

Large Grey Mongoose *Herpestes ichneumon*



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Namibian conservation status	Least Concern
Global IUCN status	Least Concern First assessed 1996: Least Concern, unchanged since then
Namibian range	Marginal in Namibia, only occurring in the mesic north-eastern areas
Global range	Occurs along the Mediterranean coast in North Africa and is widespread through the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, but absent from rainforest in Central Africa and semi-arid to arid parts of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe Outside Africa, known from the Iberian and Arabian Peninsulas
Population estimate	Unknown
Population trend	Unknown, but thought to be stable
Habitat	In Namibia, prefers wetland vegetation and dense undergrowth on the fringes of rivers and swamps. Extralimittally also found in grassland and cultivated land
Threats	No major threats

IDENTIFYING FEATURES

The name accurately describes this species. It can be mistaken for the slender mongoose but is much larger and heavier in build, has short black legs, and a more pronounced black tassel at the end of the tail. The hair on the body is longer than on a slender mongoose, and on its hindquarters and flanks it forms a “skirt” partly hiding the hind legs.

DISTRIBUTION

Large grey mongooses (also known as Egyptian mongoose) are closely associated with rivers and wetlands, but may also wander and forage in adjacent dry terrain where they

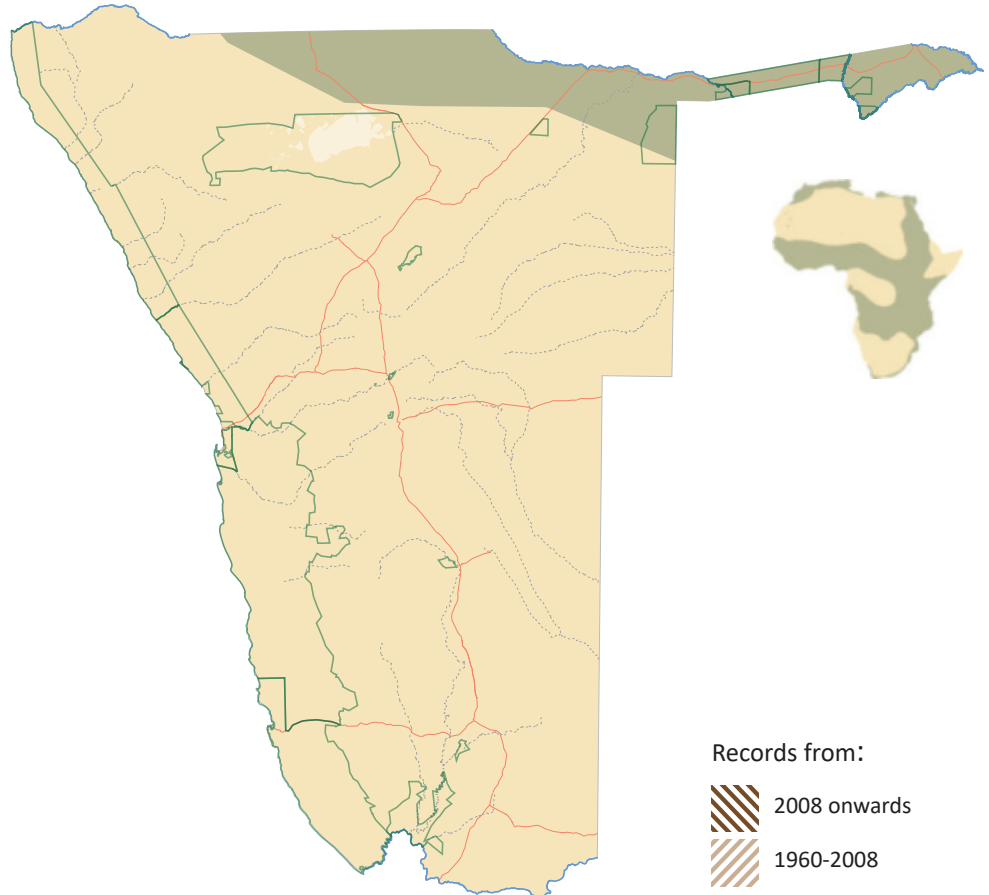
have been recorded in grassland and cultivated land. They are widespread in Africa, frequenting moist habitats with understory cover in eastern South Africa and extending northwards over most of the continent except the central tropical areas and North African deserts. Their distribution extends into countries around the Mediterranean Sea including the Iberian Peninsula.

The species normally frequents reed beds and the fringes of rivers and swamps. This habitat preference confines them to the north-eastern parts of Namibia, where they are associated with the wetlands of the Okavango and the Kwando-Linyanti-Zambezi River systems.

Distribution records of large grey mongoose, and present estimated area of distribution in Namibia.

Inset: African distribution of large grey mongoose according to IUCN (Do Linh San *et al.* 2016).

The Namibian distribution in the main map is more up to date and does not necessarily agree with the distribution shown in the inset.



POPULATION ESTIMATE AND TREND

This species is marginal in Namibia and no population estimate has been attempted. The global population trend is stable (Do Linh San *et al.* 2016).

ECOLOGY

Large grey mongooses are mostly diurnal and are commonly seen singly or in pairs, occasionally in family groups (Skinner & Chimimba 2005). They forage in wet areas, hunting in dense undergrowth on the ground and sometimes venturing into shallow water. They take a variety of small vertebrates, especially rodents, birds and eggs, frogs and reptiles (including snakes such as puff adders), as well as crabs and insects (Stuart 1983, Skinner & Chimimba 2005).

THREATS

No major threats are identified (Do Linh San *et al.* 2016).

CONSERVATION STATUS

Least Concern as the species is widespread, occurring widely beyond Namibia's borders. It is common in parts of its range, and not threatened in any significant way (Do Linh San *et al.* 2016).

ACTIONS

No specific actions are needed for the conservation of this species although Do Linh San *et al.* (2016) suggested monitoring areas where water supply and or quality may be negatively affected.

Assessors: John Pallett and Gail Thomson
Reviewer: Anthony Maddock

Suggested citation: Pallett J & Thomson G 2022. A conservation assessment of Large Grey Mongoose *Herpestes ichneumon*. In: NCE, LCMAN, MEFT (eds) 2022. Conservation Status and Red List of the Terrestrial Carnivores of Namibia. Pp 134-135. MEFT, LCMAN & NCE, Windhoek, Namibia