Northern giraffe

Giraffa camelopardalis

Three subspecies of the northern giraffe occur across Eastern and Central Africa.

West African giraffe G. c. peralta

At the beginning of the 20th century the West African giraffe were widely distributed, from Nigeria to Senegal, but by the late 1960s only 40 individuals remained in the whole of West Africa. These few survivors are now formally protected by the Nigerian government and their numbers have risen to over 550 individuals. However, their future is still very uncertain because they live in an isolated pocket of the capital (Bamako) and share their living space with local villagers. No other large wild mammals occur in this area, and habitat loss and destruction is increasing. In 2008, the West African giraffe was classified as Endangered and of high conservation concern. Exact information about the majority of Nubian giraffe in Kenya live extraliminally (outside their natural range) introductions of South African giraffe across the eastern and southern Zimbabwe. Previous re-introductions of the South African and Angolan giraffe to overlapping areas have likely resulted in hybrid populations. There have also been extralimital (outside their natural range) introductions of South African giraffe across southern Somalia and eastern Kenya. Formerly the most populous giraffe subspecies, but our recent research has shown this to be incorrect and, instead, they are distinct subspecies.

Southern giraffe

Giraffa giraffa

Two subspecies of the southern giraffe occur across Southern Africa and, together, they make up more than 50% of the continent’s total giraffe numbers.

Southern African giraffe G. g. giraffa

The South African (or Cape) giraffe ranges from west to east across southern Angola, northern Botswana, southern Mozambique, northern South Africa, southern Zimbabwe, and eastern and southern Zambia. Previous re-introductions of the South African and Angolan giraffe to overlapping areas have likely resulted in hybrid populations. There have also been extralimital (outside their natural range) introductions of South African giraffe across Angola, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. At present, the South African giraffe population is estimated at 50,000 individuals, showing a marked increase over the past three decades.

Reticulated giraffe

Giraffa reticulata

The reticulated giraffe, also known as the Masai giraffe, has a relatively limited distribution across northern and northeastern Kenya, and small remnant populations mostly likely persists in southern Somalia and southern Ethiopia. It is estimated that about 5,750 individuals remain in the wild—a significant decrease from the approximately 27,000 three decades ago. However, numbers across northern Kenya appear to be increasing with improved community and private land conservation. It is easy to see why this species is called the reticulated giraffe, as its rich orange-brown patches are clearly defined by a network of crinkled white lines, which combine the entire length at their bases.

Giraffa tippelskirchi

Giraffe tippelskirchi

Giraffa tippelskirchi

Giraffa tippelskirchi is the most endangered giraffe subspecies, with a population estimated at 39,000 individuals, showing a marked increase over the past three decades.

Kordofan giraffe

G. c. antiquorum

The Kordofan giraffe’s range includes some of Africa’s most arid areas, from southern Chad, central African Republic, northern Cameroon, northern Democratic Republic of Congo, and western Sudan. It is estimated that fewer than 2,000 individuals survive in these war-ravaged countries. Some of those populations groups were previously assumed to be other giraffe subspecies, but our recent research has shown this to be incorrect and, instead, they are distinct subspecies.

Giraffe Conservation Foundation

The Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) is dedicated to a sustainable future for all giraffe populations in the wild. GCF is the only NGO in the world that concentrates solely on giraffe conservation and management of giraffes in the wild throughout Africa.

giraffeconservation.org