

Media documentation

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LEWA'S ANIMALS

15 animal species live in the new Lewa Savanna at Zoo Zurich: ten mammal species, three bird species and two reptile species.

From the smallest Naked mole-rat to the largest giraffe, Zoo Zurich's Lewa Savanna is home to a variety of animals who live in the vast open savanna space, in the Lewa Village, the Lewa Giraffe House and around the Kopje rocks. The biggest community is formed by White rhinos, Reticulated giraffes, Grevy's zebras, impalas, Scimitar horned oryxes, ostriches and helmeted guineafowl who live alongside each other in the open savanna space.

Mammals

- Crested porcupine (*Hystrix cristata*)
- Dahomey cattle (*Bos taurus f. dom.*)
- Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*)
- Impala (*Aepyceros melampus*)
- Meerkat (*Suricata suricatta*)
- Naked mole-rat (*Heterocephalus glaber*)
- Reticulated giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*)
- Scimitar horned oryx (*Oryx dammah*)
- Spotted hyaena (*Crocuta crocuta*)
- White rhino (*Ceratotherium simum simum*)

Birds

- Grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*)
- Helmeted guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*)
- South African ostrich (*Struthio camelus*)

Reptiles

- Giant plated lizard (*Gerrhosaurus validus*)
- Pancake tortoise (*Malacochersus tornieri*)

Focus species: White rhino, Reticulated giraffe, Grevy's zebra.

SELECTED (FUN) FACTS ABOUT THE LEWA ANIMALS

The most threatened

Of all the species found in Zoo Zurich's Lewa Savanna, the Grevy's zebra (IUCN status: «endangered») has the smallest (confirmed) wild population, with approx. 3000 animals living in the wild. The Pancake tortoise («critically endangered», no confirmed population numbers), the Grey parrot («endangered»), the Reticulated giraffe («vulnerable») and the White rhino («near threatened») are all endangered as well. The Scimitar horned oryx is even considered by the IUCN as «extinct in the wild», as all wild living animals had been exterminated by hunting. However, in human care the Scimitar horned oryx has bred quite successfully and some of the animals have been reintroduced to the wild in Chad.

The largest, the smallest and lightest and the heaviest

The tallest animal in the Lewa Savanna is the Reticulated giraffe. It can grow up to five meters high and its neck alone is up to two meters long. Despite this extraordinary length, the giraffe's neck has only seven vertebrae, same as almost all mammals. The smallest animal is the Naked mole-rat, which measures 10-15 centimetres from head to tail and lives predominantly underground. Meanwhile, the Dahomey cattle is the smallest of its kind, as it is the smallest domestic cattle breed in the world. With a weight of 30-80 grams, the Naked mole-rat is also the lightest animal in the Lewa Savanna. The heaviest is the White rhino. Despite feeding exclusively on grass, it can weigh up to 2.3 tons.

The loudest, the quietest and the biggest surprise

The loudest species in the Lewa Savanna is the Grey parrot. The strong-voiced bird reaches volumes of up to 110 decibels (and with a life expectancy of up to sixty years is also one of the most long-lived animals in the Lewa Savanna). On the opposite end of the spectrum is the Reticulated giraffe. It communicates via infrasound at a frequency inaudible to the human ear. Finally, while big in stature, the White rhino astonishes with a surprisingly soft and high-pitched squeak for such a massive animal.

The fastest, the one with the strongest bite and the prickliest

The fastest of the Lewa Savanna residents is the impala. It can reach top speeds of 90 kilometres per hour. The ostrich, while unable to fly, is pretty quick, too, and can reach 70 kilometres per hour on the ground. With a bite force of over 9 kilonewtons, the Spotted hyena has the strongest bite of them all. It is particularly strong seen in relations to the hyena's bodyweight of typically 50-90 kg. Humans, by comparison, have a bite force of around 1 kilonewton. Finally, the longest «lance» of the Lewa Savanna residents belongs to the Crested porcupine, with spines up to 50 centimetres long.