



# Caracal caracal

Common name: **Caracal**

Latin name: **Caracal caracal**

Local name: **الوشق / أبو شوكات**



## ECOLOGY

### Type:

**Wild**

### Role in Ecosystem:

Caracal play a role in population control of prey species such as rodents.

## HABITAT

Caracals are found in most regions of Africa and from the Arabian Peninsula through northwest India. Caracals are at home in a number of habitats. They live in woodlands, savannahs and in scrub forests, but avoid sandy deserts. In southern Africa, they usually live in upland areas.

Caracals typically use abandoned porcupine burrows and rock crevices for maternal dens, but can be found with their young in dense vegetation.



### Food

**Carnivore**

Caracals are opportunistic predators and feed mostly on small and medium-sized animals. They hunt daily and are capable of tracking prey. Their preferred prey are small mammals, such as mice, rats and wild hares, but they can also take down prey larger than themselves, such as adult gazelles, sheep, and goats. They will also prey on birds and reptiles.



### Movement and Communication

#### Movement:

Caracals move around by walking, running and they also climb trees similar to leopards. Caracals have strong hind legs, which allow them to jump up to three meters high to catch birds with their claws.

#### Communication:

Caracals have excellent hearing and vision; they communicate with growls, hisses, barks, meows and spits. They show tactile communication, such as cuddling and fighting, during the mating season.



### Social Habits

**Solitary**

The social system of the caracal is not well understood. They are primarily solitary or live as mated pairs. Individuals appear to defend territories, which they mark with urine.



### Reproduction

**Viviparous**

Caracals appear capable of breeding year round. After a gestation of 69 to 78 days, a female gives birth to one to six kittens, with an average litter size of three. Young nurse for 10 to 25 weeks.



### Attributes



#### Appearance:

Caracals are medium-sized, robustly built cats with long powerful legs, large paws, a short tail and ear tips with long hair tufts. The most distinguishing feature of caracals are their pointed, tufted ears. They have short, dense coats and range in color from light sandy through reddish-fawn or light cinnamon to deep brownish-red, reddish-grey or rich brick-red. Although they appear to be mostly uniformly colored, upon closer inspection, subtle black and white markings are present on their face, and they have white "bellies" with dramatic red spots.

#### Size:

33-48 inches (83-123 centimeters) including their tail.

#### Weight:

They are the heaviest of the small African cats weighing from 25-40 pounds (9.5-18 kilograms) Males are generally larger than females.

#### Lifespan:

12 years in the wild and 17 years in captivity.

## INTRODUCTION

The Caracal is a medium-sized wild cat found all over Africa.

It is characterized by its long, tufted ears and tan coat.

In Sudan, it can be found in the Savanna and woodlands and mountainous regions, but they generally avoid sandy deserts.

## LIVELIHOODS AND CULTURE

### Human interaction

Caracals are often at odds with humans, as they may prey on domesticated animals and poultry.

Though rare, some people may keep Caracals as pets.

### Cultural value

In Sudan, the caracal is often associated with stealth, agility, and cunning, traits that make it a respected but wary figure in rural communities.

Some Sudanese folk stories depict it as a trickster, using its speed and intelligence to escape danger or outwit other animals.

### Cultural expression

أبو شوكات ما يخاف لكن ما يواجهه

"The caracal doesn't fear, but it doesn't confront"

A proverb, advising that not all strength is about fighting; sometimes, survival is about knowing when to escape

## THREATS

Caracals are currently classified as least concern. Threats to the caracal populations include habitat loss and hunting by humans. The species is in the position of being classified as endangered in the Asian portion of their range, yet hunted as a problem animal in southern Africa.

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