

Species identity and behaviour of cave-dwelling tree hyraxes of the Kenya coast

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September 21, 2022

Abstract

The eastern tree hyrax is thought to be a solitarily living arboreal species of the forests of East Africa. However, in the coast of Kenya, indigenous forests have been almost entirely cleared, and some of the last tree hyrax populations live in limestone rocky formations and caves. Interestingly, they seem to be living in social groups. Here, we describe and document photographically these unique tree hyrax populations. We also describe their acoustical communication and their calling activity in three different habitats. Based on these animals' physical appearance and acoustic analyses of their calls, they represent the species eastern tree hyrax, *Dendrohyrax validus*. Due to immense pressure from humans, the future of these small and isolated, cave-living tree hyrax populations does not seem bright.

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