

# BABIRUSA TALK

## Learning objectives

**Connect people with wildlife** - so that they have a better understanding and feel more connected to it. They feel it is relevant to them.

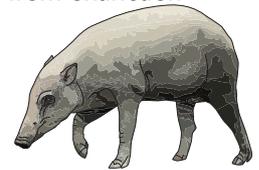
- There are three species of Babirusa
- Their behaviour & wild habitat
- Threatened by hunting and habitat loss

**Connect people with your zoo** - so that they have a better understanding of the conservation work you do to protect wildlife and want to support you.

- Introduce your Babirusa
- Explain what you are doing to help them in the zoo and in the wild – eg. The Global Species Management Plan involves research, education work and breeding in zoo's. e.g. *We have successfully bred our Babirusa as part of Global Species Management Plan to protect the species from extinction*

**Get people involved** - what can they do to help?

- Say no to hunting and illegal wildlife trade
- Support zoos and conservation organisations who are working to protect Babirusa



Animal talk	Tips for delivery:
<p><b>Introduction</b> <b>You!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who you are</li> <li>• Where you are located- so that your audience can see you</li> <li>• What you are going to talk about</li> </ul> <p><b>The animals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many Babirusa you have</li> <li>• Where they can be seen</li> <li>• Is there a feed or enrichment during the talk?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about where you stand - can your audience see you? Can they see the animals if at an enclosure?</li> <li>• Speak clearly</li> <li>• Be approachable &amp; well presented</li> <li>• Length of talk</li> <li>• Interactions</li> <li>• Involve your audience by asking them questions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Main talk</b></p> <p><b>To connect people with wildlife</b> – so that they have a better understanding and feel more connected to wildlife. They feel it is relevant to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are three species of Babirusa</li> <li>• Their behaviour &amp; wild habitat</li> <li>• Threatened by hunting and habitat loss</li> </ul> <p><b>To connect people with your zoo</b> – so that they have a better understanding of the conservation work you do to protect wildlife and want to support you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce your Babirusa</li> <li>• Explain what you are doing to help them in the zoo and in the wild – eg. The Global Species Management Plan involves research, education work and breeding in zoos. e.g. <i>We have successfully bred our Babirusa as part of Global Species Management Plan to protect the species from extinction.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Get people involved</b> - what can they do to help?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say no to hunting and illegal wildlife trade</li> <li>• Support zoos and conservation organisations who are working to protect Babirusa</li> <li>• Spread the word about these amazing animals</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Questions</b> Invite the audience to ask you questions at the end</p>	



# BABIRUSA TALK

## Introduction

Hello and welcome to our Babirusa enclosure. My name is .... And at the moment you'll find me \_\_\_\_.

I am here to tell you about these rare animals you can see here... our Babirusa. First of all, some of you may be wondering what a Babirusa is! Has anyone heard of a Babirusa before? What kind of animal do they look like? Babirusa are pigs and in fact the word Babirusa means 'pig-deer'. There are 3 species (or types) of Babirusa in the world and in the wild they are all found in Indonesia...

- The Hairy babirusa is found on 2 of the Sula islands and Buru
- The Sualwesi babirusa is found on Sulawesi and some nearby smaller islands
- The Togian Islands babirusa is from the Togian islands

Here we have \_\_\_\_ (*subspecies*) Babirusa.

We have \_\_\_\_ (*number*) Babirusa at our zoo. There are \_\_\_\_ males and \_\_\_\_ females. The males and females look very different so they are easy to tell apart. Adult males have strange curved tusks (can you spot them?). These tusks are actually their canine teeth. The top ones grow backwards through the skin of their nose, which sounds unusual but is completely normal for a male Babirusa. Females have much smaller canines which are harder to see. Scientists are not sure what the tusks are actually for!

## Habitat and lifestyle

In fact there are quite a lot of things that scientists don't know about Babirusa and this may be because they can be hard to see in the wild. Babirusa like to live in tropical rainforests and will usually be found near water, such as on the banks of rivers and streams. They are good swimmers and have been seen up to 500m out in open water.

Here at the zoo and out in the wild Babirusa feed on all sorts of different things and this is because they are omnivores. Does anyone know what an omnivore is? OR hands up who here eats meat and plants – you are all omnivores! In the wild Babirusa eat things like roots, leaves, insects and other small animals. They have very strong jaws which means they might be able to crack nut shells. Here at the zoo we feed them \_\_\_\_.

I mentioned before that we have \_\_ Babirusa here and in fact Babirusa are animals which often like to live in groups. In the wild female Babirusa can be found living in groups of up to around 13 whereas older males are often found living on their own. Groups are often seen near salt licks in the wild. They might come here to eat soil containing important minerals and these can often be really good places to study them in the wild as males, females and their young might be spotted.

When they are breeding, Babirusa are pregnant for about 5-6 months and when they are ready to give birth they will often make a nest of branches and leaves. They usually have 1 or 2 young at a time and this can happen at any time of the year.

## Threats and decline

Whilst I hope you all agree that Babirusa are amazing animals, sadly they may not be around for much longer as they are declining in number due to human impacts. This means that all of the types of Babirusa are now becoming very rare. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classes the Sulawesi babirusa and Hairy babirusa as vulnerable species and the Togian Islands babirusa as endangered. This means that all the types of Babirusa are at risk of becoming extinct in the wild.

These declines are due to the Babirusa losing their habitat and being hunted. Commercial logging and forests being cleared for farming and mining means there are not enough wild areas left for the Babirusa. They are also often hunted for their meat and sometimes for their tusks which might be used to make things like masks.



**GLOBAL SPECIES  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

ANOA  
BANTENG  
BABIRUSA



MADE BY  
**CHESTER ZOO**

# BABIRUSA TALK

## The Global Species management plan

Whilst it is sad to think that these animals are declining, the good news is that many people are working hard to try to help them. Zoos like this one, governments and conservation organisations from around the world are working together to save the Babirusa through a Global Species Management Plan. The plan brings together experts and has details of actions which will be taken to save the Babirusa from extinction. Breeding them in zoos in Indonesia and across the world is a really important part of this plan. Here at the zoo we have *successful bred/ or working towards breeding Babirusa (if appropriate at your organisation)* as part of the global species management plan Can anyone spot our young Babirusa (*if you have any*)?

It's also really important to find out all that we can about Babirusa both in zoos like this one and in the wild. Research will help guide best practice in caring for and breeding these animals in zoos and support healthy populations to prevent the Babirusa from going extinct. Working with communities and raising awareness of the threats Babirusa face aims to reduce hunting and increase protection of wild populations. We also want people like you to know just how amazing and special Babirusa are and that they are worth protecting!

## How can you help?

We want you all to help us by spreading the word about how amazing Babirusa are and supporting zoos and conservation organisations who are working to protect Babirusa and other wildlife. Say no to hunting and illegal wildlife trade of Babirusa and don't buy Babirusa meat or products made from Babirusa tusks. If fewer people buy these items it will help to reduce the demand and therefore the hunting of these incredible animals.

## Conclusion

I hope you've all enjoyed learning a bit more about our amazing Babirusa and about how you can help them. If you'd like to ask any questions about the Babirusa or the other animals then my name is \_\_\_ and you can find me \_\_\_(location).

## References

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