

MEERKATS

(*SURICATA SURICATTA*)

CONSERVATION STATUS: LEAST CONCERN*



WE ARE MAMMALS

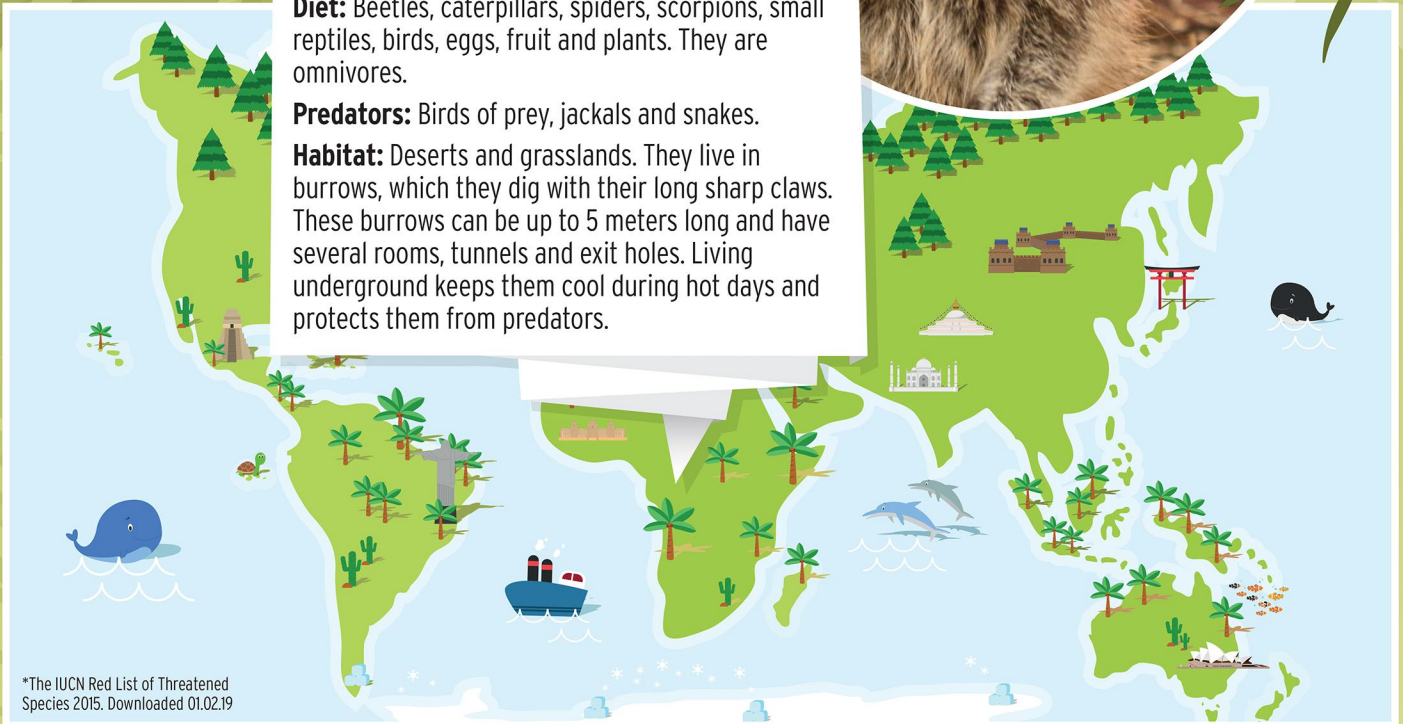
with a lifespan of 4-8 years in the wild or 10-30 years in captivity

Origin: Africa.

Diet: Beetles, caterpillars, spiders, scorpions, small reptiles, birds, eggs, fruit and plants. They are omnivores.

Predators: Birds of prey, jackals and snakes.

Habitat: Deserts and grasslands. They live in burrows, which they dig with their long sharp claws. These burrows can be up to 5 meters long and have several rooms, tunnels and exit holes. Living underground keeps them cool during hot days and protects them from predators.



*The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015. Downloaded 01.02.19



Height

25-30cm

Tail

19-24cm



Weight

>1kg



Top Speed

20mph

DID YOU KNOW?

Meerkats are excellent at working together. They live in mobs of 3-50 members. Everyone participates in gathering food, keeping a look out and taking care of the babies.

At least one meerkat, called a sentry, will find a high point and remain on lookout whilst the others forage for food. It will alert the mob of danger by letting out a high-pitched squeal.

The mob will then scramble for cover.

GET UP CLOSE AND FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THESE AMAZING ANIMALS BY BOOKING A MEERKAT EXPERIENCE!

ADAPTATIONS

Their tightly closed ears and clear protective membrane over their eyes shield them from dust and dirt when digging. The dark patches around their eyes reduce the glare of the sun. They have wide angled vision and an enhanced sense of smell. They have thin fur on their tummies. The meerkats sunbathe to keep warm.

REPRODUCTION

Females can give birth to 1-8 babies at a time, but usually 3-4. The babies are called pups and are born underground. The pups are born blind, deaf and almost hairless. By nine weeks old the pups are weaned and will be ready to have their own offspring by the time they are one and a half years old. The whole family work together to bring up the pups and they rotate the role of 'babysitter'.

PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE MEERKATS