

A large tortoise, likely a Galapagos tortoise, is the central focus of the image. It is positioned in the lower-left to center area, facing right. Its shell is dark brown with distinct scutes. The tortoise is surrounded by a natural environment with brown soil and several bright yellow flowers in the foreground and background. The background is softly blurred, showing more greenery and yellow flowers.

# UNUSUAL WILDLIFE

EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

  
**Akorn**

AKORN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Both **East and Southern Africa** are regions known for its rich biodiversity and numerous endemic and unusual species. These are a few of our favorites, not often seen on safari, and the best places to see them.





## GERENUK

**Status** Near Threatened

Its name, derived from the Somali language, means "giraffe-necked," which aptly describes its most notable feature: an exceptionally long neck. This unique physical characteristic and ability to stand on their hind legs allows the gerenuk to reach leaves and shoots on trees and bushes that other gazelles and antelopes cannot access. They are found in the drier regions of East Africa.

### BEST PLACES TO SEE

**KENYA** Samburu National Reserve, Tsavo East & Tsavo West National Park, Meru National Park

**TANZANIA** Serengeti National Park, Tarangire National Park

**UGANDA** Kidepo Valley National Park



## GREVY'S ZEBRA

**Status** Endangered

Grevy's zebra is the largest and most endangered of the three zebra species, the others being the plains zebra and the mountain zebra. Named after Jules Grévy, a former president of France, they are known for their distinctive stripes which are narrow and closely spaced. Unlike other zebras, Grevy's zebras have white bellies and a characteristic bull's-eye pattern on their rumps.

### BEST PLACES TO SEE

**KENYA** Samburu National Reserve, Laikipia Plateau, Meru National Park

## BEISA ORYX

**Status** Near Threatened

The beisa oryx, also known as the East African oryx, is a large antelope species, standing about 1.1 to 1.2 meters (3.6 to 3.9 feet) at the shoulder and weighing between 75 to 200 kilograms (165 to 440 pounds). They are native to the arid and semi-arid regions of East Africa. It is known for its striking appearance and impressive adaptations to harsh environments.

### BEST PLACES TO SEE

**KENYA** Samburu National Reserve, Meru National Park, parts of Tsavo East National Park





## THORNICROFT'S GIRAFFE

**Status** Vulnerable

The Thornicroft's giraffe, also known as the Rhodesian giraffe, is a subspecies of giraffe endemic to the Luangwa Valley in northeastern Zambia. This is the only region where they are found in the wild. Their coat features irregular, star-shaped patches that are light brown with beige outlines. These patterns are unique to each individual and help in identifying them.

**BEST PLACES TO SEE**

**ZAMBIA** Luangwa Valley

A pangolin is shown in profile, walking through a field of dry, golden-brown grass. The pangolin's body is covered in overlapping, scaly plates that range in color from brown to a bluish-grey. The background consists of sparse, dry trees and a clear blue sky, suggesting a savanna or woodland environment. The lighting is bright, casting soft shadows on the ground.

# PANGOLIN

**Status** Highly endangered

Pangolins are unique and fascinating mammals known for their distinctive scales and elusive behavior. They belong to the family Manidae and are the only mammals wholly covered in scales, which they use for protection. They primarily feed on ants and termites and use their strong claws to break into insect nests and their long tongues to collect their prey. There are four species in Africa with the Ground Pangolin found in East & Southern Africa.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**BOTSWANA** Okavango Delta, Central Kalahari Game Reserve

**KENYA** Tsavo National Park, Laikipia Plateau

**MALAWI** Majete Wildlife Reserve

**NAMIBIA** Etosha National Park, Kalahari Desert

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park, Tswalu Kalahari Reserve

**ZAMBIA** South Luangwa National Park, Lower Zambezi

**ZIMBABWE** Hwange National Park

# AARDVARK

**Status** Not endangered

The aardvark is a unique and fascinating medium sized mammal native to sub-Saharan Africa.

