

# WITZANDS AQUIFER NATURE RESERVE

## MAMMALS

Compared to the exceptionally high plant diversity that characterises the Core Cape Floristic Subregion, the diversity of animals (especially large game) is often regarded as low. While faunal diversity cannot compare with that of the flora, the perception that fynbos has a low faunal species diversity is not accurate. Much of the fauna is inconspicuous, nocturnal and occurs at low densities. The wide diversity of habitats allows a large suite of faunal species (especially small vertebrates, insects and other invertebrates) to occur. Freshwater fish, amphibian, reptile and invertebrate groups display high levels of endemism. Additional surveys and taxonomic work will undoubtedly reveal new species within the city.

Eighty-three mammal species are thought to occur within the city and sixteen of these are endemic to South Africa. White-tailed Mouse (*Mystromys albicaudatus*) is classified as Vulnerable and is one of 12 species of mammal with Red Data status found within the city. Many of the mammals in the Fynbos Biome are secretive and nocturnal, and therefore difficult to observe. Some of the larger mammals, especially carnivores, need home ranges larger than many of the city nature reserves to survive. One can often see Small Grey Mongoose (*Galerella pulverulenta*), Striped Mouse (*Rhabdomys pumilio*), or one of the small antelope Cape Grysbok (*Raphicerus melanotis*), Steenbok (*Raphicerus campestris*) and Duiker (*Sylvicapra grimmia*) when visiting the reserves. With luck, some visitors may see some of the more secretive species such as Cape Clawless Otter (*Aonyx capensis*) or Caracal (*Felis caracal*).



**Honey Badger**  
*Mellivora capensis*



**Bat Eared Fox**  
*Otocyon megalotis*



**Cape Mole Rat**  
*Georychus capensis*



**Cape Fox**  
*Vulpes chama*



**Cape Grysbok**  
*Raphicerus melanotis*



**Cape Porcupine**  
*Hystrix africaeaustralis*



**Caracal**  
*Caracal caracal*



**Common Duiker**  
*Sylvicapra grimmia*



**Forest Shrew**  
*Myosorex varius*



**Four Striped Grass Mouse**  
*Rhabdomys pumilio*



**Lesser Dwarf Shrew**  
*Suncus varilla*



**Small Spotted Genet**  
*Genetta genetta*



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