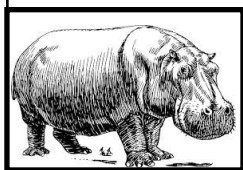




Reading in Geography

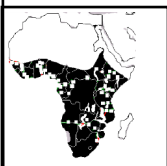


HIPPOPOTAMUS



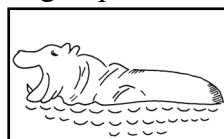
The name hippopotamus comes from the term 'river horse'. The term river _____ is used in Africa. "Hippo" is a common name for the animal. The hippo is a large, mostly herbivorous mammal. It is larger than all other four legged animals except the _____ and white rhino. The common hippopotamus is semiaquatic (amphibious) - lives in and _____ of the water.

The hippopotamus is found only in the continent of Africa. It is also found only in the southern half of Africa. Its habitat is the waterways of sub-Saharan Africa. Interestingly, while hippopotamuses are



generally found on river flats, they have been seen at _____ altitudes in near freezing conditions. Generally however, the hippo inhabits rivers, _____ and mangrove swamps, where territorial bulls preside over a stretch of river and groups of five to thirty females and young.

During the day the hippo feeds on aquatic vegetation. It may swim the length of its territory, or more than 40 km, in search of food. The hippo spends most of the day with only its eyes, _____, and nostrils above the surface of a river. At night the hippo _____ on land plants. It is fond of sugarcane and corn and is inclined to trample and feed in plantations.



The Hippo's mouth is huge and contains long, pointed upper and lower _____; the lower teeth measure 61 cm and weigh almost 3 kg. Those teeth are not used for eating; they are used in battle, defending its territory and herd. Interestingly, a hippo's jaw hinge allows the animal to open its _____ to almost 180°.

Hippos may be very aggressive and _____ to humans. The cow bears one young at a time and fights ferociously if the calf is attacked. Old males are also very dangerous. Hippos do charge and attack boats. Hippos kill more humans than any other _____ animal.

Hippos are threatened by humans. Hippos are hunted using harpoons, digging pitfalls or by starving it to death (fencing). The teeth are valued as _____ and the skin (6 cm thick) is used to make leather whips (sjamboks). The meat of the hippopotamus is edible and soup is made from the skin (hide). The hippo is also under threat from habitat loss. (Reference: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/hippo>)

Missing Words

ears
mouth
horse
ivory
lakes
feeds
dangerous
elephant
high
African
out
teeth

COMPREHENSION

1. What is a two word term meaning hippopotamus? _____
2. What word refers to an animal that eats only plants? H _____
3. Name the 2 animals larger than the hippo. _____
4. What is the meaning of amphibious? _____
5. In which continent would you find a hippo? _____
6. Do hippos submerge in the river at night or during the day? _____
7. How long are the hippo's lower teeth? _____
8. What is a baby hippo called? _____
9. With what weapon might a hippo be hunted? _____
10. How thick is a hippo's skin (hide)? _____

