

# COMMON GENET

SCIENTIFIC NAME: **Genetta genetta**

CONSERVATION STATUS: **Least Concern**



## WEIGHT

Male: 1.6 to 2.3 kg (3.5 to 5.0 lbs)

Female: 1.4 to 2.3 kg (3 to 5 lbs)

## SIZE

Male: 86 to 105 cm (34 to 41 in) long, including tail

Female: 86 to 105 cm (34 to 41 in) long, including tail

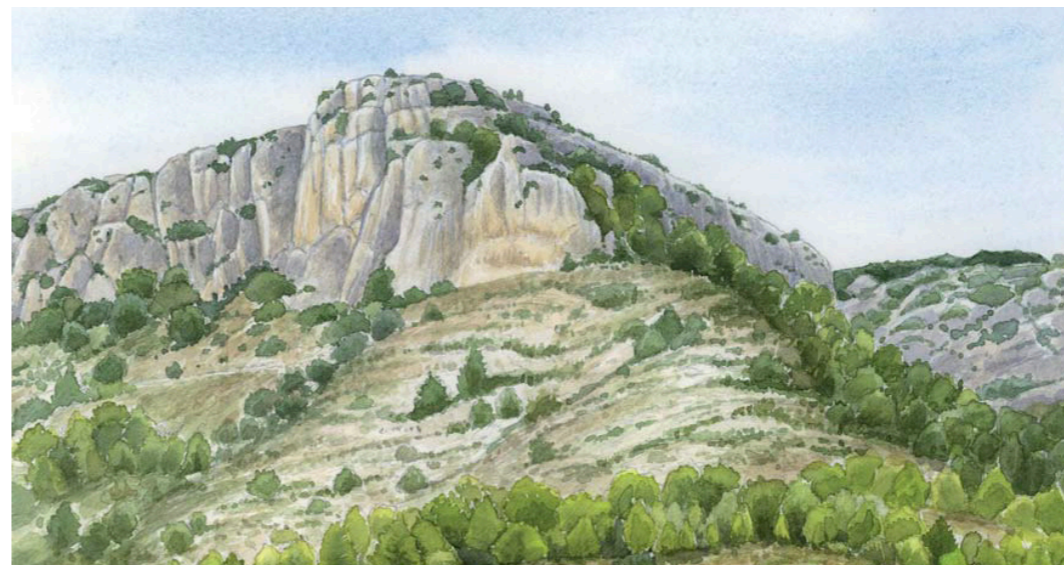


## INVISIBLE

Living almost unnoticed this small carnivore has a coat and a shape that resembles a cat but its body is slender and its muzzle more pointed. A Genet's paws are shorter, its neck and tail longer. It has large ears, and its elongated muzzle ends with a dark brown nose. They build resting places in rock heaps, crevices, caves and hollow trees. Genets are good climbers which helps when hunting.

## HABITAT

Common Genets occupy a variety of ecosystems across their vast distribution. Though they prefer to live in areas with trees, bushes and a definite dry season, they can survive anywhere that has enough prey and woody or rocky shelters.



## SOCIAL STRUCTURE

They lead solitary lives. Males and females maintain small home ranges, varying in size from less than 0.4 square miles (1 km<sup>2</sup>) to as large as 0.8 square miles (2 km<sup>2</sup>). Although Genets prefer an independent lifestyle, their home ranges overlap.

## COMMUNICATION

They communicate using smell and body language. They secrete a substance from microscopic glands in the skin that identifies the social and reproductive status of the individual. They also use strong-smelling urine for marking and when under stress. Their poo includes a scent-marking secretion. To intimidate aggressors, it hisses and shows its pointed teeth while raising the long, black hairs down its back and erecting its tail, much like a threatened cat. Mothers and their young call to each other and also communicate using visual and olfactory cues.



## BEHAVIOR

Fully nocturnal, the Common Genet is extremely active in total darkness and rests during the day. Although they're good climbers, they spend most of their time on the ground, only climbing trees to look for food or to escape danger. When walking, they hold their bodies close to the ground and their tails horizontal. To travel long distances, they typically follow roads, tracks, or dry streambeds.

They have a tendency to use toilet areas, where excrement will be found in heaps, which is a useful indication of their presence. When fresh their poo tends to be shiny and dark, almost black sometimes, but lightens with age.



## DIET

Primarily carnivorous, they eat small mammals, birds and their eggs, reptiles, amphibians and fish. They will enhance their diet with fruit, insects and fungi. Common Genets climb trees to gather fruit and hunt roosting birds.

