

New Arrivals at Haller Park

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Haller Park welcomed **Banded Mongoose** (*Mungos mungo*) and the **Piggy Warthog** (*Phacochoeros aethiopicus*)- both males- into the Haller Park family of captive animals. This is in line with the new Lafarge Eco Systems strategic plan to introduce more animal species into the ecosystems as attractions into the Park.

The two animal species have since been put on a close monitoring and an adaptation program that will see them restore their natural behaviors away from the hand-reared behavior.

Found abandoned and orphaned in *Masaai Mara, Maji Moto Group Ranch* on *December 2009* by a well wisher, the animals were adopted and reared up until later relocated to Malindi where the well wisher had to relocate because of work. It came to her attention that a more sustainable home was needed for the animals - *Haller Park* fit as the suitable location and new home for them.

Banded Mongoose- *Mungos mungo*

At the Haller Park- animal orphanage (*called "Kaya"*), the little curious mongoose embarked on discovering the new home. He made short



Banded Mongoose



Piggy the warthog

errands within the periphery while keeping a very close eye on the partner-Piggy Warthog. The natural behavior of foraging for insects was displayed throughout this period.

The mongoose seemed not very concerned about the curious staff and tourists who found the little highly active animal very amusing. He however appeared very pleased with the new huge home-range that provided a new interaction.

The Mongoose spends his day climbing expertly on the coral walls of the orphanage where they recite and forages across the ecosystems from the Arena round through research site all the way to the game sanctuary. Lately the mongoose has been reported going all the way to areas around the vicinity of the Bus stop gate.

Piggy Warthog- Phacochoeros aethiopicus

When he arrived at the Haller Park, he loved attention and affection; however extra caution needed to be taken cause of the sharp tusks. He is very powerful and strong and if frightened or provoked, could be dangerous. He also enjoys a mud bath.

Interesting Fact:

The Banded Mongoose have been seen removing ticks from Warthogs in Kenya and Uganda. This symbiotic relationship benefits both species - the mongoose feed while the warthogs are cleaned.

Some Facts on the Banded Mongoose:

Description

They vary from grey to brownish-grey, with 10-12 distinctive series of blackish-brown bands that run across its back.

Social Behavior

Maintain family groups of 6-30 animals and move in a huge snake winding motion here and there among the bush.

They communicate by sending out twittering sounds as contact call. If threatened and for defense, they growl and 'spit' like a cat with arched back, neck hairs raised, jumping about on hind feet.

Often sleep in sitting posture with head tucked below.

With up to 35 adults and sub adults, banded mongoose packs are the largest of all mongooses

Diet

They prey on insects, lizards, birds and small mammals

Reproduction

They maintain a gestation period of about 2 months and a litter size of 2-6.

Some Facts on the Warthog:

Description

Warthogs have a stout, sparsely haired grayish skin and peculiar fleshy lumps or 'warts' on their face, from which the animal derives its name.

The male has 2 pairs of these warts while the female only has one.

Both sexes have tusks which protrude from near the front of the head, those of the male being much larger than those of the female.

Social Behaviour

The long, thin, tufted tails are held stiffly upright when running. It is believed to help members of a group to see each other and remain close when running through tall grass.

Diet

They are omnivores and have an interesting practice of kneeling on its tough, hairy, padded knees to eat short grass.

Using its snout and tusks, it also digs for bulbs, tubers and roots during the dry season.

Reproduction

Warthog litters vary from 1-5 young being born after a gestation period of 5 months.