

Naked Mole-Rat

Scientific Name: *Heterocephalus glaber*

Class: Mammalia

Order: Rodentia

Family: Bathyergidae



Naked mole rats have four protruding teeth on the outside of the lips. Their eyes are almost useless and their ears are just holes in the skin. They have wrinkled pinkish skin and are 3" to 4" long. Naked mole rats weigh around 102 grams. They are largely hairless, although covered by some thin hairs that are sensitive to vibration

Range

East Africa: Southeast Ethiopia, Eastern Kenya and Somalia

Habitat

The habitat of the naked mole rat is underground only. Naked mole rats will come to the surface to migrate to new groups. Usually 70 to 80 individuals to a colony. Underground passage is usually 7" deep and single passage and 2 lane passages that are 20" deep in grasslands and savannahs.

Gestation

Gestation is about 10 weeks. Pups can walk in a few hours and eat solid food at 3-4 weeks.

Litter

Usually 3 to 15 pups. Can have up to 4-5 litters per year

Behavior

Lives in a large colony and has a cooperative social structure. It is a burrowing rodent, virtually blind, and never eats food above ground. Only mammal with a social organization similar to bees, ants, and termites.

Reproduction

The colony is dominated by the only breeding female or queen. The queen has 1 to 3 mates. She mates almost every 3 months within about 1 week of her last litter.

Wild Diet

Tubers and roots only, wild species eat sweet potatoes. All moisture comes from food. Young eat a form of feces called a cecotroph to obtain beneficial bacteria that aids digestion.