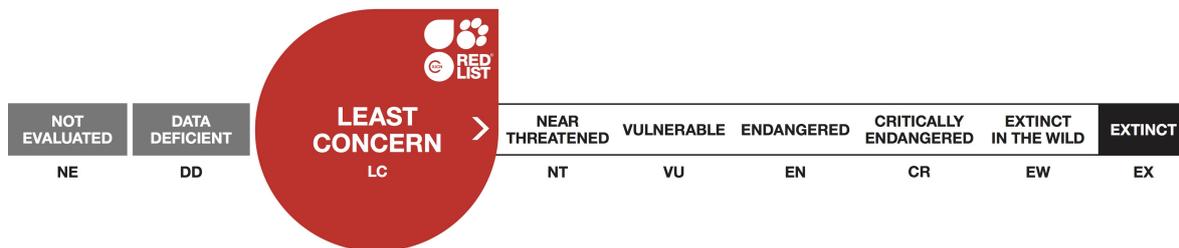


Herpestes flavescens, Kaokoveld Slender Mongoose

Assessment by: Rapson, S. & Rathbun, G.B.



View on www.iucnredlist.org

Citation: Rapson, S. & Rathbun, G.B. 2015. *Herpestes flavescens*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015*: e.T41599A45205933. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-4.RLTS.T41599A45205933.en>

Copyright: © 2015 International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

Reproduction of this publication for educational or other non-commercial purposes is authorized without prior written permission from the copyright holder provided the source is fully acknowledged.

Reproduction of this publication for resale, reposting or other commercial purposes is prohibited without prior written permission from the copyright holder. For further details see [Terms of Use](#).

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ is produced and managed by the [IUCN Global Species Programme](#), the [IUCN Species Survival Commission \(SSC\)](#) and [The IUCN Red List Partnership](#). The IUCN Red List Partners are: [BirdLife International](#); [Botanic Gardens Conservation International](#); [Conservation International](#); [Microsoft](#); [NatureServe](#); [Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew](#); [Sapienza University of Rome](#); [Texas A&M University](#); [Wildscreen](#); and [Zoological Society of London](#).

If you see any errors or have any questions or suggestions on what is shown in this document, please provide us with [feedback](#) so that we can correct or extend the information provided.

Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Mammalia	Carnivora	Herpestidae

Taxon Name: *Herpestes flavescens* Bocage, 1889

Synonym(s):

- *Galerella flavescens*
- *Herpestes nigratus* (Thomas, 1928)

Common Name(s):

- English: Kaokoveld Slender Mongoose, Angolan Slender Mongoose, Black Mongoose, Black Slender Mongoose
- French: Mangouste rouge du Kaokoveld

Taxonomic Notes:

Crawford Cabral (1989, 1996) considered *nigratus* conspecific with the earlier described *flavescens* Bocage, 1889 from Angola. This classification has been followed by others (Bronner *et al.* 2003, Wozencraft 2005, Taylor 2013, Veron *et al.* in press) and is adopted here. While the 'Black Mongoose' (*Myonax nigratus* Thomas, 1928) was initially described as a species in its own right, there has been much controversy surrounding its species status (summarised in Rapson 2011), and notably it was regarded as a subspecies of the Cape Grey Mongoose (*H. pulverulentus*) by Ellerman *et al.* (1953). However, unique characteristics of *nigratus* distinguishing it from both *H. pulverulentus* and Common Slender Mongoose (*H. sanguineus*) include craniometric variables—size of anterior and posterior chambers of the auditory bulla, presence or absence of the postorbital bar and the number of lower premolars—and pelage colour (Watson and Dippenaar 1987, Watson 1990, Taylor and Goldman 1993). Rapson *et al.* (2012) presented the first genetic evidence indicating that it is indeed a species separate from both *H. pulverulentus* and *H. sanguineus*. In addition, *nigratus* may actually constitute a species distinct from *H. flavescens*, as highlighted by Rathbun and Cowley (2008) who noted the remarkable difference in pelage colouration between specimens from Angola and Namibia, the lack of comparative data between the two forms in Crawford-Cabral's papers, and the possible ecological differences between the two forms. Comparative ecological, morphometric and genetic studies of individuals from Namibia and Angola are needed to resolve this taxonomic conundrum. The Kaokoveld Slender Mongoose, alongside other 'small' African *Herpestes* species, are here retained in the genus *Herpestes*, although Watson and Dippenaar (1987) included them in the genus *Galerella*, a classification which is backed up by molecular studies (Rapson *et al.* 2012, Veron *et al.* in press).

