

# ANIMALS



## Saudi Arabia



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# Saluki Hound

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Historically bred in the Fertile Crescent, the Saluki has a long legged body. It has been in the Arabian Peninsula for long, the ancient rock art near the city of Hail depict the Saluki. In 1996, the Guinness Book of World Records lists a Saluki as being the fastest dog in the world, reaching a speed of 68.8 kilometers per hour.



# Hamadryas Baboon

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They are a very common sight near the cities of Taif and Abha. An interesting thing about them is that the males are often double the size of the females. They were even considered sacred by the ancient Egyptians.



# Sand Cat

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Predominantly found in the western deserts of Arabia, the Sand Cat is listed as Near Threatened by the IUCN. It is believed to be the only species of the cat family that lives in a true desert. They are well adapted to the extremes of the desert, where its hot and sunny during the day and cold and breezy during the night.





# Sand Gazelle

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Known as Reem in Arabic, this is the palest of all gazelles. It is classified under the endangered category by the IUCN and very few of the Sand Gazelles exist in the wild today. There have been many conservation initiatives undertaken by many countries in the Middle East with varying degrees of success.



# Arabian Wolf

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This small desert adapted wolf is found in small pockets around the Arabian Peninsula. It's hunting is banned in many countries in the Gulf and that has led to an increase in its population. Though it is a subspecies of the Grey Wolf, a distinct feature of the Arabian Wolf is its fused paws.



## Red Fox

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It is native to Arabia and has adapted to the harsh desert climate. It has fur between its toes to protect its feet from the hot sand. It can be found in various ecological systems in the country from the mountainous regions to coastal areas and arid deserts.





# Honey Badger

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Though it looks similar to a weasel, this mammal is a species of Badger. They can be found in many regions across the world stretching from Africa to the Indian Subcontinent, however its sightings in Saudi Arabia are very rare.





## White-tailed Mongoose

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This is the largest species of the Mongoose family and is found in the southwestern part of the country. It is a nocturnal animal that has a similar lifestyle to the Desert Hedgehog, staying in a burrow during the day and hunting at night. An interesting thing about this mongoose is that they are very terrestrial and rarely migrate.



# Common Genet

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Found along the coastal part of the Kingdom, this genet's most striking feature is its long striped tail. The Common Genet is also known for its remarkable climbing skills. In some countries the Common Genet is hunted for its fur.



# Striped Hyena

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Classified as near threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), dwindling numbers of the Striped Hyena exist in the country today. The Striped Hyena lives a nomadic lifestyle, constantly on the move. It is a popular feature in Middle Eastern folklore and there have been a few reports in the past of this animal being a delicacy amongst some families in the Middle East.





# Desert Hedgehog

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It is one of the smallest types of hedgehogs, so small that it can easily fit ins a human palm. This prickly nocturnal is normally found near arid scrubs in the desert. During the day it lives inside the burrow to escape the heat and at night it comes out to hunt for food.





# Houbara Bustard

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The houbara bustard, also called or African houbara, is a large bird in the bustard family. It is found in arid habitats in North Africa and southwestern Asia with a population on the Canary Islands. It is dull brown with black markings on the wings with a greyish neck and a black ruff along the side of the neck.



# Arabian Grosbeak

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The Arabian golden-winged grosbeak or Arabian grosbeak is a finch found in Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen. It is included as a subspecies in *R. socotranus* by some authorities, but in recent times the three golden-winged grosbeak populations are usually considered distinct species.



# Arabian Leopard

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Though there have been no sightings of the Arabian Leopard in the wild since 2002, it is believed that small isolated population exist in the Hejaz and Sarawat Mountains. A majority of the Arabian Leopards in Saudi Arabia are placed in captive breeding and there are plans for their reintroduction in the wild.





# Arabian Oryx

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The Arabian Oryx is almost like a prized possession of Arabia. It is the national animal of Oman and is in the official logo of Qatar airways. Saudi Arabia has taken a number of initiatives to preserve the animal and they have managed to successfully do so. They have been reintroduced in the wild and can be spotted in the Farasan Islands.





# Caracal

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Also referred to as the Desert Lynx at times, the Caracal is a species of wild cat that is known for its long black tufts on the back of its ears. Today, in the wild they are found in the western part of Saudi Arabia. Paintings and sculptures of the Caracal are also found in ancient tombs in Egypt.



# Dugong

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It is the only strictly marine herbivorous mammal, but unfortunately due to a slow rate of reproduction the dugong today is vulnerable to extinction. In 2013, Saudi Arabia has become the 26th Signatory State to sign the Dugong MOU in order to protect the Dugongs in its waters.



# Nubian Ibex

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Found in the mountainous regions of the country, the Nubian Ibex is native to the Middle East. The NCWCD has established special ibex reserves to save the dwindling populations of the Nubian Ibex in Saudi Arabia.