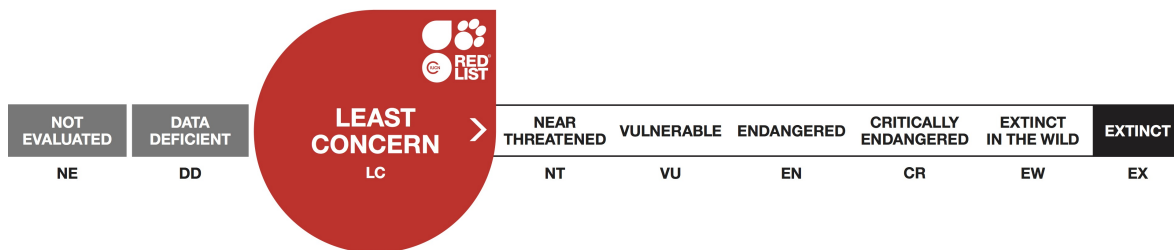


Vulpes chama, Cape Fox

Assessment by: Hoffmann, M.



View on www.iucnredlist.org

Citation: Hoffmann, M. 2014. *Vulpes chama*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2014*: e.T23060A46126992. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2014-1.RLTS.T23060A46126992.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	Canidae

Taxon Name: *Vulpes chama* (A. Smith, 1833)

Common Name(s):

- English: Cape Fox, Silver Fox, Silver Jackal
- French: Le Renard Du Cap
- Spanish: Zorro Chama, Zorro Del Cabo

Assessment Information

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

Year Published: 2014

Date Assessed: March 14, 2014

Justification:

The Cape Fox is widespread in the central and western regions of southern Africa, and has even expanded its range over recent decades. It is generally common to fairly abundant across much of its range, although problem animal control activities have resulted in population reductions in some areas. It is thought that populations are currently stable across their entire range and there is no reason to believe that the species meets any criteria for listing in a threatened category.

Previously Published Red List Assessments

2008 – Least Concern (LC)

2004 – Least Concern (LC)

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

Geographic Range

Range Description:

