the giraffe which stands up to 3.5 metres, and the hippo which weight about 3 metric tonnes.

➤ **FAMILY: SUIDAE**

GENERAL TAXONOMIC CHARACTERS

- Medium – sized mammals
- Barrels – like and stocky bodies and short necks.
- Head long and pointed with a mobile snout (muzzle) which is flattened at the tip.
- Fore- legs shorter than hind legs which gives the animal a forward dropping appearance. (contrast this with the Hyaena)
- Each foot has 4 toes – but only the 3rd and 4th reach the ground and are hoofed, whereas the 2nd and 5th digits have smaller hooves and are placed higher up to the limb- and do not reach the ground.
- Hair scanty to almost absent.
- A mane is present in some forms (warthog), tail with bushy coarse hair at tip.
- Two – chambered, non-ruminating in appearance.

- Upper incisor reduced or absent, and canines usually reduced or lost- although in some cases canines are enlarged and tusk-like in appearance.
- The stomachs of members of the order show marked variations:

Family	type of stomach	Ruminant/non-Ruminant
Suidae and Tayassuidae	Two-chambered	Non-Ruminant
Hipopotamidae	three-chambered	Non-Ruminant
Camelidae and Tragulidae	Three chambered	Ruminant
Cavidae, Girafidae, Antilocapridae	Four Chambered	Ruminants
Bovidae i.e. the true Ruminants with	Rumen Omasum	Reticulum Abomasum

- DF: I:3/3, C: 1/1, PM: 4/4, M: $\frac{3}{4} = 44$

Except in Babirusas (Indonesia)

L: 2/3, C: 1/1, 3/2, 3/3 = 34

- Large upper canines grow outward and backwards and lower canines grow upward and backwards, tending to form a complete circle. In certain species the canines grow to great size forming tusk like structures which are formidable weapons in times of defence.

- Babirusas

- Warthog

The following General will be discussed:

- (a) Potamochoerus - Bush – Pig
(Red River Hog)
- (b) Phacochoerus - Warthog

(c) Hylochoerus - Giant Forest Hog

➤ **FAMILY: HIPPOPOTAMIDAE**

GENERAL TAXONOMIC CHARACTERS

- Medium – size to huge animals
- Barrel – shaped bodies hanging very close to the ground.
- Legs short with four digits
- Incisors and canines well developed and growing continuously.
- Skin almost hairless – pinkish to dark in colour.
- Tail short with strands of coarse hairs at tip.
- Stomach three – chambered and non-ruminating.
- DF: I : 2 – 3/1, c: 1/1, PM:4/4, M:3/3 = 38 – 42.

The family Hippopotamidae has got two genera only, and the animals are only found in Africa.

➤ **FAMILY TRAGULIDAE (WATER CHEVROTAINS) GENERAL TAXONOMIC CHARACTERS (AFRICAN)**

- Small and slender antelopes (Africa type W.C.) more closely related to camelids and suides than duikers and deer.
- Head small with pointed snout.
- Legs long, thin and delicate with four digits (2 + 2).
- Three – chambered stomach and ruminant.
- Horns absent.
- Upper canines elongated to form “tusks” – and protruding downwards.

➤ **FAMILY: GIRAFFIDAE**

GENERAL TAXONOMIC CHARACTERS:

- Family in which is found the tallest land mammal.
- Legs and necks very much elongated compared to other Artiodactyls. Neck with same 7 vertebrae found in other Artiodactyls, but greatly elongated.

- Fore and Hind feet with two digits only (false digits absent)
- Horns small, covered with skin and hair only (no horny sheaths)
- Four chambered stomach and ruminating.
- DF: I: 0/3, C: 0/1, PM: 3/3 M:3/3 = 32.
- The family, found are confined in Africa only and is represented two Genera

➤ **Genus: Potamochoerus (Bush pig and Red River Hog)**

General Taxonomic Characters: Pig – like animals; elongated face; laterally flattened body; colouration varies from reddish brown to black; young longitudinally stripped, canines tusk like; pronounced light – coloured mane along top of neck and back, whitish and blackish face.