Assessment Information

Red List Category & Criteria: Least Concern [ver 3.1](#)

Year Published: 2015

Date Assessed: May 17, 2015

Justification:

It is listed as Least Concern because although this species has a relatively restricted distribution, and is associated with a particular microhabitat, it is believed to be common. There are no known major threats to the species, and it is present in several protected areas.

Previously Published Red List Assessments

2008 – Least Concern (LC) – <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2008.RLTS.T41599A10491570.en>

1996 – Lower Risk/least concern (LR/lc)

Geographic Range

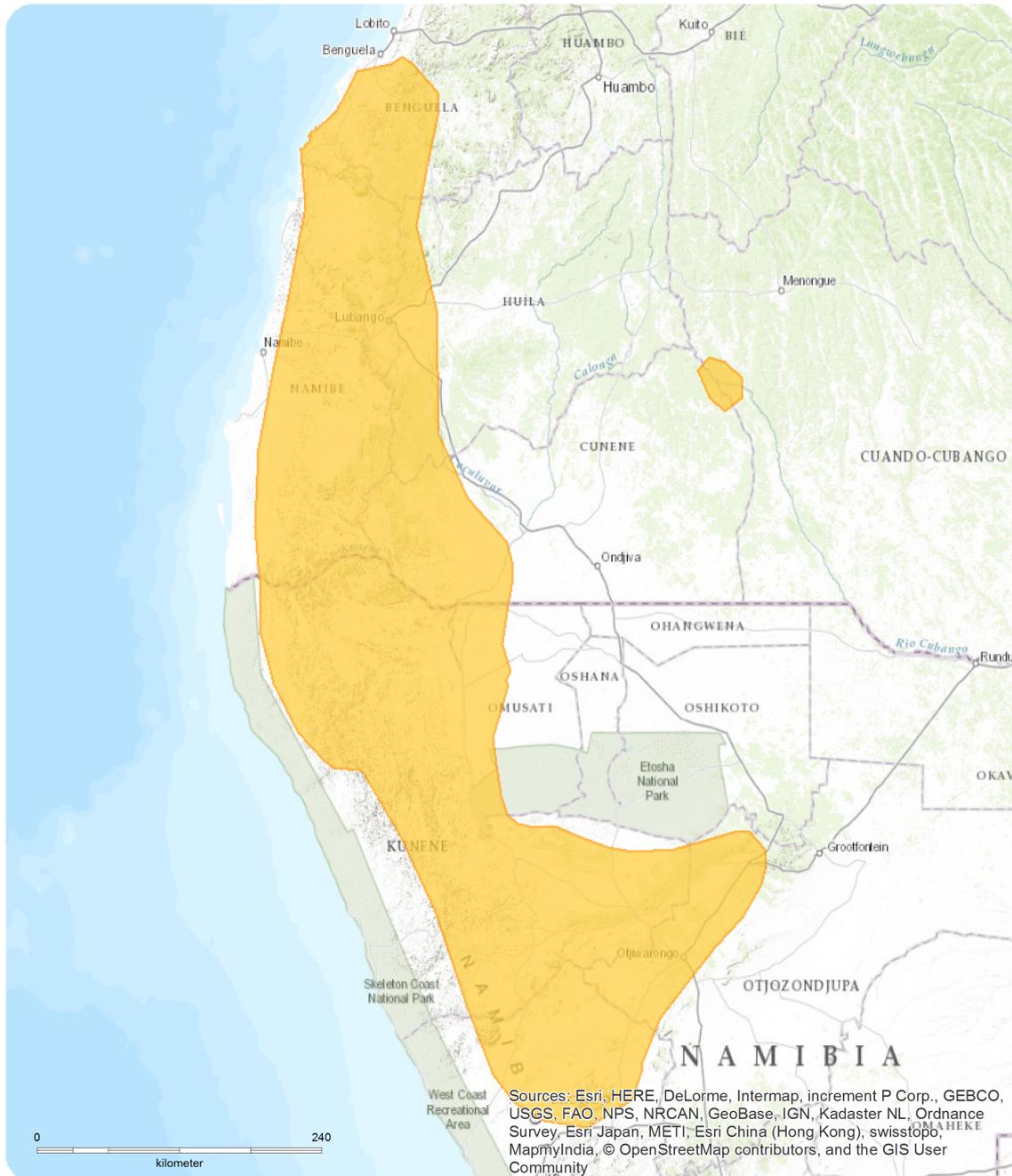
Range Description:

