

Bechuana trade skins of this species, when made up, are known as 'Grey Jackal' karrosses.

"Weight (of a female), 24 lb. Dogs probably weigh up to 30 lb."—Percival. Shoulder height, 45-50 cm.—(Wilhelm).

The Great-Eared Foxes

Otocyon

Otocyon Müller, 1836, Archiv. Anat. & Phys. Med., p. L; genotype, *O. megalotis* Desmarest, 1822, Mammal. Suppl., i, p. 538. Delalande's Fox from South Africa (Bechuanaland?).

Delalande's Fox—Bakoorjakkals

Otocyon megalotis Desmarest

OTOCYON MEGALOTIS MEGALOTIS.

Canis megalotis Desmarest, 1822, Mamm. Suppl., i, p. 538.

Type (in the Paris Museum?) from the Cape.

OTOCYON MEGALOTIS STEINHARDTI.

Otocyon steinhardti Zukowsky, 1924, Archiv. f. Naturg., Abt. A, 1 heft, pp. 52-58.

Type (not preserved) from Goreis (Ugab Mts.), 45 km. west of Outjo, S.W. Africa.

NATIVE NAMES:

PERSONALLY COLLECTED

Herero: *Okata-ká-ha*.

Ovambo: *Ombúü, Mbúgu*.

Bechuana: *Mothlósě, Motlósi*.

Ovadirico, Mambakushu: *Li-shánga-shanga*.

Ovacuangari: *A-sánga-sanga*.

Nama Hottentot, Berg Damara, Hei||kum Bushman: ||*Ab*.

||K'au||en & !Kung Bushman: !*U*.

Karross trade name: *Macloutsie, Maclusi*.

German (S.W. Africa): *Löffelhund*.

OTHER SOURCES

Bechuana: *Thlosi* (Zukowsky); *Mothlusi* (England).

Nama Hottentot: ||*Ai* (Schinz).

!Kung Bushman: ||*Ai* (Bleek); *Ku* (Zukowsky).

Sikwengo (Hukwe) Bushman: *A* (Zukowsky).

!O!kung Bushman: ||*Ai* (Bleek).¹

¹ Miss Bleek's ||K'au||en, Naron, and !Kung names for the Silver Fox (*Vulpes*) may correctly refer to *Otocyon*.

DISTRIBUTION IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.—Delalande's Fox occurs all over South-West Africa, except perhaps along the coastal portion of the Namib Desert. It is comparatively plentiful everywhere in an easterly direction (Gobabis Dist., etc.), in the Kaokoveld (numerous around Okorosave), Ovamboland, the Etosha Pan Region, Damaraland, and Great Namaqualand.

"Plentiful everywhere in the Kaokoveld."—Steinhardt.

In Southern Great Namaqualand, the Orange River Valley, and Little Namaqualand it appears to become scarcer. In Grootfontein District *Otocyon* was met with as far north as Numkaub, and according to river natives it reaches the Okavango. It has been recorded by Balme from the Maschi River (Eastern Caprivi).

"*Otocyon* is numerous in the Omaheke, the Kaukouveld, the Okavango Flood Area, and here and there in the Kungveld. It is everywhere numerous in the Hukweveld (Central Caprivi)."—Wilhelm.

This fox extends into Southern Angola, both in the east and west.

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.—The South African *Otocyon megalotis* occurs in the dry karroo plains of the Western Cape Province where it extends as far south and east as Beaufort West (S.A. Museum), Graaff Reinet, and Uitenhage.

"It is found only rarely in the Eastern Karroo."—Hewitt.

North of the Orange River it ranges through Gordonia, Griqualand West, the Western Orange Free State, the Western Transvaal (recorded from the Eastern Transvaal by Kirby), the whole of Bechuanaland—where it is generally plentiful, and perhaps the south-western corner of Southern Rhodesia. According to Warren it is not found in Natal.

"A fox undoubtedly occurs in Northern Rhodesia, and a specimen (unidentified) was observed in the Kafue Flats."—Pitman.

In East and North-East Africa the genus (*Otocyon*) reappears, and is represented by two closely allied species or races which have been recorded from Tanganyika Territory, Kenya Colony, Uganda (Betton), the Southern Sudan, Abyssinia, and Somaliland.

HISTORICAL.—An extinct species, *O. curvipalatus*, has been described from the upper Tertiary deposits of North-Western India, although to-day the genus is confined to the African Continent.

HABITS.—Although nocturnal, it is not unusual to see an odd pair of Large-Eared Foxes wandering about by day in regions where they are fairly plentiful. They lie up above ground under bushes, in high grass, or in the shelter of rocks, and when disturbed are not so ready as Silver Foxes to bolt into the nearest burrow. I did not find them very easy to trap, although they may be run down and killed by natives with dogs without much difficulty. *Otocyon* goes about singly, in pairs, often in threes, and sometimes in small parties up to five or six in number. In South-West Africa it favours open sandy country similar to that inhabited by *Vulpes chama*, the two species often occurring on the same veld in apparently more or less equal numbers.

