



SCIMITAR HORNED ORYX



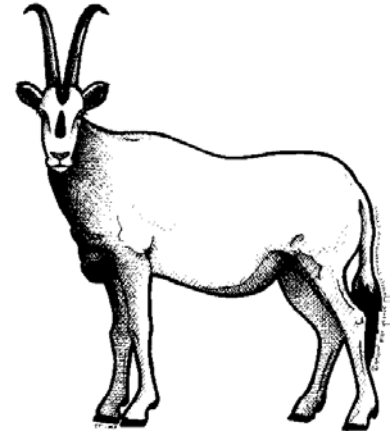
Phylum: Chordata, Class: Mammalia, Order: Artiodactyla, Family: Bovidae
Oryx dammah

There are three species of oryx: the gemsbok, the scimitar oryx and the Arabian oryx. They are medium sized antelopes, all sturdy, well-built animals with short manes, shoulder humps, and long horns that are straight or only slightly curved with conspicuous rings.

Size: Weight - 200-400 lbs.
Height at shoulder - 36-54 inches
Horn length - 23-58 inches

Habitat: arid plains and deserts

Range: once found in semidesert areas from Morocco and Senegal to Egypt and the Sudan



Status: *ENDANGERED* Scimitar horned oryx are endangered due to over-hunting, habitat loss due to agriculture, and livestock grazing. As of 1996, the only populations of scimitar-horned oryx still existing in the oryx's former range were vagrants in a reserve in Chad and a reintroduced population in a national park in Tunisia.

Diet in the wild: grasses, shrubs, succulent bulbs

Special features:

- Both male and female oryx have 3-4 foot long horns.
- Also known as the white oryx.

Behavior: Oryx typically live in large groups of 20-40 animals or more and are nomadic animals that wander over large areas of arid country in search of food. They can survive for long periods without water and rest at the hottest times of the day.

To avoid injuring each other with their long, potentially lethal horns oryx have developed a ritualized style of combat. Two males will clash foreheads, lock horns as a test of strength and try to push each other over.

Breeding and young:

- Estrous cycle of 21-22 days, an estrus of less than 24 hours. Gestation 222-253 days.
- Females often keep the calves concealed in brush to protect them from predators. As the calves grow older, they may begin to associate with other calves in groups called creches. Calves nurse until they are 4½ months old.