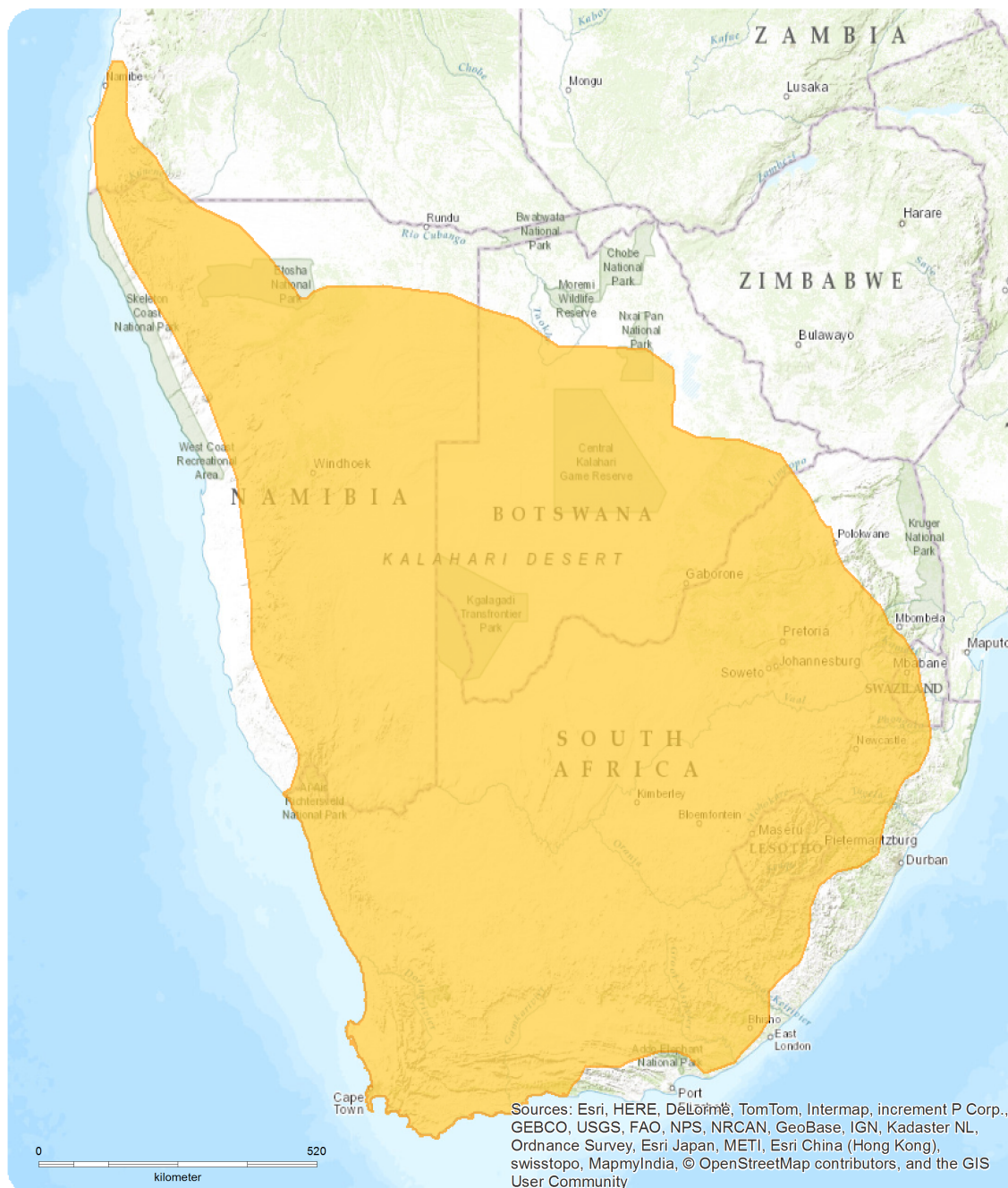
The species is widespread in the central and western regions of southern Africa, reaching to about 15°N in south-western Angola (Crawford-Cabral 1989). It occupies mainly arid and semi-arid areas, but in parts, such as the fynbos biome of South Africa's western Cape Province, the species enters areas receiving higher precipitation and denser vegetation. The species has expanded its range over recent decades to the south-west where it reaches the Atlantic and Indian Ocean coastlines (Stuart 1981). Expansion through South Africa's eastern Cape Province has been documented (Coetzee 1979). Status in Swaziland is uncertain, but they may occur in the south-west (Monadjem 1998), as the species occurs in adjacent regions of north-western KwaZulu-Natal (Rowe-Rowe 1992); they are not confirmed from Lesotho, but may occur (Lynch 1994). Previous records of its occurrence in western Zimbabwe (Roberts 1951, Coetzee 1977) and Mozambique (Travassos Dias 1968) have not been substantiated, and it is

considered unlikely that these records are valid.

Country Occurrence:

Native: Angola (Angola); Botswana; Namibia; South Africa

Distribution Map

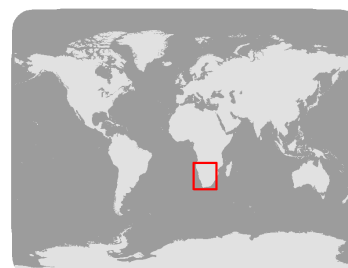


Vulpes chama

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

Generally common to fairly abundant across much of its range, although problem animal control activities have resulted in population reductions in some areas. Estimates are only available for South Africa's Free State province where an average density of 0.3 foxes per km² was estimated with a total population of 31,000 individuals (Bester 1982). Annual offtake resulting from problem animal control programmes averaged roughly 16% up to 1985, with no obvious declines in overall populations (Bester 1982). Range and numbers have increased in the south-west and east of South Africa (Coetzee 1979, Stuart 1981). Estimated population sizes or numbers are not available, but it is thought that populations are currently stable across their entire range.