"*Otocyon* is nocturnal, and mostly found in twos or threes up to five, sleeping by day in thick bush cover or in burrows. It is a swift runner, and has an extremely acute sense of hearing. A good many of these animals are killed by leopard."—Wilhelm.

"In East Africa *Otocyon virgatus* was usually secured by 'jacking' at night, although frequently seen singly or in pairs in broad daylight. It seems to live in pairs or groups of from three to six."—Loring.

"An inhabitant of dry open country; met with either singly or in pairs. It is nocturnal, but occasionally ventures forth by day in more secluded parts of the country."—FitzSimons.

Otocyon has a rather thin call, which, although not so loud, bears some resemblance to that of an ordinary fox. It may occasionally be heard calling at night. At Sandfontein where some cubs were kept alive, the female wandered round close to the camp for several nights, calling to and being answered by the young ones.

"Like a jackal, it will circle round a camp during the night when its (*schluchzenden*) cry is often heard. In a trap it makes a (*kekererendes*) sound resembling 'Ha-ba-wa-wa.'"—Wilhelm.

This fox has a faintly unpleasant smell, not unlike that of a jackal; *Vulpes chama*, on the other hand, has little or none.

Foxes are eaten by the Native Tribes of South-West Africa.

Food: very largely insects—white ants, locusts, beetles, etc.; also small rodents, the nestlings and eggs of ground-nesting birds, lizards, wild fruits, tuberous roots and other vegetable matter. Long-Eared Foxes occasionally come to carrion, and are at times attracted by meat bait in traps. Abundant spoor of *Otocyon*, *Vulpes* and *Proteles* was frequently observed around large gerbil warrens. A tame individual at Fockshof (Grootfontein Dist.) was reported never to have interfered with poultry: it fed mainly on white ants, and spent the greater part of the day hunting and scratching about for them. It also ate cooked scraps from the table and was particularly fond of milk.

"The stomachs of several examined were found to contain about a quart of termites and other insects."—Loring (East Africa).

"Principal food, mice and all kinds of insects; they will sometimes come to carrion."—Wilhelm.

"A tame individual never attempted to molest poultry, but, when young chickens were about, when opportunity offered, would snap one up."—FitzSimons.

"Fairly omnivorous feeders; in captivity they are especially fond of monkey-nuts."—Haagner.

BREEDING HABITS.—A litter of four cubs (estimated to be about ten days old) was dug out of a burrow at Sandfontein (Gobabis Dist.) on November 20th. FitzSimons records a litter of five, discovered in the burrow of an ant-bear.

"A female in the Pretoria Zoo reared several litters of three. The period

of gestation was 60 days—practically the same as that of a Side-Striped Jackal.”
—Haagner.

“The young are born in burrows during the rains (December to April). Period of gestation, about 70 days. Their breeding habits appear to resemble those of jackals.”—Wilhelm.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES.—In build *Otocyon* resembles more a small jackal than an ordinary fox, the relationship of *Otocyon* to *Canis adustus* being to some extent comparable with that of *Proteles* to *Hyæna*.

The longish hair on the shoulders and upper back has a slight tendency to fall loosely on either side, leaving a centre parting—somewhat as in *Proteles*, although much less noticeably. The tail is less woolly than in *Vulpes chama* or *Canis mesomelas*, the brush being comparatively limp like that of *Canis adustus*. Towards the end of the hot season the fur becomes rather ragged and is often clogged with burrs and grass seeds, for which reason karrosses are best when made from winter skins.

Weight (of *O. virgatus*), ♂ 8½ lb., ♀ 6½ lb. (Loring and Mearns).
Shoulder height, 35–40 cm. (Wilhelm).

The Typical Foxes

Vulpes

Vulpes Oken, 1816, Lehr. Naturg. 3, pt. 2, pp. 1033–1034; genotype, *V. vulpes* Linnæus, 1758, Syst. Nat., ed. 10, p. 40. The European Fox from Scandinavia.

South African Silver Fox—Silwerjakkals

Vulpes (Cynalopex)¹ chama A. Smith

VULPES CHAMA.

Canis chama A. Smith, 1834, S. Afr. Quart. Journ., ii, p. 89.

Type (in the South African Museum) from Little Namaqualand.

NATIVE NAMES:

PERSONALLY COLLECTED

Herero: *Ombánji-ururápa*.

Ovambo: *Ombánji-kalulúnga, Karurúnga*.

Ovadirico, Ovacuangari: *Mbánzi-chángwáy*.

Bechuana: *Thóšě, Thlóšě, Khanína* (Gobabis Dist.).²

Nama Hottentot, Berg Damara, Naron Bushman: *!Khamab*,³

Hei||kum Bushman: *!Khamagirib*.

||K'au||en Bushman, !Kung Bushman: *≠Gu*.

¹ *Cynalopex* Ham.-Smith, 1839, Jardine's Nat. Libr. Mamm., ix, pp. 222–232, pls. xvi–xviii; genotype *C. corsac* Linnæus, 1768, Syst. Nat., iii, append., p. 223: The Corsac Fox from 'the great plains' between the Jaco and Irtis Rivers (Russia).

² Probably from a borrowed source.

³ The 'Ermine' of Krönlein's list.