

PARLIAMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

THURSDAY, 20 MARCH 2025

13. Mr D W Bryant to ask Mr A W Bredell, Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning:

With regard to caracals in CapeNature-managed reserves:

- (1) (a) What is the estimated total population of caracals in CapeNature-managed reserves, (b) how many caracals are estimated to be in each reserve and (c) which of these subpopulations, if any, are deemed to be endangered;
- (2) whether there are any plans in place for the protection or reintroduction of caracals in CapeNature reserves; if so, (a)(i) what are the details of these plans, (ii) what are the timelines and (iii) what are the allocated budgets and (b) what measurable out-comes have been achieved to date?

REPLY:

(1) Caracal were last globally assessed by the IUCN in 2014 and in the South African Red List Assessment of 2016 and are listed as LEAST CONCERN in both assessments.

The criteria defined by the IUCN, assess the risk of extinction, with those species identified as being of high risk warranting the development and implementation of suitable mitigation measures to secure and protect the species going forward. The main criteria considered include:

Rate of Population Decline: How quickly the species' population is decreasing.

Geographic Range: The area in which the species is found.

Population Size: The total number of mature individuals.

Population Structure: Whether the species has a very small or fragmented population.

Probability of Extinction: Results from quantitative analyses indicating the likelihood of extinction in the wild.

(a), (b) and (c) CapeNature does not conduct extensive monitoring on the species (census monitoring), and interpret broad-based population density analyses such as used during the periodic Red List Assessments, referencing baseline datasets to assess the general health of the local populations. Populations are not considered to be severely fragmented, and the species is not migratory.

In southern Africa, caracal are considered common in both South Africa and Namibia, and evidence indicates that they are increasing in numbers expanding into new, and recolonising vacant, areas (Figure 1)

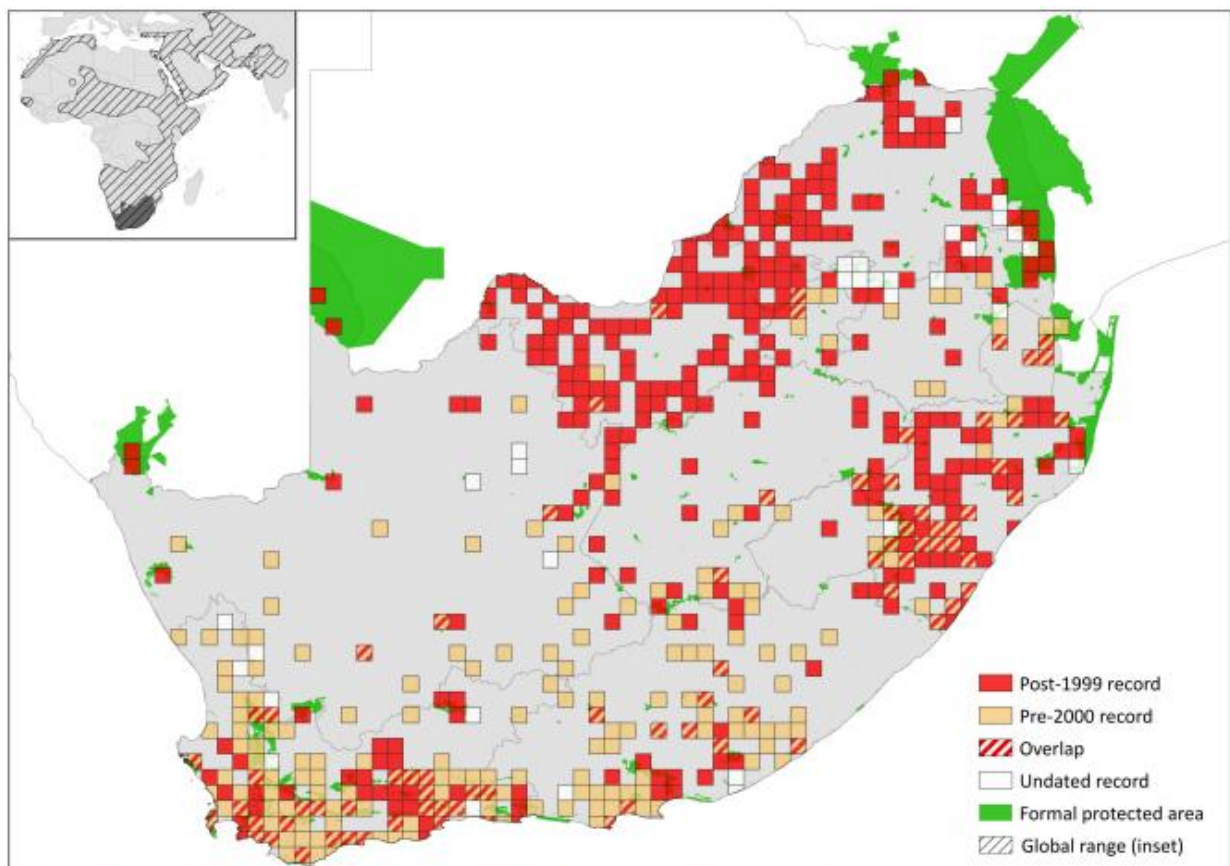


Figure 1. Distribution records for Caracal (*Caracal caracal*) within the assessment region

