

EASTERN BONGO

MONARTO
ZOO



Tragelaphus eurycerus isaaci

STATUS

- The Eastern bongo, (or Mountain bongo), which is the subspecies at Monarto, is classified as Endangered by the IUCN.
- The other subspecies, the Western or Lowland bongo is classified as "Near Threatened"

ORIGIN

- Bongos were once found in three parts of Africa: East, Central and West. Today all three populations' ranges have decreased due to habitat loss for farming and uncontrolled logging. Bongos are also hunted for meat.

DISTRIBUTION

- The Eastern bongo is found in one remote and mountainous area of central Kenya. The Western bongo is more widespread across Western and Central Africa.

HABITAT

- Bongos come from tropical rainforest areas, and like to live in areas with thick, lush undergrowth. These areas usually result from disturbance by elephants, fires or logging.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- Adult males are solitary. Females and young may live in small herds of about a dozen individuals
- As young males reach maturity they leave the small maternal herd to live on their own.



DESCRIPTION

- Bongos are the largest and heaviest of the forest antelopes. Males can weigh up to 400kg, females weigh around 220kg
- Males and females have horns
- They are a rich chestnut colour that darkens with age: old males are almost black
- There are 10-15 distinct white stripes on their shoulders, flanks and hindquarters
- Bongos are extremely elusive and mostly nocturnal. Young are hidden at birth
- The gestation period is 9 months and their expected lifespan is 19 years.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Bongos eat leaves, flowers, vines, bark, grasses, fruits, twigs and roots
- They communicate using a large range of sounds including grunts, snorts and bleats
- Their predators include leopards, lions, hyaenas and man. Young are sometimes eaten by pythons.