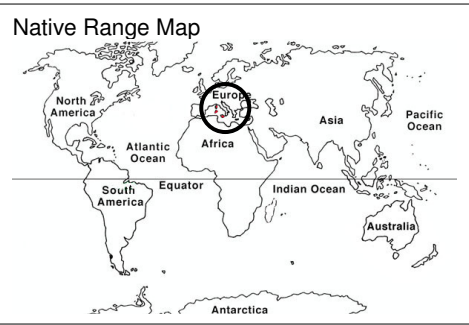


## Miniature Mediterranean Donkey



Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Chordata  
Subphylum: Vertebrata  
Class: Mammalia  
Order: Perissodactyla  
Family: Equidae  
Genus: *Equus*  
Species: *asinus*



Photo courtesy of Tony Wisneski

### Habitat

- **In the Wild:** Miniature donkeys originated in the Mediterranean area of northern Africa in ancient times and more recently from the islands of Sicily and Sardinia. They have been extensively bred in the United States and are almost extinct in the land of their origin.
- **Exhibit Location:** Domestic Animal Barn

### Characteristics

- Height: 36 inches and under (measured to the shoulder)
- Weight: 250-450 lbs. (most are in the lower weight range)
- Although many donkeys are the familiar gray-dun color, there are many other coat shades. Most donkeys, regardless of coat color, will have dorsal stripes and shoulder crosses, dark earmarks, white muzzle and eye rings, and a white belly and inner leg.
- Donkeys' ears are much longer in proportion to their size than a horse's.
- A donkey's hair coat is shed out much later in the summer than that of the horse and serves as protection from the weather and flies.
- **Lifespan: In the Wild** 10 years; **In Captivity** 30-35 years

### Behaviors

- Donkeys are social animals.
- They seek attention from their owners with friendly nudges, brays and funny little sounds.
- A donkey's voice is a raspy, brassy bray, the characteristic "Aw-EE, Aw-EE" sound. Jacks especially seem to enjoy braying, and will "sound off" at any opportunity.
- The miniature Mediterranean donkey is extremely intelligent and can be very stubborn.
- A donkey's favorite pastime is rolling on the ground.
- **Enrichments at the Zoo:** "amazing grazer" (object in which food is hidden), "jolly apple" (object used for scent enrichment), molasses, grooming, walks

### Reproduction

- Females reach sexual maturity at 3 years of age. Males are sexually mature at 7-12 months of age.
- Gestation period is approximately 1 year, with 1 young (foal) born. Twins are rare.
- Foals are weaned anywhere between 6-9 months of age.

### Diet

- **In the Wild:** grasses
- **At the Zoo:** hay, mineral supplements

