

ALTINA WILDLIFE PARK

a **unique** wildlife adventure

ALTINA WILDLIFE



FACTSHEET



Scimitar Oryx Scientific Name: Oryx dammah

Habitat: Scimitar Oryx or Scimitar-Horned Oryx originated in the Northern African countries of Egypt, Senegal and Chad. They inhabited arid plains and deserts and to a lesser extent, rocky hillsides and thick brush.

Description: Both male and female Oryx have curved horns that can grow between 100-125cm in length. These Oryx are mostly white with reddish brown necks and dark markings on the forehead and down the length of the nose and they have long tufted tails. They can stand up to 1.4 meters at the shoulders and weigh between 100 and 210 kilograms.

Status: Extinct in the wild

Interesting facts:

- Myth: Scimitar Oryx were also called Unicorns as they resembled a small horse with 1 horn especially when the Oryx was viewed side on.
- Group Structure: They normally live in herds from 20 – 70 individuals, which comprises of an alpha male and females with their offspring.
- Reproduction: Gestation period is between 8 – 8 ½ months after mating, females give birth to a single calf weighing about 10 kilograms.
- These Oryx have wide hoofed feet which means they can travel across the desert without sinking into the sand.
- Their white coat helps reflect the heat of the desert.
- These Oryx have a special network of veins that take blood from the heart to the brain, going past the nostrils which cool the blood by several degrees before getting to the brain.
- They have special kidneys that prevent loss of water from urination.
- Oryx can cope for weeks without water as they are able to raise their normal body temperature of 46°C by several more degrees to avoid sweating.
- Diet: Consists of grasses, herbs, juicy roots and buds off bushes.
- Lifespan: 15 – 20 years.