

# Piggy Hogs

Feral pigs and javalinas



# Feral pigs

Pigs (*Sus scrofa*) are not native to North America. They were introduced by Christopher Columbus in 1493 to the West Indies, and then to the continental United States by Hernando de Soto in 1539. Domestic pigs were used as a low maintenance source of food. As explorers traveled, domestic pigs were left behind, becoming feral pigs. Feral refers to domestic animals that have gone wild. The free-range pig population in the United States is made up of feral pigs, Eurasian wild boar, and hybrid populations. Feral pigs are omnivores, opportunistic, generalist feeders. They eat mainly an herbivorous and agricultural diet, with some invertebrates and small vertebrates, when available.



# Javalinas

Javelina are not pigs. Pigs are "Old World" and peccary are "New World" animals. There are differences in physical anatomy.

Javelina (*Tayassu tajacu*) known as collared peccary, are medium-sized animals that resemble wild boar with short coarse salt and pepper colored hair, short legs, and a pig-like nose. The hair around the neck/shoulder area is lighter in color resembling a collar. They have long, sharp canine teeth protruding from the jaws about an inch.

A major adaptation for survival is living in large family groups of 10 or less, with a few herds up to 53 animals, defending a territory including their sleeping and feeding areas. Javalinas communicate using sounds and smells. They live in desert washes, saguaro and palo verde forests, oak woodlands, and grasslands with mixed shrubs and cacti and are considered herbivores., eating a variety of native plant foods such as agave, mesquite beans, and prickly pear, as well as roots, tubers, and other green vegetation. When available they will eat lizards, dead birds, and rodents.

Their main predators are mountain lions, humans, coyotes, bobcats, and jaguars.



# Javalina fingerplay

A javalina's a peccary, it is not a pig.  
(hands making collar around neck)

One dew claw on the hind foot,  
(touching heel)

And not nearly as big! (hands close  
together)





# Feral Hog song

I'm a feral hog and I am strong.

My hair is coarse and bristly and long.

I eat grains and cactus and grass and roots,

Mesquite, guajillo, tubers and fruits.

*I'm a Little Teapot*



Can you add food and shelter for the javalina?



# Be a feral pig chef!

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Here are  
some wild  
boar and  
javalina  
books!

## FACTS ABOUT THE WILD BOAR

A PICTURE BOOK FOR KIDS



Lisa Stratton

## MEET WILD BOARS



MEG ROSOFF AND SOPHIE BLACKALL

## Don't Call Me Pig!

A JAVELINA STORY

WRITTEN BY Conrad J. Storad

ILLUSTRATED BY Beth Neely and Don Rantz



## THE THREE LITTLE JAVELINAS

by Susan Lowell  
Illustrated by Jim Harris