Individuals with tan or yellowish pelage (hence '*flavescens*') are confined to southwestern Angola, whereas those with very dark, nearly black pelage (hence '*nigratus*')—yet with a distinctive rufus tinge—occur in northwestern and northcentral Namibia (Crawford-Cabral 1996, Tromp 2011, Taylor 2013, G. Rathbun pers. obs. 2000–2008). These two regions comprise together the entire range of the species.

Country Occurrence:

Native: Angola (Angola); Namibia

Distribution Map



Herpestes flavescens

Range

■ Extant (resident)

Compiled by:
IUCN (International Union for
Conservation of Nature)



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any official endorsement, acceptance or opinion by IUCN.



Population

There is little information available on either colour form of this species because there are few specimens in museums. However, it is relatively common in Namibia where it has been studied, and is assumed to be so in arid regions of Angola (Taylor 2013). In Namibia, it is sometimes confused with the Common Dwarf Mongoose (*Helogale parvula*), which is also nearly black in colour, although this latter is smaller, highly social, and is more of a habitat generalist. This confusion partly hinders understanding of how common Kaokoveld Slender Mongoose really is in this country.

Current Population Trend: Unknown

Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

In northern Namibia, this species is restricted to habitats dominated by large granitic boulders, and the drainages and woodlands connecting these. This results in a fragmented distribution (Shortridge 1934, Rathbun and Cowley 2008, Rapson *et al.* 2013). There is little information available on Kaokoveld Slender Mongooses from Angola, but because GIS imagery suggests that there are granite outcrops in southwestern Angola, it is likely that Angolan populations have similar habitat preferences to their Namibian counterparts. In Namibia, genetic data suggest that populations of this mongoose are linked, despite the isolation of their preferred kopje habitats (Rapson *et al.* 2013). Studies of *H. flavescens* in Namibia revealed that it is predominantly solitary. Home ranges are 0.12–1.5 km², although they may be up to 4 km², are often overlapping, and include multiple den sites (Rathbun and Cowley 2008, Tromp 2011). Foraging behaviour of these mongooses in Namibia indicates that they are highly opportunistic (Rathbun *et al.* 2005). Prey items include insects, scorpions and solifugae, small mammals, birds, lizards and snakes (Rathbun and Cowley 2008, Nakwaya 2009, Warren *et al.* 2009), suggesting a very catholic diet.

Systems: Terrestrial

Use and Trade

This species is not used.

Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

There are no known major threats to either the Angolan or Namibian forms of the species. However, high levels of hybridisation occur with its sister species (Common Slender Mongoose *H. sanguineus*) at Spitzkoppe and Ruacana in Namibia (Rapson *et al.* 2012). The close contact of these two species may be because of unusually large populations of *H. sanguineus* that have resulted from local communities unintentionally providing food scraps and chickens, thus increasing the probability of contact between the two mongooses. In addition, the encroachment of local communities with dogs and livestock has led to the disappearance of Kaokoveld Slender Mongoose from several areas in northern Namibia. This could be a result of dog predation and trapping mongooses by local communities in order to reduce chicken losses (Tromp 2011).

Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

This species is recorded from several protected areas, including the Skeleton Coast Park and Etosha National Park (Tromp 2011). The individuals in Namibia appear to adapt well to low-intensity tourism

activities, remaining elusive but relatively common (Rathbun and Cowley 2008, Tromp 2011).

Credits

Assessor(s): Rapson, S. & Rathbun, G.B.

Reviewer(s): Duckworth, J.W. & Hoffmann, M.

Contributor(s): Hoffmann, M.

**Facilitators(s) and
Compiler(s):** Do Linh San, E.

Bibliography

- Bronner, G. N., Hoffman, M., Taylor, P. J., Chimimba, C. T., Best, P. B., Matthee, C. A. and Robinson, T. J. 2003. A revised systematic checklist of the extant mammals of the southern African subregion. *Durban Museum Novitates* 28: 56-106.
- Crawford-Cabral, J. 1989. The prior scientific name of the larger red mongoose (Carnivora: Viverridae: Herpestinae). *Garcia de Orta, Série de Zoologia, Lisboa* 14: 1-2.
- Crawford-Cabral, J. 1996. The species of *Galerella* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Herpestinae) occurring in the southwestern corner of Angola. *Garcia de Orta, Serie de Zoologia, Lisboa* 21: 7-17.
- Ellerman, J.R., Morrison-Scott, T.C.S. and Hayman, R.W. 1953. *Southern African Mammals 1758 to 1951: A Reclassification*. British Museum (Natural History), London, UK.
- IUCN. 2015. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2015-4. Available at: www.iucnredlist.org. (Accessed: 19 November 2015).
- Nakwaya, D.N. 2009. The diet of the black mongoose (*Galerella nigrata*) (Carnivora: Herpestidae) in north-west (Hobaterre Concession) and north-central (Erongo Conservancy), Namibia. M.Sc. Thesis, University of Namibia and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.
- Rapson, S.A. 2011. The effects of past major climatic fluctuations on the genetic structures of fauna endemic to Namibia's granite inselbergs. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Queensland, Brisbane.
- Rapson, S.A., Goldizen, A.W. and Seddon, J. 2012. Species boundaries and hybridization between the black mongoose (*Galerella nigrata*) and the slender mongoose (*Galerella sanguinea*). *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 65(3): 831-839.
- Rapson, S.A., Goldizen, A.W. and Seddon, J. 2013. The effects of past climatic fluctuations and landscape features on the genetic structure of mongooses endemic to Namibia's granite inselbergs. *Journal of Mammalogy* 94(1): 218-230.
- Rathbun, G.B. 2004. The shadow hunter. *Africa Geographic Magazine* (February 2004) 12(1): 18-19.
- Rathbun, G.B. and Cowley, T.E. 2008. Behavioural Ecology of the black mongoose (*Galerella nigrata*) in Namibia. *Mammalian Biology* 73(6): 444-450.
- Rathbun, G.B., Cowley, T. and Zapke, O. 2005. Black mongoose (*Galerella nigrata*) home range and social behaviour affected by abundant food at an antelope carcass. *African Zoology* 40: 154-157.
- Shortridge, G.C. 1934. *The mammals of South West Africa: a biological account of the forms occurring in that region*. Heinemann, London, UK.
- Taylor, M.E. 2013. *Herpestes flavescens* Kaokoveld Slender Mongoose (Angolan Slender Mongoose). In: J. Kingdon and M. Hoffmann (eds), *The Mammals of Africa. V. Carnivores, Pangolins, Equids and Rhinoceroses*, pp. 304-306. Bloomsbury, London, UK.
- Taylor, M.E. and Goldman, C.A. 1993. The taxonomic status of the African mongooses, *Herpestes sanguineus*, *H. nigratus*, *H. pulverulentus* and *H. ochraceus* (Carnivora: Viverridae). *Mammalia* 57: 375-391.
- Thomas, O. 1928. Two new SW African mongooses. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* 10(2): 408.
- Tromp, S. 2011. The effects of past major climatic fluctuations on the genetic structures of fauna endemic to Namibia's granite inselbergs. Ph.D. Thesis, The University of Queensland.

