



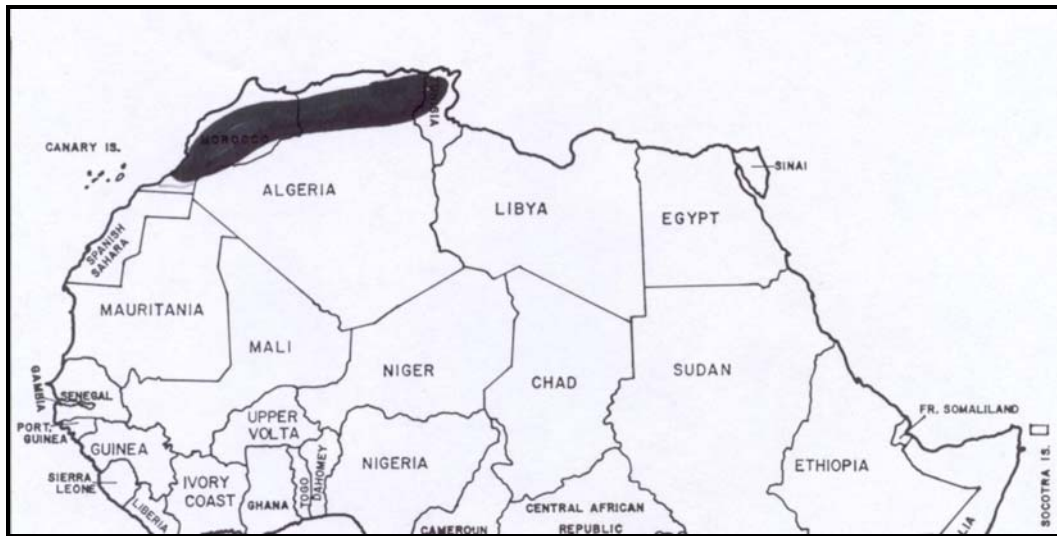
Cuvier's Gazelle, *Gazella cuvieri*

Legal Status: Cuvier's gazelle is protected in the United States as an Endangered Species. In addition, they are regulated by CITES as an Appendix I species (Tunisia). The IUCN Antelope Specialist Group considers Cuvier's gazelle as Endangered, with a classification of C2a. The current wild population is thought to be between 500 and 1,500 animals.

Description: A medium-sized gazelle measuring 23.5 - 27 in. tall at the shoulder and 44 - 55 lb in weight, Cuvier's gazelles are brown with a distinct dark-brown lateral band across the fore and rear flanks, a white belly and rump patch with a black tail. The top of the nose has a prominent black spot. The face is well striped with long, narrow pale ears. Horns are long (9 - 14 in., well formed in both sexes and are strongly annulated. They rise vertically before diverging out and back; the smooth tips curve in and forwards.



Range: Historically, Cuvier's gazelles were quite widespread in the higher elevations of the mountainous regions of Morocco, including the Middle and High Atlas, extending beyond the latter almost to the Atlantic Coast. They also occurred in Algeria and Western Tunisia. In 1972, only small herds were left in various parts of the Atlas Mountains. By 1997, they were thought to have become extinct in Tunisia.



Habitat: Cuvier's gazelles occur in a wide variety of hilly habitats, including open oak forest, Aleppo pine forest, open areas with a mixture of fields, vineyards and hilltop grasslands and stony desert plateaus. They are found in areas with rainfall ranging from 600 mm/yr (24 in.) to desert on the northern fringes of the Sahara.

Diet: Cuvier's gazelles are both browsers and grazers, eating herbs and shrubs in the summer, and in the winter, green grasses. They can utilize water from plants as well as dew, but need to visit waterholes frequently. Feeding generally occurs at night and in the early morning.

Social Organization: Cuvier's gazelles live in widely spaced territories where a single male attends one or more females and their young. They generally occur in groups of three to five, and rarely more than eight. They have a strong group instinct and it is thought that if persecution were to end, it is possible they could increase and expand their present range and form larger herds.

Threats to Survival: Excessive hunting for skins, meat and trophies contributed to their early decline. Loss of habitat due to continuous expansion of pastureland for livestock and deforestation for agriculture or charcoal appears to be the main threat now.

Zoo Programs: The Center for Saharan Fauna in Almeria, Spain maintains the core population of this species. There are also animal collections in Doha (Qatar), Rabat (Morocco) and Madrid (Spain), and approximately 80 animals in 7 managed collections in North America that are descendants of fifteen individuals imported by the Zoological Society of San Diego between 1982 and 1988 from Munich (Germany). The current target population goal for this species is 125. Cuvier's gazelles in North America are descendants of 1.2 founders from the herd originally established in Almeria with wild-caught animals from the Western Sahara. Munich received animals born in Almeria of known parentage. Unfortunately, many of the individuals who were sent to the United States from Munich do not have parentage records. These animals, do, however go back to the original 1.2 founders in Almeria.

Conservation: The International Studbook is maintained by the Center for Saharan Fauna in Almeria (Spain). A captive propagation program is based at Almeria. The North American Regional Studbook is maintained by The Living Desert in Palm Desert, California. The species occurs in two protected areas in Algeria—the Djebel Sahari Hunting Reserve and the Mergueb Nature Reserve. Recolonization projects are currently under way in some of their former ranges. Cuvier’s gazelles are mobile and could recolonize former territories as long as safe corridors are present, with protected areas and waterholes between territories.

Contacts:

North American Regional Studbook Keeper and Population Manager:

Wendy Enright
The Living Desert 47-900 Portola Ave.
POB 1775
Palm Desert, CA 92260
Tel: (760) 346-5694 x2211
Fax: (760) 568-9685
mailto:wenright@livingdesert.org

Wild Status:

Steve Shurter
International Programs Director- Gilman International Conservation Assistant Director
White Oak Conservation Center
581705 White Oak Road
Yulee, Florida, USA 32097
phone: 904 225 3290
mailto:steves@wogilman.com