

PRESENT DAY STATUS OF CERTAIN UNGULATES  
IN THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

BY

R. KNOBEL

Director of National Parks of South Africa

All the representatives of South African ungulates are protected in national parks and nature reserves and although some species are not very common nor very abundant in numbers, none are threatened with extermination. South Africa is in the fortunate position to have some ungulates still existing outside national parks and nature reserves, where they are protected by hunting ordinances, etc. This summary will refer to the status of species in national parks and nature reserves only.

RUMINANTIA

1. Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*).

Kruger National Park, Transvaal. Rather plentiful in the Park. No signs of any decrease. Bechuanaland Protectorate.

2. Buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*, with 3 sub-species: Natal, Eastern Cape Province and Kruger National Park).

Ample signs of increase especially in the Kruger National Park where many thousands occur. Bechuanaland Protectorate.

3. Black wildebeest or white-tailed gnu (*Connochaetes gnou*).

Protected in Nature Reserve in the Orange Free State and Mountain Zebra National Park in the Cape Province, and a few in Nature Reserves in Transvaal. There are not more than 500 individuals still in existence in the Union of South Africa.

4. Blue wildebeest or Brindled gnu (*Gorgon taurinus*).

Very abundant in Kruger National Park, Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Nature Reserves in Natal and Transvaal. No signs of decrease in numbers. Bechuanaland Protectorate.

5. Hartebeest (*Alcelaphus caama*).

Common in the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park where this animal is on the « upgrade ». It has lately been reintroduced into the Addo Elephant National Park. Also in Nature Reserves in Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal and Bechuanaland Protectorate.

6. Bontbok (*Damaliscus pygargus*).

Still in a precarious position. Protected in the Bontbok National Park near Bredasdorp in the Cape Province (c. a. 150 individuals) and on a few private farms. It is still the rarest antelope in South Africa.

7. Blesbok (*Damaliscus albifrons*).

Very plentiful in Nature Reserves in the Orange Free State and Transvaal and on private farms where it is practically « domesticated » for marketing (venison) purposes.

8. Waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*).

Fairly represented in the Kruger National Park and private Nature Reserves in Transvaal, and Bechuanaland Protectorate. Satisfactory.

9. Reedbuck (*Redunca arundinum*).

Occur in the Kruger National Park and re-introduced into Addo National Park and Nature Reserves of Natal and Transvaal, and Bechuanaland Protectorate. Position not very satisfactory.

10. Mountain Reedbuck (*Redunca fulvorufala*).

Recently re-introduced into Addo Elephant National Park and Mountain Zebra National Park and Nature Reserves of Natal. Signs of increase, especially on private farms.

11. Grey Rhebok (*Pelea capreolus*).

Occur in fairly satisfactory numbers in Nature Reserves and on private farms. Recently re-introduced into the Addo Elephant National Park and Mountain Zebra National Park. Bechuanaland Protectorate.

Mammalia 22 1950

p. 498-503

27. Cape grysbok (*Nototragus melanotis*).

Cape Peninsula, Karoo, Eastern Cape and Natal. Position fair.

28. Sharpe's or tropical grysbok (*Nototragus sharpei*).

In Kruger National Park. Very seldom seen.

29. Steenbok (*Raphicerus campestris*).

Signs of improvement in all National Parks and Nature Reserves. Bechuanaland Protectorate.

THE FOLLOWING ANTELOPES FROM BECHUANALAND DO NOT OCCUR IN THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dik-dik (*Madoqua (Rhynchotragus) damarensis*).

Rare, occurs in dry North Western Districts of South West Africa and probably Bechuanaland Protectorate.

Situtungu or waterkudu (*Limnotragus speki*).

Very rare. Occur in marshes of Ngamiland (Bechuanaland Protectorate) only.

Lechwe waterbuck (*Onotragus lechwe*).

Rare. In Okovango river and Swamps (Bechuanaland Protectorate) only.

## NON-RUMINANTIA

## A. PROBOSCOIDEA.

30. African Bush Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*).

Kruger National Park (750 — 1.000 individuals), Addo Elephant National Park (24 +), Knysna (most probably 6 or 7), also on large estates of North Western Transvaal and Bechuanaland Protectorate.

## B. PERISODACTYLA.

31. Black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*).

Occurs in Nature Reserves in Natal only — numbering not more than 400. Exterminated in the rest of the country.

32. White rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*).

In Natal only where not more than 300 individuals are still in existence.

33. Mountain Zebra (*Equus (Hippotigris) zebra*).

In Mountain Zebra National Park (17), adjacent farms (40), and mountainous regions near Oudtshoorn (c. a. 25). The position is improving very slowly.

34. Burchell's Zebra (*Equus (Quagga) burchellii*).

Very satisfactory in Kruger National Park and Natal Nature Reserves and Bechuanaland Protectorate.

## C. ARTIODACTYLA.

35. Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*).

Very common in all rivers in the Kruger National Park and in rivers and lakes in Nature Reserves of Natal.

36. Bushpig (*Potamochoerus porcus*).

Not so common in Kruger National Park as in Natal and Eastern Cape Province (Addo). No signs of any decrease in numbers.

37. Warthog (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*).

Very common in Kruger National Park and Natal Nature Reserves and Bechuanaland Protectorate.

## D. DOUBTFUL CLASSIFICATION : HYRACOIDEA.

38. Rock rabbit (*Procapra capensis*).

Very common in Natal, Cape Province and Transvaal bushveld.

39. Bush dassie (*Dendrohyrax arboreus*).

Rare. Eastern Cape Province.