

Did you know?

- To break a bird's egg, the Yellow mongoose will sometimes roll an egg close by a rock or stone, then throw the egg between its legs to hit the rock or stone so the egg breaks.
- Slender mongooses are more adept at climbing trees, often hunting nesting birds and eggs.
- Yellow mongooses are excellent diggers, and their burrows are extensive, with about 40 different entrances, with different chambers and tunnels, up to a depth of 1.5 meters.

Quick Facts: Slender

Life Span: 8-12yrs
Weight: 460-715g
Body length (excludes tail): 28-40cm

Quick Facts: Yellow

Life Span: 15yrs
Weight: 450-800g
Body length (excludes tail): 23-33cm



No.3 in the series of Mammals of the Greater Woodmead Estate will appear in November and will feature the Rock Hyrax.



Want to learn more about the exciting environment of the Greater Woodmead Estate?

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THE COUNTRY CLUB
JOHANNESBURG



Slender & Yellow mongooses

No.2 in a series:
Mammals of the Country Club Estate



The black tipped tail makes the Slender mongoose easily distinguishable from the white tipped tail of the yellow mongoose. The Slender also tends to be more reddish/brown to grey than yellow. Occasionally, both can be seen on the Greater Woodmead Estate. Their numbers are small, but they have also been seen in gardens and driveways of homes neighbouring the Club. How fortunate we are that, within a city, The Country Club provides a vital habitat in which these animals can survive.



Distribution

Slender mongooses are found throughout sub-Saharan Africa, ranging from Senegal in the west to Sudan in the east and south to the Northern Cape in South Africa. Yellow mongooses are restricted to southern Africa and they are known to occur in Namibia, Botswana, South Africa and Lesotho. In South Africa, they occur in all the provinces.

Habitat and Lifestyle

Both species are primarily diurnal, although they are sometimes active on warm, moonlit nights. Whilst Slender mongooses generally live alone or in pairs, Yellow mongooses are more social and the colonies they live in are usually focused on a family group of a male and female with their youngest offspring, along with subadults, very old adults, and other individuals that have an association with the group.

Slender mongooses don't seem to be territorial, but will nevertheless maintain stable home ranges that are often shared with members of related species. Indeed, Slender mongooses and these other species may even den together. Dens may be found anywhere sheltered from the elements: in crevices between rocks, in hollow logs, and the like. Yellow mongooses live in permanent burrows and, like their Slender counterpart, they often share them with related species such as meerkats and ground squirrels.

When mongooses get excited, the hairs on their back and tail may be raised. They can hiss at one another, as well. When threatened by predators, these animals will spit and growl; when two mongooses attack each other they snarl. When females see their mate during the breeding season they produce a buzzing sound. Scent-marking is usually used for territorial purposes and mate marking.



Diet and Nutrition

Slender and Yellow mongooses are both primarily carnivorous, though they are opportunistic omnivores. Insects make up the bulk of their diet, but lizards, rodents, snakes, birds, amphibians, and the occasional fruit are eaten when available.

Mating Habits

Slender mongooses are polygynandrous (promiscuous) which means that both males and females have multiple mates. Yellow mongooses are polygynous, which means that one male mates with multiple females. Slender breeding is seasonal and occurs during the short rain season in October-November or long rain season in February-April. Yellow mongoose breeding occurs from July until late September, so most births occur from October to November. Slender and Yellow females produce litters consisting of 2-4 pups. The gestation period lasts around 57-65 days for Slender but a shorter 42-57 days for Yellow. Slender mongoose pups are independent at 6 months, Yellow mongoose young reach independence at 10 months.



Population Numbers

Both the Slender and Yellow mongooses are abundant and widespread throughout their range. Whilst no population estimate is available for Slender, the total population size of the Yellow mongoose is estimated to be around 100,000 individuals. Both species are classified as Least Concern (LC) by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and numbers remain stable.