



# GEMSBOK

*Oryx gazella*



The gemsbok is truly desert adapted. They can survive without surface water. Primarily a grazer, the gemsbok will browse if grass is not available, and dig for roots, bulbs and tubers. They eat tamma melons and cucumbers for their water content and obtain minerals by eating soil and salt at water holes. Gemsbok spend half of the day inactive, to save energy and water to avoid overheating. They allow their body temperature to rise to 45 degrees Celsius during the day, then excess heat is lost at night. Gemsbok graze for long periods at night when the moisture content of the vegetation is higher.



## SPECIES QUICK FACTS

### SIZE

The gemsbok stands about four to five feet tall at the shoulder.

### WEIGHT

Gemsbok range between 250 and 260 pounds.

### FOOD HABITS

Gemsbok are generally grazers, but will sometimes dig up to a meter deep to find tubers and roots.

### HABITAT

Gemsbok are found in wooded and wet grasslands as well as on stony plains.

### GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Gemsbok are found predominantly in eastern and southern Africa.

### FUN FACT

Gemsbok get most of their water from their food by eating melons and cucumbers and also by consuming the condensation on grasses at dawn and dusk.