Source: Avenant N. L., Drouilly M., Power R. J., Thorn M., Martins Q., Neils A., du Plessis J. & Do Linh San, E. 2016. A conservation assessment of *Caracal caracal*. In The Red List of Mammals of South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho. Child M. F., Roxburgh L., Do Linh San E., Raimondo D., Davies-Mostert H. T. (Eds). South African National Biodiversity Institute and Endangered Wildlife Trust, South Africa.

Caracal densities (inferred from home range sizes) can vary significantly between habitats due to environmental factors such as the size, type, density and composition prey availability, habitat characteristics, and the degree of human persecution. For instance, male caracals in Postberg Nature Reserve (PNR; 0.23–0.47 Caracal / km²) have larger home ranges than those in Mountain Zebra National Park (MZNP; 0.3 Caracal / km²), but smaller than those on surrounding farms. Given these variations, a precise population estimate for South Africa is difficult to determine.

However, considering their wide distribution in South Africa, their preference for rocky or mountainous terrain (like PNR and MZNP), and their adaptability to various vegetation types (including the Kalahari), the total caracal population in the region could range from 45 000 to 150 000 individuals, depending on local densities (0.15–0.5 individuals per km²) and occupancy.

(2) CapeNature does not consider caracal to be under threat to the extent that species specific mitigation measures such as conservation translocations need to be instituted to secure their protection beyond those already outlined in current Protected Area Management Plans.

As such, the following questions are not applicable:

- (a)(i) what are the details of these plans,
- (ii) what are the timelines and
- (iii) what are the allocated budgets.
- (b) what measurable outcomes have been achieved to date?

PARLEMENT VAN DIE PROVINSIE VAN DIE WES-KAAP

VRAAG VIR SKRIFTELIKE BEANTWOORDING

DONDERDAG, 20 MAART 2025

13. Mnr D W Bryant vra Mnr A W Bredell, Minister van Plaaslike Regering, Omgevingsake en Ontwikkelingsbeplanning:

Met verwysing na rooikatte in reservate wat deur CapeNature bestuur word:

- (1) (a) Wat die beraamde totale rooikatbevolking in reservate is wat deur CapeNature bestuur word, (b) hoeveel rooikatte na beraming in elke reservaat is en (c) watter van hierdie subbevolkings, indien enige, as bedreig beskou word;
- (2) of enige planne vir die beskerming of hertoetrede van rooikatte in CapeNature-reservate ingestel is; so ja, (a)(i) wat die besonderhede van hierdie planne is, (ii) wat die tydlyn is en (iii) wat die toegewese begroting is en (b) watter meetbare uitkomste tot op hede behaal is?

ANTWOORD:

(1) Rooikatte is in 2014 laas wêreldwyd deur die IUCN en in die Suid-Afrikaanse Rooielys-evaluering geëvalueer en is as die MINSTE BESORG gelys in albei evaluerings.

Die kriteria wat deur die IUCN uiteengesit is, evalueer vir risiko vir uitsterwing, met daardie spesie wat geïdentifiseer is as hoë risiko wat die ontwikkeling en implementering van geskikte temperingsmaatreëls regverdig om die spesie voortaan te beveilig en te beskerm. Die hoofkriteria wat in ag geneem word, sluit die volgende in:

Koers van bevolkingsafname:	Hoe vinnig die spesie se bevolking afneem.
Geografiese omvang:	Die area waarbinne die spesie aangetref word.
Grootte van bevolking:	Die totale getal volwasse individue.
Bevolkingstruktuur:	Of die spesie 'n baie klein of gefragmenteerde bevolking het.

Waarskynlikheid van uitsterwing: Resultate van kwantitatiewe analise wat die waarskynlikheid van uitsterwing in die wildernis aandui.

(a), (b) en (c) CapeNature doen nie omvattende monitering van die spesie (sensusmonitering) nie, en interpreteer breëbasisontledings van bevolkingsdigtheid soos gebruik word gedurende die periodieke Rooilys-evaluerings, met verwysing na basislyndatastelle om die algemene gesondheid van die plaaslike bevolkings te evalueer. Bevolkings word nie as ernstig gefragmenteer beskou nie, en die spesies is nie trekdier nie.

In suidelike Afrika word rooikatte in Suid-Afrika en Namibië as algemeen beskou, en die bewyse dui daarop dat hulle getalle toeneem en uitbrei na nuwe en gebiede en na oop gebiede herkoloniseer (Figuur 1).