Known for its distinctive appearance and nocturnal lifestyle, primarily feeding on ants and termites. They use their powerful claws to dig into termite mounds and ant hills and their long, sticky tongues to lap up the insects. They can consume up to 50,000 insects in one night.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**BOTSWANA** Okavango Delta, Central Kalahari Game Reserve

**KENYA** Masai Mara, Laikipia Plateau

**NAMIBIA** Etosha National Park

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park, Tswalu Kalahari Reserve, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

**ZAMBIA** South Luangwa National Park, Lower Zambezi National Park

**Zimbabwe** Hwange National Park





# BAT EARED FOX

**Status** Not endangered

The bat-eared fox is a distinctive and fascinating small canid (biological family of dog-like carnivorans) with an insectivorous diet, however they also consume small mammals, birds, eggs, and fruits. Their most distinguishing feature is their large, bat-like ears, which can be as long as 13 cm (5 inches), used for thermoregulation and enhanced hearing.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**BOTSWANA** Okavango Delta, Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Makgadikgadi

**KENYA** Masai Mara Reserve, Laikipia Plateau

**NAMIBIA** Etosha National Park, Namib Desert

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park, Tswalu Kalahari Reserve, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

**TANZANIA** Serengeti National Park





## TOPI

**Status** Not endangered

The topi, also known as the Tsessebe in Southern Africa, is a highly social and distinctive antelope found in sub-Saharan Africa. They have a sleek, elongated body with a reddish-brown coat that can have a purplish sheen, particularly in sunlight. Their legs have distinctive dark patches, and they have a dark face and forehead.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**BOTSWANA** Okavango Delta, Chobe National Park

**KENYA** Maasai Mara National Reserve, Tsavo National Park

**NAMIBIA** Etosha National Park, Namib Desert

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park

**TANZANIA** Serengeti National Park, Ruaha National Park

**UGANDA** Queen Elizabeth National Park, Murchison Falls National Park

# L'HOEST MONKEY

**Status** Vulnerable

The L'Hoest's monkey, also known as the mountain monkey, is a distinctive primate found in the forests of Central Africa. They live in matrilineal social groups typically consisting of about 10 to 20 individuals, led by a dominant female. They have a dark face with strikingly bright eyes and expressive facial expressions while their tails are relatively long and often held upright. The tail helps with balance when navigating through the trees.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**RWANDA** Nyungwe Forest National Park

**UGANDA** Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Kibale National Park





# HONEY BADGER

**Status** Not endangered

The honey badger, also known as a ratel, is a small but formidable carnivore known for its strength, fearlessness, and resilience they are able to defend themselves against much larger predators, including lions and leopards. They have a stocky, muscular build with short, sturdy legs and highly opportunistic feeders. Their diet includes small mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, fruits, and honey. They are known for raiding beehives to eat honey and bee larvae, a behavior aided by their thick skin, which protects them from stings.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**BOTSWANA** Okavango Delta, Central Kalahari Game Reserve

**KENYA** Maasai Mara National Reserve, Tsavo National Park

**NAMIBIA** Etosha National Park

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

**TANZANIA** Serengeti National Park, Ngorongoro Conservation Area

# SHOEBILL

**Status** Threatened

Shoebills are large birds, standing between 110 to 140 cm (43 to 55 inches) tall with a wingspan of up to 260 cm (102 inches). The most striking feature is its massive, shoe-shaped bill, which can be up to 24 cm (9.4 inches) long and 20 cm (7.9 inches) wide. These birds are carnivorous, primarily feeding on fish, amphibians, young crocodiles, and occasionally small mammals and birds.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**SOUTH AFRICA** iSimangaliso Wetland Park

**UGANDA** Lake Albert Delta, Murchison Falls National Park, Lake Edward Flats

**ZAMBIA** Bangweulu Swamps





## BUSH BABY

**Status** Not endangered

Bushbabies are small, nocturnal primates native to Africa. They belong to the family Galagidae and are known for their large eyes, excellent night vision, and remarkable agility. With unique toothcombs adorning their lower front teeth, they skillfully extract gum from trees. Their remarkable ability to leap vast distances between branches showcases their prowess, propelled by robust hind limbs and aided by their tails for impeccable balance.

