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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Desert Warthog

The **Desert Warthog**, *Phacochoerus aethiopicus*, is listed as ‘Least Concern’ on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Only recently has it become widely accepted that there are two species of warthog: the Desert Warthog and the Common Warthog, *Phacochoerus africanus*. The present geographic distribution of the former is not well known, but is presently known from eastern Kenya, south-eastern Ethiopia and Somalia. Peculiarly, the Desert Warthog lacks incisors – one of the traits that make it the most specialized of the world’s pigs.

The current conservation status of the Desert Warthog is poorly known. The species is present at many localities in Kenya where it is common in some places, particularly where Islam is the predominant religion. Threats to the long-term survival of this species are poaching, habitat degradation and competition for water with humans and livestock.

The Desert Warthog is probably Africa’s least-studied large mammal. Present research is focused on assessing the distribution and conservation status of this species. Enforcement of anti-poaching laws and effective management of protected areas and their buffer zones are key to the long-term survival of this impressive wild pig species.

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