



CARACAL

Caracal caracal

SPECIES QUICK FACTS

SIZE

The caracal can reach 35 inches in length.

WEIGHT

The caracal ranges between 29 and 42 pounds in weight.

FOOD HABITS

Caracals are strictly carnivorous. They prey primarily on birds, rodents, and small antelope. They stalk their prey before pouncing.

HABITAT

Caracals are at home in a number of habitats such as woodlands, savannahs, and in scrub forests, but they avoid sandy deserts. In southern Africa, this species is more commonly found in upland areas. Caracals typically use abandoned porcupine burrows and rock crevices for maternal dens, but they can also be found with their young in dense vegetation.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Caracals are found in most regions of Africa (except for open desert and dense rainforest), the Arabian peninsula, and southwestern Asia.

FUN FACT

Caracals can jump up and take sleeping birds from their perches and can even bat them to the ground in mid-flight.



The caracal has a short reddish-brown pelage on the back and flanks that contrasts with white fur on the chin, throat and ventrum. Most notably, the caracal's ears, which are long and slender, are topped by long tufts of black fur. The caracal is largely nocturnal but is sometimes seen by day, particularly in cooler portions of its range. It jumps and climbs well, and is a skillful, agile hunter. Mainly terrestrial and usually solitary, it stalks prey, then captures it after a quick dash or leap. The caracal is renowned for catching low-flying birds.

