**Basic Information: Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*)**

**Names: Hippo**

**Identification pointers:** Huge size; skin a dark grey, smooth and hairless with pink tinge around eyes and mouth; small ears; usually in or close to water; short legs, barrel shaped body; huge head, large mouth.

**Can be confused with:** rhinos when on land.

**Activity period:** Rest in the water during the day, walk onto land at night to feed.

**Length:** 3.1m **Height:** 1.4-1.7m **Weight:**  1000-2000kg

**Gestation period:** ±8 months

**Lifespan:** ±35-40 years

**Diet:** Mostly grass, sometimes aquatic herbs.

**Predators:** Lions

**Preferred habitat:** Permanent waterbodies such as rivers, lakes and dams.

**Red List status:** Vulnerable

**Population:** decreasing

**Threats:** Hunting for meat and ivory is the major threat, particularly in areas of civil unrest. Pollution of waterways and disruption of water flow, as well as overgrazing have a major adverse effect. Expansion of human populations along waterways is also adversely affecting hippo populations. They are often killed in revenge for destroying crops or attacking humans.