Current Population Trend: Stable

Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

They mainly associate with open country, including grassland, grassland with scattered thickets, and lightly wooded areas, particularly in the dry Karoo regions, the Kalahari and the fringes of the Namib Desert. They also penetrate moderately dense vegetation in lowland fynbos in the western Cape, as well as extensive agricultural lands where they lie up in surviving pockets of natural vegetation during the day and forage on arable and cultivated fields at night (Stuart 1981). Along the eastern flank of the Namib Desert, Namibia, they occupy rock outcroppings and inselbergs, ranging out onto bare gravel plains at night (Stuart 1975). In Botswana, they have been recorded from Acacia-scrubland, short grassland and especially on the fringes of shallow seasonal pans, as well as cleared and overgrazed areas (Smithers 1971). In the central Karoo of South Africa, they occupy the plains as well as the low rocky ridges and isolated rock outcroppings. In the Free State, Lynch (1975) found that they were most abundant in areas receiving less than 500 mm of rainfall, although in KwaZulu-Natal they have been recorded between 1,000 and 1,500 m above sea level, where rainfall is roughly 720–760 mm (Rowe-Rowe 1992).

Systems: Terrestrial

Use and Trade

The trade in Cape Fox pelts is negligible and this situation is unlikely to change.

Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

There are no major threats to the species. Habitat loss/changes are not a major factor influencing the conservation status of the Cape Fox. In fact, in western Cape Province and elsewhere, changing agricultural practices have resulted in range extensions for this species, as well as for the Bat-eared Fox (Stuart 1981). Expansion of semi-arid karroid vegetation during the process of desertification, especially eastwards, has also resulted in range extensions of this canid. Heavy direct and indirect problem animal control measures do not seem to have had a major impact on populations of the Cape Fox, even though they have resulted in declines in some areas. The illegal but widespread and indiscriminate use of agricultural poisons on commercial farms poses the main threat (Stuart and Stuart 2013).

Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

Not listed in the CITES Appendices. Occurs in many protected areas across its range, including a number

of provincial and private nature reserves, as well as on game ranches in all South African provinces, although the species has a much more restricted range in Limpopo Province and KwaZulu-Natal (Stuart 1981, Rautenbach 1982, Lynch 1975, Rowe-Rowe 1992). In Swaziland, the species may occur in Nhlangano Nature Reserve in the south-west and pups have been successfully reared in Milwane Game Reserve (Monadjem 1998).

Although treated as a problem animal across most of its range, it is partially protected in several South African provinces, as it does not appear on the official lists of problem species. However, no permit is required from any authority to kill this fox in problem animal control operations. No protection measures are currently enforced and at the present time, this is not necessary.

Although the Cape Fox has been extensively studied in South Africa's Free State province (Lynch 1975, Bester 1982, Kok 1996), there is little information available elsewhere within its range. Aspects such as diet and reproduction are quite well known, but little information is available on aspects of social ecology and behaviour in the wild. Some investigation into the role, if any, this species plays in disease transmission is necessary.

Credits

Assessor(s): Hoffmann, M.
Reviewer(s): Sillero-Zubiri, C.
Contributor(s): Stuart, C. & Stuart, M.

