

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Visayan Warty Pigs

Written and Photographed by Guy Belleranti

The Visayan warty pig is one of the world's most endangered animals.

A Visayan warty pig is a small species of wild pig native to the Visayan Islands of the Philippines. It's called a warty pig because the male, or boar, has three pairs of warty bumps on its face. Scientists believe these warts might act as protection from opposing male tusks when they fight over mates.



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Warty pigs are omnivores. An omnivore is an animal that eats both plants and other animals. They eat fruit, insects, and earthworms and use their long snouts for finding underground roots and tubers. They also eat seeds and play a critical role in dispersing the seeds of some plant species. With farms replacing their wild habitat, they often pig out on farmers' crops. Of course, farmers don't like this. So people hunt the pigs, which endangers them even more.

Some people call Visayan warty pigs "punk rock pigs". No, it's not because they like loud rock music! Instead, it's because the boars grow stiff spiky manes during mating season.

These manes can grow up to nine inches long. The male pigs raise their manes to make themselves appear larger and more threatening to other male pigs.



Warty pig moms usually give birth to three or four piglets. They are good mothers and very protective. The piglets

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## About the Author

Guy Belleranti is an author of fiction, poetry, articles, puzzles, and humor for children and adults. He also works as a docent at the Reid Park Zoo in Tucson, Arizona. The information in this article comes from his experiences teaching children about the wild animals at the zoo.

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1. According to the article, why do scientists think Visayan warty pigs have warty bumps on their faces?
  - a. The warty bumps help them identify each other.
  - b. The warty bumps help them forage for food.
  - c. The warty bumps help act as protection.
  - d. The warty bumps do not have any purpose.



2. In the article you learned that Visayan warty pigs are endangered. What is responsible for destroying much of their habitat? Use a complete sentence.

3.  **PREVIEW**  
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4. Visayan warty pigs are extinct on four of the six Visayan islands in the Philippines.

4. According to what you read in the article, what are two characteristics of male warty pigs, or boars, during the mating season? Write **two** complete sentences.

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5. How have scientists learned most of what they know about the Visayan warty pigs? Write **one** complete sentence.

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. o \_ \_ \_ i \_ \_ o r \_ \_

**hint:** an animal that eats plants and other animals

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_ \_ n d a \_ \_ \_ e \_ \_ \_ d

**hint:** nearly extinct

\_\_\_\_\_



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3. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
**hint:** keeping away from harm

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_ \_ u \_ \_ e \_ \_

**hint:** a type of root that some animals eat

\_\_\_\_\_

5. d \_ \_ s p \_ \_ \_ s \_ \_

**hint:** scatter around in different places

\_\_\_\_\_

6. \_ \_ u \_ \_ \_ s

**hint:** long, pointed teeth that grow out the sides of certain mammals' mouths

\_\_\_\_\_

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In the article, "Visayan Warty Pigs," you learned many interesting facts about this very endangered species of wild pigs.



One of the facts you learned about Visayan warty pigs is that warty pigs have lost most of their forest habitat to farmland. On the lines below, describe three ideas that could help us protect the remaining wild warty pigs.



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## ANSWER KEY

# Visayan Warty Pigs

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1. According to the article, why do scientists think Visayan warty pigs have warty bumps on their faces? **c.**



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5. How have scientists learned most of what they know about the Visayan warty pigs?  
Write **one** complete sentence.

**Scientists have learned most of what they know about warty pigs by studying them in zoos.**

## ANSWER KEY

# Visayan Warty Pigs

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article.  
Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. o m n i v o r e

omnivore



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**hint:** long, pointed teeth that grow out the sides  
of certain mammals' mouths