Items	<i>P. Porcus (Bush pig or Red River Hog)</i>	
Body structure	Body shape same as in Genus (only one specie in Genus) SH: 63 – 76cm; HB: 127cm; T: 38cm; WT: 54 – 81kg.	
Geographical distribution	Widely distributed in most Africa except most of S. Africa, Angola and Namibia and Sahara Desert.	
Habitat preferences:	Guinea Savannah/Sahel Savannah and High Forest including Montane Forests.	
Feeding habit	Roots, berries, wild fruit; reptiles, eggs and young birds. Omnivorous.	
Reproduction	Litter size: 2 – 8 CP: about 5 months life spans 12 – 15 years	

Items	<i>P. Porcus</i>	
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Behaviour	Social animals living in sounders (group) of 4-20 individuals – sometimes up to 40; nocturnal; use snout as “ploughs” to dig roots and bulbs; when alarmed emit snorting grants like domestics pig.	
Economic Status	Fairly Plentiful in most of Africa. Hunted for meat; can be very destructive to yam, cassava and related foods crops	

Items	<i>P. aethiopi</i>	
General tax. Character	Body shapes as in genus; SH; 76cm, HB 152-177cm, T: 46cm; WT:68-11kg males usually much heavier than females; other characters as in genus	
Distribution	Distributed in most of Africa except most of S. Africa thick High Forest and Sahara Desert.	
Habitat Preference	Sahel/Guinea Savannah including open High Lowland forests and Montane forests.	
Reproduction	Litter size of 2-5 young, GP: 171-195 days: life span of about 15 years.	

Genus: Phacochoer

General Taxonomic Characters:

Items	<i>P. aethiopi</i>		
Behaviour	Diurnal; social animal living in groups of up		

	to 10 individuals, sleeps in Aardvak burrows; likes and baths; sometimes kneels while feeding; poor eyesight but hearing and smelling good; old males cornered otherwise timid; uses tusks to dig roots; bulbs etc. unlike the bush – pig which uses its muzzle or snout.		
Status and economic considerations	Fairly abundant is most of African where it is found; hunted for its sweet meat; not destructive to farm crops like bush pig.		

➤ **Genus:** **Hylochoerus (Lant Forest Hog)**

General Taxonomic Characters: Largest of the Suidea in Africa heavily built elongated body and legs; rump higher than shoulders, body covered with scattered long coarse black hair forming a crest to the neck and back wide elongated snout facial glands in front of eyes; tusks small and undeveloped; upper canines forming largest tusk; tuft of black hair at tip of tail.

Items	<i>Hylochoerus meinertzhageni</i> (Forest Hog) – only one species in the genus	
Tax. Character	SH: 102cm; HB: 152 – 177cm; T: 38cm; WT: 160 – 275kg; other taxonomic characters same as in the genus only one species in the genus.	
Geographical distribution	Ivory Coast; Ghana; Togo; Republic Of Benin; Central African Republic, Cameroun, Gabon; Zaire; Congo; SW Sudan; SW Uganda and Kenya Northern Tanzania (unconfirmed)	
Habitat Preferences:	Dense high Forests of both lowland and montane areas.	
Feeding habit	Grasses, fruits, roots, and berries and leaves	

Reproduction	L.S.: 2-6; GP: 4 months; Life span: 15 years	
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Genus: Hylochoerus

General Taxonomic Characters:

Items	<i>H. Meinertzhageni</i>		
Behaviour	Social animals living in groups of 4 – 20 animals old males solitary; mainly nocturnal – although can be diurnal in protected areas: use regular pathways in dense high forest which become visible tunnels; hardly dig for their food like warthogs; have been known to charge without provocation; like to wallow in water and mud.		
Economic Status	Vary rare – not easily seen like other suidae; can be destructive to farm and mud.		

➤ **Genus: Genus Hippopotamus (Common Hippopotamus)**

General Taxonomic Characters: Huge barrel shapes body; short legs with four digit; incisors and canines developed into tusks – especially the lower canines, two pairs of upper incisors; (one pair in the Choeropsis – (Pygmy Hippo) broad and large muzzle. Eyes and nostrils prominent when submerged in water, skin is brownish grey to pinkish; only ones species, stomach three chambered and non – ruminating; body produce only sticky droplets of moisture which appear re-giving rise to the statement that ‘Hippos sweat blood’.