### BEST PLACES TO SEE

**KENYA** Kakamega Forest, Kenyan Coast

**MADAGASCAR** Andasibe-Mantadia National Park

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park

**TANZANIA** Serengeti National Park

**UGANDA** Bwindi Impenetrable National Park

**ZANZIBAR**

# DUNE LARK

**Status** Near Threatened

The dune lark is a small passerine bird endemic to the sand dunes of the Namib Desert in southwestern Africa. As they are ground feeders, they have a pale sandy brown plumage, which provides excellent camouflage against the desert sands, often seen running across the sand in search of food. They can also flick sand with their beaks to uncover hidden insects.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**NAMIBIA** Namib-Naukluft National Park, Sossusvlei



# AARDWOLF

**Status** Not Threatened

The aardwolf is a fascinating and unique mammal belonging to the Hyaenidae family. Unlike its more aggressive hyena relatives, the aardwolf has a diet that primarily consists of termites. They use their long, sticky tongue to lap up termites and a single aardwolf can consume over 200,000 termites in a single night. Aardwolves are generally solitary when foraging but are monogamous and share a territory with their mate. They raise their young together in their shared burrow.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**BOTSWANA** Central Kalahari Game Reserve

**KENYA** Masai Mara Reserve, Samburu National Reserve, Meru National Park

**NAMIBIA** Etosha National Park

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Tswalu Kalahari Reserve

**TANZANIA** Serengeti National Park, Ruaha National Park





# BUSH PIG

**Status** Not Threatened

The bushpig is a wild pig species found in various habitats across sub-Saharan Africa. They live in groups called sounders, typically consisting of 4 to 12 individuals, but sometimes larger. These groups usually comprise related females and their offspring, with one or more adult males. They are known for their adaptability and distinctive appearance.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**KENYA** Aberdare National Park

**SOUTH AFRICA** Kruger National Park, Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park

**ZIMBABWE** Hwange National Park



# MELANISTIC LEOPARD

**Status** Vulnerable

The melanistic leopard, commonly referred to as a black panther, is a leopard with a genetic mutation that causes an overproduction of melanin, giving it a dark, almost black coat. Despite the dark coloration, these leopards still have the characteristic spots of the species, which can be seen faintly in certain lighting conditions. They are typically solitary and nocturnal, which aids in hunting.

## BEST PLACES TO SEE

**KENYA** Aberdare National Park, Mount Kenya, Laikipia Plateau





## GOLDEN CROWNED LEMUR

**Status** Vulnerable

The golden-crowned lemur is found in the dry deciduous forests of northern Madagascar. Their diet is omnivorous, consisting mainly of fruits, leaves, flowers, and insects and small vertebrates. They are social animals, typically living in small groups of up to six individuals with a dominant female, several males, and their offspring. They are active at various times throughout the day and night, rather than being strictly diurnal or nocturnal.

### BEST PLACES TO SEE

**MADAGASCAR** Ankarana, Montagne d'Ambre



## WHALE SHARKS

**Status** Endangered

Whale sharks are the largest fish species in the world. These gentle giants can grow up to 12 meters (39 feet) in length on average, and weigh up to 21 tons (42,000 pounds). They have a broad, flat head with a wide mouth, and their bodies are covered in a pattern of light spots and stripes, which is unique to each individual. Its mouth can be up to 1.5 meters (5 feet) wide and contains over 300 rows of tiny teeth, although these teeth play no role in their feeding.

### BEST PLACES TO SEE

**MOZAMBIQUE** Tofo Beach

**SEYCHELLES**

**TANZANIA** Mafia Island



**Akorn**  
AKORN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

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