



Wild Camel FactFile

Name: Camelus Ferus

Classification: Mammal

IUCN Status: Critically Endangered

Lifespan in the Wild: 40 years

Diet: Herbivorous (Their main food source are shrubs)

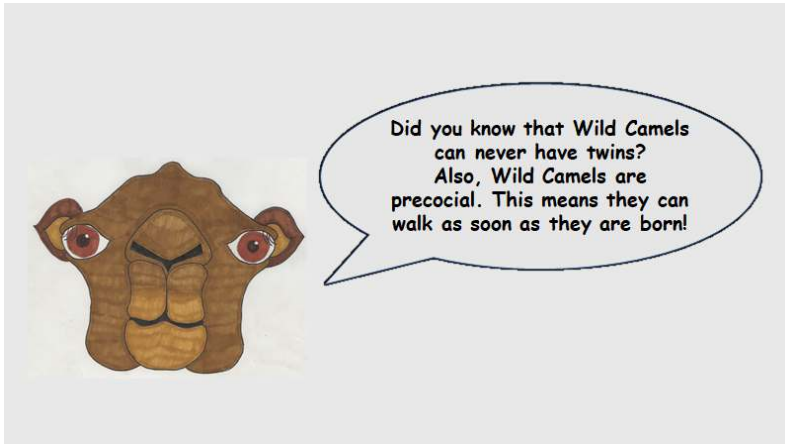
Habitat: Gobi Desert (China and Mongolia)

Top Speed: 64 km/hr

Height: 2-3.5 metres

Lifestyle

Wild Camels are social animals and live in groups of 6 to as many as 30 individuals. Much like the nomadic humans they live alongside in Mongolia, they are a migratory species, which means they travel long distances in search of food and water (and in the winter, snow!) Wild Camel herds have a dominant bull Camel and typically other females and their calves.



Did you know that Wild Camels can never have twins? Also, Wild Camels are precocial. This means they can walk as soon as they are born!

Mating Habits

Wild Camels are polygynous. This means that one male camel mates with many females. They breed during the winter and it takes 13 months for calves to be born, which means a camel can only have a calf once every two years.

Threats

Wild Camels live in the Gobi desert. Because the desert contains little fresh water, and only sand and rock, people don't live there. However there are things hidden in the desert that people do want; like iron ore, gold and oil. This causes illegal miners to come to the Gobi to find these things. These people often kill the Wild Camels for food or sport, and they come in trucks which cross the tracks that the camels use to find their way to fresh water in the Gobi, causing the Wild Camels to get confused and lost. The toxic chemicals used by the miners also get into the scarce water systems used by the camels, killing them



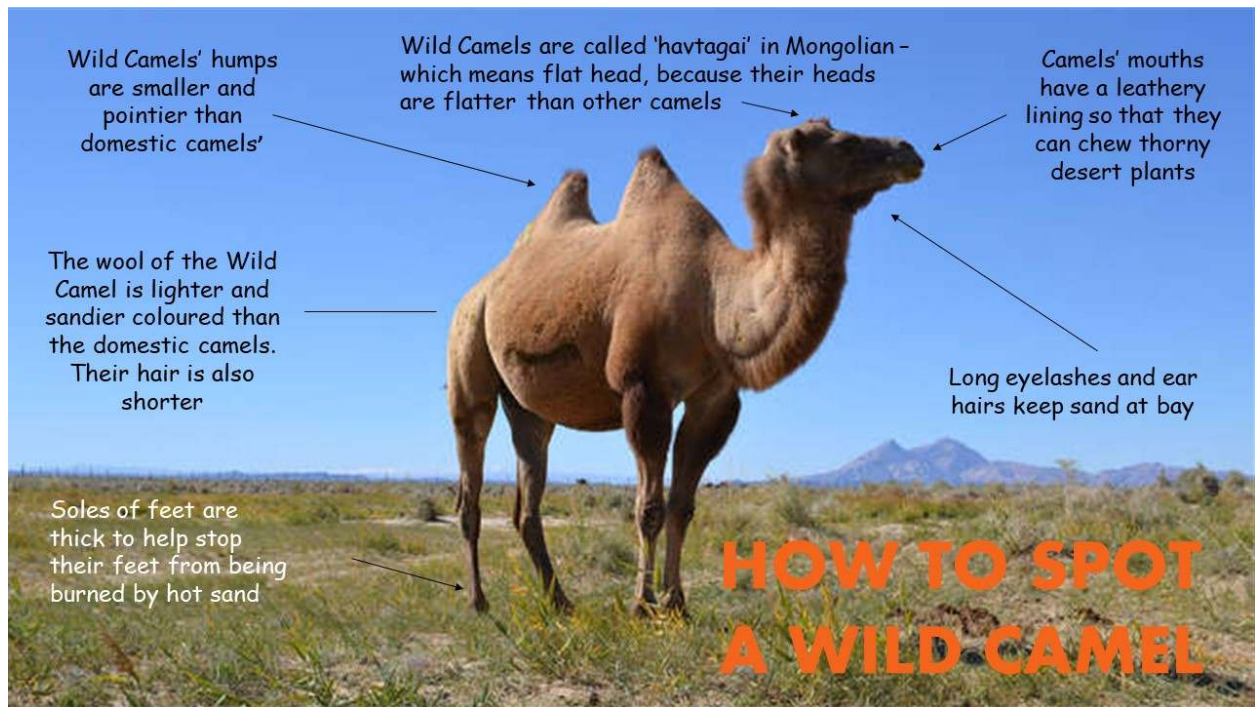
Other threats to the Wild Camels include:

- Wolves hunting them for food
- Competition for food with domestic camels
- Being shot by farmers

Hybrid Camels

A hybrid camel is the calf that is born when a Wild Camel and a domesticated camel mate. This may not seem like a problem, because the goal of the breeding center is to breed as many calves as it can, but it is actually a very big one. This is because as the Wild Camel is a completely different species from the domesticated camel, its unique genes are diluted in the hybrid calves, meaning the Wild Camel species is not being protected.

This threat can be stopped by preventing the Wild and domestic herds from grazing too close together during the breeding season.



Random Facts!

- ★ The Wild Camel is the 8th rarest mammal in the world
- ★ They can smell water from over 30 miles away
- ★ They can survive by drinking water that is saltier than sea water
- ★ A group of camels is called a 'caravan'

Puzzle!