Items	<u>Hippotamus amphibious</u>	
Body structure	SH: 140 – 160cm; HB: 330 – 475cm; T: 38 – 56cm; WT: 3 – 4.5 metric tons; lower canines grow very big reaching up to 0.6 metre (about 5 feet). And weighed up to 3kg. other taxonomic characters like in the genus.	
Geographical distribution	Most of <u>Africa south of Sahara</u> except most of South Africa, Angola, Namibia and Sahel areas of Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia.	

Genus: _____

General Taxonomic Characters: Genus Hippopotamus (continued)

Items	<i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i>	
Habitat preferences	Streams, lakes and ponds with permanent water and bordered by grassland up to an altitude of 8,000 feet.	
Feeding habit	Mostly grazers	
Reproduction	L. S. of one young only; Gestation period of 227 – 240 days and life span of 40 – 50 years.	
Behaviour	Social animal living in schools of 5 – 30 individuals, mainly aquatic; nocturnal; can submerge under water up to 6 minutes; travels long distances on land up to 33km in search of food at night, during rainy season can travel long distances to live in temporary pool (a form of proposeful immigration); normally placid, but can be very dangerous when provoked.	

Genus: _____

General Taxonomic Characters:

Genus Hippopotamus (continued)

Items		
Economic status	Still plentiful in most suitable habitats, especially protected areas hunted for meat “tusks” of commercial value, <u>beneficial to fish industry</u> ; can be destructive to crops and even fisher men when molested.	

➤ **Genus:** _____ **Genus Cheoropsis (P. Hippopotamus)**

General Taxonomic Characters: General shape like common hippo, but size very much reduced; pig – like in appearance eyes placed on side of head; body almost hairless, expect a few bristles on lips; incisors and canines not well developed like in common Hippo, one pair of upper incisors; back arched; legs short with digits spread out; one species in the genus.

Items	<u>Choeropsis liberiensis</u>	
Body structure	SH: 75 – 100cm; HB: 150 – 180cm, T; 16cm, WT: 160 – 272kg other taxonomic characters like in the genus.	

Geographical distribution	Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast and possibly but doubtful in Nigeria in the Delta Of River Niger.	
Habitat preferences	Swampy forests – along streams and creeks in high lowland forests.	
Feeding habit	Browser and Grazer, feeding on shoots, roots, grasses and fruits.	
Reproduction	L. S. I young; GP: 201 – 210 days; life span 17 – 40 years	

Genus: _____

General Taxonomic Characters:

Choeropsis (continued)

Items	<i>Choeropsis liberiensis</i>	
Behavior	Secretive animals – little is known of their habits. less aquatic than common hippo; live singly or in pairs, but more solitary; when alarmed, run into forest swampy thickets as opposed to common hippo which run into water. Nocturnal.	
Economic status	Numbers very much reduced – rare animal to see; hunted for meat where found – although completely protected in most countries where found.	

➤ **Genus:** **Hvemoschus (water Chovretain)**

General Taxonomic Characters:

As in family

Items	<i>Hyemoschus Aquaticus (water chevretain)</i>	
Body structure	SH: 30 – 36cm; HB: 91 – 102cm; T: 5.5cm; WT: 14 – 16kg; other taxonomic characters like family genus.	
Geographical distribution	Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast; Ghana; Togo; Republic of Benin; Nigeria; Cameroun, Gabon; Central African Republic; Congo (Brazaville) and Western Uganda.	
Habitat preferences	Mostly browsers; feeding on fruits, leaves. Seeds and water weeds. Diet also consist of animal matter like fish, insects and flesh of dead animal omnivorous.	
Reproduction	Litter size of I young; Gestation period of about 120 days; life span unknown animal not well studies.	

Genus: Hyemoschus

General Taxonomic Characters:

Items	<i>H. Aquatiouas (Water Chevrotain)</i>	
Behaviour	Semi- aquatic; shy animals – plunging in water when alarmed; good swimmers, nocturnal and solitary (expect during breeding season when male and female pair).	
Economic status	Population status not well documented but probably still found in few numbers; hunted for meat where found	

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