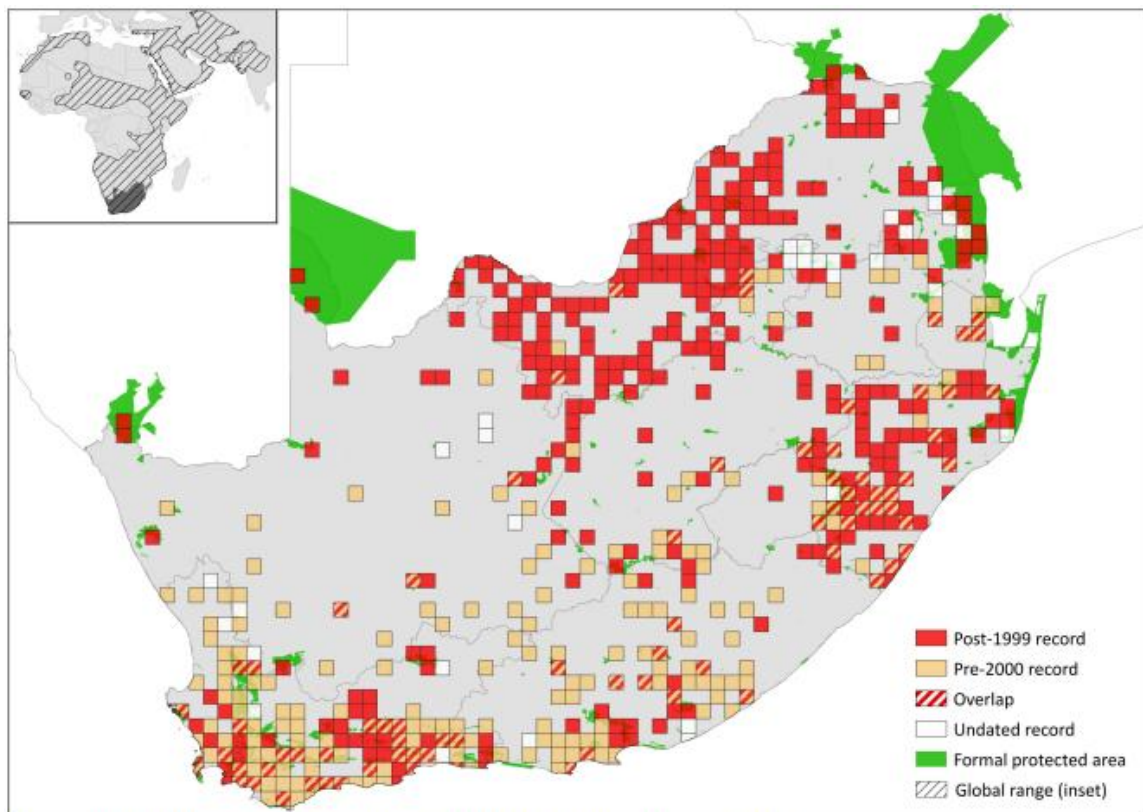


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Rooikatdigthede (afgelei van tuisstreekgroottes) kan opvallend wissel tussen habitats as gevolg van omgewingsfaktore soos die grootte, tipe, digtheid en samestellende prooibeskikbaarheid, habitateienskappe, en die graad van menslike vervolging. Byvoorbeeld, rooikatmannetjies in Postberg Natuurreervaat (PNR; 0,23–0,47 Rooikat / km²) het groter tuisstreek as dié in die Bergkwagga Nasionale Park (MZNP; 0,3 Rooikat / km²), maar kleiner as dié op omliggende plase. Gegee hierdie variasies is dit moeilik om die presiese bevolkingskatting vir Suid-Afrika te bepaal.

Maar, in ag genome hulle wye verspreiding in Suid-Afrika, die feit dat hulle rotsagtige of bergagtige gebied verkies (soos PNR en MZNP), en hulle aanpasbaarheid by verskeie tipes plantegroei (insluitend die Kalahari), kan die totale rooikatbevolking in die streek wissel van 45 000 tot 150 000 individue, afhangend van plaaslike digthede (0,15–0,5 individue per km²) en bewoning.

(2) CapeNature beskou nie rooikatte as bedreig tot die mate dat spesiespesifieke temperingsmaatreëls soos bewaringstranslokasies ingestel moet word om hulle beskerming te verseker wat verder strek as die Bestuursplanne vir Beskernde Gebiede nie.

Gevolgtik is die volgende vrae nie van toepassing nie:

- (a)(i) wat die besonderhede van hierdie planne is,
 - (ii) wat die tydlyn is, en
 - (iii) wat die toegelate begrotings is.
- (b) watter meetbare uitkomst tot op hede bereik is?