Veron, G., Patou, M.-L. and Jennings, A.P. In press. Systematics and evolution of the mongooses (Herpestidae, Carnivora). In: E. Do Linh San, J.J. Sato, J.L. Belant and M.J. Somers (eds), *Small Carnivores: Evolution, Ecology, Behaviour and Conservation*. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, UK.

Warren, Y., Cunningham, P., Mbangi, A. and Tutjavi, V. 2009. Preliminary observations of the diet of the black mongoose (*Galerella nigrata*, Thomas, 1928) in the Erongo Mountains, Namibia. *African Journal of Ecology* 47: 801-803.

Watson, J.P. 1990. The taxonomic status of the slender mongoose, *Galerella sanguinea* (Ruppell, 1836) in southern Africa. *Navorsing van die Nasionale Museum, Bloemfontein* 6: 351-492.

Watson, J.P. and Dippenaar, N.J. 1987. The species limits of *Galerella sanguinea* (Ruppell, 1836), *G. pulverulenta* (Wagner, 1839) and *G. nigrata* (Thomas, 1928) in southern Africa (Carnivora: Viverridae). *Navorsing van die Nasionale Museum, Bloemfontein* 5: 351-492.

Wozencraft, W.C. 2005. Order Carnivora. In: D.E. Wilson and D.M. Reeder (eds), *Mammal Species of the World: A Taxonomic and Geographic Reference. Third Edition*, pp. 532-628. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC, USA.

Citation

Rapson, S. & Rathbun, G.B. 2015. *Herpestes flavescens*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015*: e.T41599A45205933. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-4.RLTS.T41599A45205933.en>

Disclaimer

To make use of this information, please check the [Terms of Use](#).

External Resources

For [Images and External Links to Additional Information, please see the Red List website](#).

Appendix

Habitats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Habitat	Season	Suitability	Major Importance?
3. Shrubland -> 3.5. Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry	-	Marginal	-
0. Root -> 6. Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)	-	Suitable	Yes

Threats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
2. Agriculture & aquaculture -> 2.3. Livestock farming & ranching -> 2.3.2. Small-holder grazing, ranching or farming	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation 2. Species Stresses -> 2.2. Species disturbance		
5. Biological resource use -> 5.1. Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals -> 5.1.3. Persecution/control	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality		
8. Invasive & other problematic species & genes -> 8.1. Invasive non-native/alien species -> 8.1.2. Named species (Canis familiaris)	Ongoing	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality 2. Species Stresses -> 2.2. Species disturbance		

Conservation Actions in Place

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Conservation Actions in Place
In-Place Land/Water Protection and Management
Occur in at least one PA: Yes

Research Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Research Needed
1. Research -> 1.1. Taxonomy
1. Research -> 1.2. Population size, distribution & trends

Additional Data Fields

Population
Continuing decline of mature individuals: Unknown
Extreme fluctuations: Unknown
Population severely fragmented: No
Habitats and Ecology
Generation Length (years): 3

The IUCN Red List Partnership



The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ is produced and managed by the [IUCN Global Species Programme](#), the [IUCN Species Survival Commission \(SSC\)](#) and [The IUCN Red List Partnership](#).

The IUCN Red List Partners are: [BirdLife International](#); [Botanic Gardens Conservation International](#); [Conservation International](#); [Microsoft](#); [NatureServe](#); [Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew](#); [Sapienza University of Rome](#); [Texas A&M University](#); [Wildscreen](#); and [Zoological Society of London](#).