Bibliography

- Baillie, J. and Groombridge, B. (comps and eds). 1996. *1996 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK.
- Bester, J. L. 1982. Die gedragsekologie en bestuur van die silwervos *Vulpes chama* (A. Smith, 1833) met spesiale verwysing na die Oranje-Vrystaat. M.Sc. Thesis, University of Pretoria.
- Coetzee, C.G. 1977. Order Carnivora. Part 8. In: J. Meester and H.W. Setzer (eds), *The Mammals of Africa: An Identification Manual*, pp. 1-42. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC, USA.
- Coetzee, P. W. 1979. Present distribution and status of some of the mammals of Albany. Albany Divisional Council and Grahamstown Municipality, South Africa.
- Crawford-Cabral, J. C. 1989. Distributional data and notes on Angolan carnivores (Mammalia: Carnivora). 1. Small and median-sizes species. *Garcia de Orta, Série de Zoologia, Lisboa* 14: 3-27.
- IUCN. 2014. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2014.1. Available at: www.iucnredlist.org. (Accessed: 12 June 2014).
- Kok, O. B. 1996. Diet composition of different carnivores in the Free State, South Africa. *South African Journal of Science* 92: 393-398.
- Lynch, C. D. 1975. The distribution of mammals in the Orange Free State, South Africa. *Navorsinge van die Nasionale Museum, Bloemfontein* 3: 109-139.
- Lynch, C.D. 1994. The mammals of Lesotho. *Navorsinge van die Nasionale Museum Bloemfontein* 10(4): 177-241.
- Monadjem, A. 1998. *Mammals of Swaziland*. The Conservation Trust of Swaziland and Big Game Parks.
- Nel, J.A.J., Stuart, C. and Stuart, T. 2013. *Vulpes chama* Cape Fox. In: J. Kingdon, and M. Hoffmann (eds), *Mammals of Africa. Volume V: Carnivores, Pangolins, Equids and Rhinoceroses*, pp. 62-65. Bloomsbury Publishing, London, UK.
- Rathbun, G.B. (subeditor). 2005. Macroscelidea. In: J.D. Skinner and C.T. Chimimba (eds), *The Mammals of the Southern African Subregion, 3rd edition*, pp. 22-34. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Rautenbach, I. L. 1982. Mammals of the Transvaal. *Ecoplan monograph, N.S. Supplemento* 1: 111-211.
- Roberts, A. 1951. *The Mammals of South Africa*. Central New Agency, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Rowe-Rowe, D.T. 1992. *The Carnivores of Natal*. Natal Parks Board, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.
- Smithers, R. H. N. 1968. *A check list and atlas of the mammals of Botswana*. The Trustees of The National Museums of Rhodesia, Salisbury, Rhodesia.
- Stuart, C. T. 1975. Preliminary notes on the mammals of the Namib Desert Park. *Madoqua* 4: 5-68.
- Stuart, C.T. 1981. Notes on the mammalian carnivores of the Cape Province, South Africa. *Bontebok* 1: 1-58.
- Travassos Dias, J. A. 1968. *Fauna selvagem de Mocambique No.1. Radio Mocambique Mensario Boletim mensal de Radio Clube de Mocambique*. Lourenco Marques, Mozambique.

Citation

Hoffmann, M. 2014. *Vulpes chama*. *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2014*: e.T23060A46126992.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2014-1.RLTS.T23060A46126992.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?
2. Savanna -> 2.1. Savanna - Dry	-	Suitable	Yes
3. Shrubland -> 3.5. Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry	-	Suitable	Yes
3. Shrubland -> 3.8. Shrubland - Mediterranean-type Shrubby Vegetation	-	Suitable	Yes
4. Grassland -> 4.5. Grassland - Subtropical/Tropical Dry	-	Suitable	Yes
0. Root -> 6. Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)	-	Suitable	Yes
14. Artificial/Terrestrial -> 14.1. Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land	-	Marginal	-

Threats

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

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
5. Biological resource use -> 5.1. Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals -> 5.1.2. Unintentional effects (species is not the target)	Ongoing	Minority (50%)	Negligible declines	Low impact: 4
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality		
9. Pollution -> 9.3. Agricultural & forestry effluents -> 9.3.3. Herbicides and pesticides	Ongoing	Minority (50%)	Negligible declines	Low impact: 4
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.3. Indirect ecosystem effects		

Conservation Actions in Place

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

Conservation Actions in Place
In-Place Research, Monitoring and Planning
Action Recovery plan: No
Systematic monitoring scheme: No
In-Place Land/Water Protection and Management
Conservation sites identified: Yes, over entire range
Occur in at least one PA: Yes
Area based regional management plan: No
Invasive species control or prevention: Not Applicable

Conservation Actions in Place
In-Place Species Management
Harvest management plan: No
Successfully reintroduced or introduced benignly: No
Subject to ex-situ conservation: Unknown
In-Place Education
Subject to recent education and awareness programmes: No
Included in international legislation: No
Subject to any international management/trade controls: No

Conservation Actions Needed

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

Conservation Actions Needed
2. Land/water management -> 2.1. Site/area management

Research Needed

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

Research Needed
1. Research -> 1.3. Life history & ecology
0. Root -> 4. Other

Additional Data Fields

Population
Population severely fragmented: No

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](#).