



CARACAL

Felis caracal Schreber, 1776

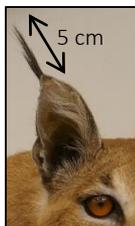
Caracal was originally thought to be allied with *Lynx lynx*. However, recent genetic analyses show that the caracal is not part of the *Lynx* sp. group but rather is more closely allied with *Profelis aurata*. The lifespan of caracals is 17 years.

CHARACTERISTICS



Sexual dimorphism;
Adult males heavier (8/20kg) than adult females (6.2/15.9kg).

Primary nocturnal. Differences in the duration of daytime activity were dependent on daytime temperatures.



Large, conspicuous ears, black on the back and adorned with black tufts.

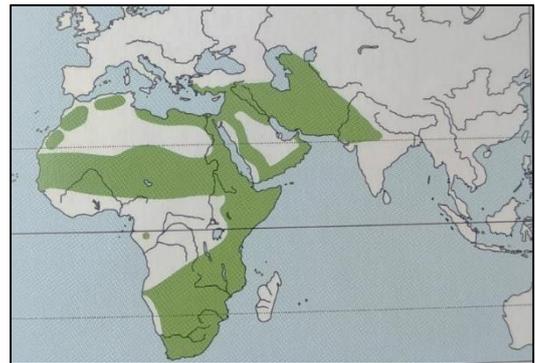
CONSERVATION

CITES Appendix I (Asian population); otherwise CITES Appendix II.



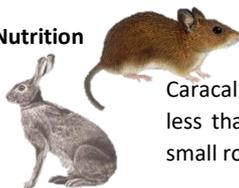
HABITAT

Caracals are found in dry woodlands, savanna, acacia scrub, hilly steppe and arid mountain areas to 2500 m.



BEHAVIOUR

Nutrition



Caracal generally take prey that weigh less than 5 kg, including hares, hyrax, small rodents and birds.



Social organization: Caracals are solitary and most sightings are of single adults. Observations of two to four animals together most likely represent mating pairs or females with their large young.

Mating: Caracals were found to have a rather unusual mating system in which a female copulated with several different males in succession. The mating order appeared to be determined by age and weight of the male.

Communication: Cats communicate with each other vocally, visually and especially through scent. By sharpening its claws in the tree they mark it with scent from glands between its toes. Scent serves both to bring cats together, for mating and to keep them out of each other's territory.