



Thomson's Gazelle, *Gazella thomsonii*

Legal Status: Thomson's gazelle occur in significant numbers throughout the majority of its historical range and therefore is not considered to be under any threat. IUCN lists Thomson's gazelle as Low Risk.

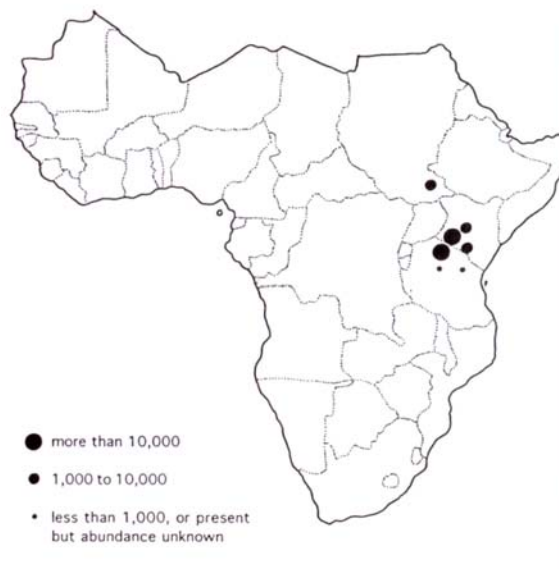
Description: Thomson's gazelles are small gazelles, weighing 30 to 65 pounds with females being slightly lighter than males. Thomson's gazelles are a sandy, light brown color with a white rump and underside. The most distinctive characteristic is the black flank strip down the side of the body, along with the black tail and distinctive facial markings. Both males and females have horns. The horns of males are significant in size and strongly ridged. The horns run relatively straight with a slight S-shaped curvature. The horns of females are short, straight, and relatively weak, the horns are often deformed and/or broken. There have been observations of female Thomson's gazelles that lack horns all together. (Estes, 1993; Spingale, 1986)



Thomson's gazelles possess several scent glands. The most obvious are the preorbital glands. The preorbital glands of the males are well developed and produce a thick, black secretion that is typically deposited on twigs and other objects. The male's preorbital glands also open widely during agonistic and sexual interactions. The preorbital glands of the females are basically non-functional. The Thomson's gazelles also possess hoof and inguinal glands, as well as carpal or shin glands located on the forelegs under tufts of long, darker hair. (Estes, 1993; Spinage, 1986)

Distribution:

Thomson's gazelle's historical range is the grasslands of East Africa. It has lost some of its former range to settlement expansion but still exists in large numbers in the Serengeti-Masai Mara ecosystem of Kenya and Tanzania. It also still inhabits the Ngorongoro Crater, the Laikipia and



Kajiado rangelands of Kenya, and southeastern Sudan (Mongalla gazelle, *G. t. albonotata*). (East, 1998)

Habitat: Thomson's gazelle inhabit the acacia savannas and grasslands of East Africa. They prefer heavily grazed, trampled, or burnt grasslands, and as long as some small growth remains, they stay on grassland areas long after other larger herbivores have left.

