



HISTORICAL INCIDENCE OF THE LARGER LAND MAMMALS IN THE BROADER WESTERN AND NORTHERN CAPE

CJ Skead

ABOUT THE BOOK

The book *Historical mammal incidence in the Cape Province: Volume 1 – The Western and Northern Cape* was published by the former Chief Directorate: Nature and Environmental Conservation, Provincial Administration of the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Town, in 1980. The author is the late CJ (Jack) Skead, a legendary naturalist, scientist and historian (see ‘The Author’).

A Second Edition, titled *Historical incidence of the larger land mammals in the broader Western and Northern Cape*, is currently in preparation and is due for publication in March 2011.

NEW FEATURES

- Maps, showing the historical distribution records for 44 species
- Overviews (summaries) of the historical distribution of many species
- Numerous black and white illustrations
- Two entirely new chapters
- Dust cover
- Modern design and layout
- Strong binding

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1 includes background information pertaining to the book and the subject matter that it addresses. The geographical area covered by the book is briefly described, especially with regard to political boundaries, climate, terrain, and biomes and vegetation. A section on nomenclature, which gives details of taxonomic conventions and common names used, is followed by notes on idiosyncrasies in the colloquial names of some South African mammals.

Chapter 2 contains a brief review of the mammal position when the first European visitors and settlers arrived at the Cape. The written record started in the latter 1400s and continued intermittently until Jan van Riebeeck established a permanent settlement at the Cape in 1652, whereafter the number of records steadily increased.

Chapter 3 provides a description of the nature of the veld in the broader Western and Northern Cape provinces, based on the contents of the diaries and journals of early European travellers and settlers.

Chapter 4, which forms the main part of the book, presents a fully revised account of the known historical distribution records for a wide range of mammal species, usually according to a number of defined geographical regions, within the overall area covered by the book. The majority of the records relate to the larger species, and particularly those which were relatively easily identified and seen by the early observers. Many of the records are critically evaluated for their reliability.

Maps showing the distribution of the historical records are presented for 44 species, and for these species and certain others an overview (summary) of their historical distribution is provided.

Chapter 5, which is a new addition to the book, provides a review of the patterns and trends in the status of the larger mammals. More specifically, it identifies those species that went extinct, or that were exterminated from, the area covered by the book. It mentions (exterminated) species that have since been re-introduced to this area, and it incorporates comments on the dynamic status of those species that were not exterminated. The impact of humans on the larger mammals is briefly reviewed.

Chapter 6, which is a new addition to the book, lists and provides comments on larger mammal species that have been introduced in the area covered by the book, or into parts of it. ‘Introduced’ refers to species that are non-indigenous. Importantly, it provides information and discussion on the known and potential ecological consequences or impacts of introduced species.

THE AUTHOR



Cuthbert John (Jack) Skead (1912–2006) started his working career in 1933 as a farmer in the Eastern Cape, before focusing on research in the field of natural history. He was appointed as Director of the Kaffrarian (now Amat-hole) Museum in 1950 and

for the next 22 years developed a second, successful career as an ornithologist, based firstly at the Kaffrarian Museum, and then at the Percy FitzPatrick Institute for African Ornithology (University of Cape Town) and then back at the Kaffrarian Museum, before retiring in 1972. Subsequent to his retirement, he developed a third career spanning 34 years, during which he focused on gathering and synthesising information from historical records, firstly on the ecology and distribution of mammals, birds and plants, and secondly on place names and their history, with an emphasis on the Eastern Cape. During this period he produced over 100 articles and books on these topics.

POTENTIAL USERS OF THE BOOK

- Students, scholars and natural historians
- Conservation planners and managers
- Private game reserve owners and game farmers
- Eco-tourism operators and EIA practitioners
- National and provincial government departments tasked with setting policies and guidelines for the translocation of mammal species in the area covered by the book and in South Africa as a whole

THE EDITORS

André Boshoff and Graham Kerley are ecologists at the Centre for African Conservation Ecology, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth. Peter Lloyd is a mammalogist with the Western Cape Nature Conservation Board (Cape Nature), Cape Town.



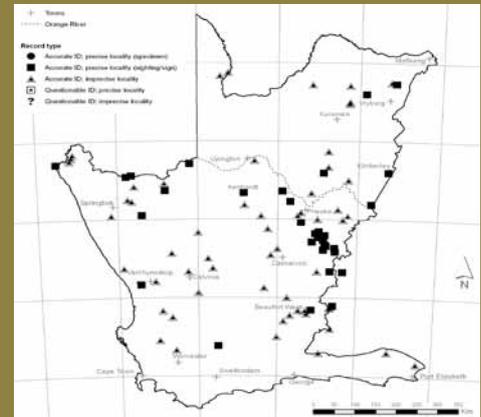
BOOK DIMENSIONS & DETAILS

This A4 size, hardcover, book contains 500 pages of black and white text, tables, maps and illustrations. It has a full colour dust cover and gold foiled title on the hardcover.

EXAMPLES OF CONTENTS



A gemsbok depicted in the Gordon Atlas held in the Rijksmuseum Collection, Amsterdam (GA 157). Robert Jacob Gordon was a soldier, explorer and naturalist in the region between 1773 and 1795. Early distribution records show that the gemsbok was principally a species of the arid central and western parts.



Historical distribution records indicate that the springbok was widespread in most of the area covered by the book, being absent only in the south-western and southern coastal lowlands.



A painting by Charles Davidson Bell, completed in c. 1835, showing a rhinoceros caught in a pitfall trap made by local hunters. Pitfall traps were commonly used by the San and Khoikhoi to secure a supply of meat, hides and other useful body parts. (John and Charles Bell Heritage Trust Collection, University of Cape Town, C 29).