



Banded mongoose

The banded mongoose (*Mungos mungo*) is a **mongoose** commonly found in the central and eastern parts of **Africa**. It lives in **savannas**, open forests and **grasslands** and feeds primarily on **beetles** and millipedes.

Social behavior

Banded mongooses live in mixed-sex groups of 7–40 individuals (average around 20). Groups sleep together at night in underground dens, often abandoned termite mounds, and change dens frequently (every 2–3 days). When no refuge is available and hard-pressed by predators such as **wild dogs**, the group will form a compact arrangement in which they lie on each other with heads facing outwards and upwards.

Mongooses use various types of dens for shelter including **termite mounds**. While most mongoose species live solitary lives, the banded mongoose live in colonies with a complex social structure.

Swallows – Behavior and Ecology



Swallows are excellent flyers, and use these skills to feed and attract a mate. Some species, like the mangrove swallow, are territorial, whereas others are not and simply defend their nesting site. In general, the males select a nest site, and then attract a female using song and flight, and (dependent on the species) guard their territory. The size of the territory varies depending

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on the species of swallow; in colonial nesting species it tends to be small, but it may be much larger for solitary nesters. Outside of the breeding season some species may form large flocks, and species may also roost communally. This is thought to provide protection from predators such as sparrowhawks. These roosts can be enormous; one winter roosting site of barn swallows in Nigeria attracted 1.5 million individuals. Non-social species do not form flocks, but recently fledged chicks may remain with their parents for a while after the breeding season. If a human being gets too close to their territory, swallows will attack them within the perimeter of the nest.

Ethiopian wolf (2 pages)



Southern Ethiopian wolf in the [Bale Mountains](#).

The **Ethiopian wolf** (*Canis simensis*) is a canid native to the Ethiopian highlands. It is similar to the coyote in size and build, and is distinguished by its long and narrow

skull, and its red and white fur. Unlike most large canids, which are widespread, generalist feeders, the Ethiopian wolf is a highly specialized feeder of Afroapline rodents with very specific habitat requirements. It is one of the world's rarest canids, and Africa's most endangered carnivores.

The species' current [range](#) is limited to seven isolated mountain ranges at altitudes of 3,000–4,500m, with the overall adult population estimated at 360-440 individuals in 2011, more than half of them in the [Bale Mountains](#).

The Ethiopian wolf is listed as [Endangered](#) by the [IUCN](#), on account of its small numbers and fragmented range. Threats include increasing pressure from expanding human populations, resulting in [habitat](#) degradation through [overgrazing](#) and disease transference from free ranging [dogs](#).

Social and territorial behaviors

The Ethiopian wolf is a social animal, which lives in family groups containing up to 20 individuals older than one year, though packs of six wolves are more common. Packs are formed by dispersing males and a few females which, with the exception of the breeding female, are reproductively suppressed. Each pack has a well-established hierarchy, with dominance and subordination displays being common.

These packs live in communal territories, which encompass 6 km² (2.3 sq mi) of land on average. In areas with little food, the

species lives in pairs, sometimes accompanied by pups, and defends larger territories averaging 5.2 sq mi. In the absence of disease, Ethiopian wolf territories are largely stable, but packs can expand whenever the opportunity arises, such as when another pack disappears. The size of each territory correlates with the abundance of rodents, the number of wolves in a pack, and the survival of pups. Ethiopian wolves rest together in the open at night, and congregate for greetings and border patrols at dawn, noon and evenings. They may shelter from rain under overhanging rocks and behind boulders. The species never sleeps in dens, and only uses them for nursing pups. When patrolling their territories, Ethiopian wolves regularly scent-mark, and interact aggressively and vocally with other packs. Such confrontations typically end with the retreat of the smaller group.

Reproduction and development

All members of the pack contribute to protecting and feeding the pups, with subordinate females sometimes assisting the dominant female by feeding them. Full growth is reached at the age of two years.

Prairie Dogs

Prairie dogs live in large colonies or "towns", and collections of prairie dog families that can span hundreds of acres. The prairie dog family groups are the most basic units of its society. Members of a family group inhabit the same territory. Members of a family group interact through oral contact or "kissing" and grooming one another. They do not perform these behaviors with prairie dogs from other family groups.



A pair of prairie dogs greeting each other.

A prairie dog town may contain 15–26 family groups. There may also be subgroups within a town, called "wards", which are separated by a physical barrier. Family groups exist within these wards. Most prairie dog family groups are made up of one adult male, two to three adult females and one to two male offspring and one to two female offspring. Females remain in their natal groups for life and are thus the source of stability in the groups. Males leave their natal groups when they mature to find another family group to defend and lead. Some family groups contain more females than one male can control, so have more than one adult male in them. Among these multiple-male groups, some may contain males that have friendly relationships, but the majority contain males that have largely antagonistic relationships.