

Status and ecology of the Striped Hyaena, *Hyaena hyaena*, in Jordan

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Abstract. In Jordan, the Striped Hyaena, *Hyaena hyaena*, occurs throughout the country in all zoogeographic regions, without any special preference for habitat types or altitudes. The habitats for this unloved animal must also include safe refuges. The diet consists mainly of the remains of camels, donkeys and horses, but also includes the remains of cows, dogs, foxes, domestic goats, sheep, Goitred Gazelles (*Gazella subgutturosa*), and Nubian Ibex (*Ibex nubiana*). Human interactions and threats affecting the current populations of *H. hyaena* are also discussed.

Kurzfassung. Die Streifenhyäne, *Hyaena hyaena*, kommt in ganz Jordanien in allen zoogeographischen Regionen vor, ohne besondere Ansprüche an Habitat oder Höhenlage zu stellen. Die Lebensräume dieses in Jordanien unbeliebten Tieres müssen jedoch sichere Rückzugsgebiete besitzen. Die Nahrung besteht hauptsächlich aus Resten von Kamelen, Eseln und Pferden, doch wurden vereinzelt auch Reste von Rindern, Hunden, Füchsen, Ziegen, Schafen, Kropfgazellen (*Gazella subgutturosa*) und Nubischen Steinböcken (*Ibex nubiana*) gefunden. Interaktionen mit dem Mensch und die Gefahren für den Bestand der Hyäne werden beschrieben und diskutiert.

Key words: Jordan, Middle East, Striped Hyaena, *Hyaena hyaena*, distribution, conservation, human interaction.

Introduction

Carnivores in Jordan are becoming increasingly threatened, mainly by the rapid development of the countryside as a result of urban and agricultural expansion. The Striped Hyaena, *Hyaena hyaena*, additionally suffers from persecution, as it is an unloved animal which local people fear. Within the past 30 years, several hyaena records have been published from Jordan (NELSON 1973, ATALLAH 1977, AMR & DISI 1988, SEARIGHT 1987, MASSETI & COVARELLI 1991, QUMSIYEH et al. 1993, AL YOUNIS 1993, AMR et al 1996, QUMSIYEH 1996, AMR 2000, BUNAIAN et al. 2001), but no comprehensive study of the status, distribution, ecology and conservation needs of the species has been undertaken. The present paper attempts to close this gap.

Material and methods

We reviewed 40 published reports dealing with the mammals of Jordan and neighbouring countries, and extracted records that gave localities for the Striped Hyaena in Jordan. Museum specimens preserved in local museums (JNHM: Jordan Natural History Museum, JUNHM: Jordan University Natural History Museum) were also examined: JNHM040 (♂ skin & skull), 3.6.1982, Ezmal, Irbid. – JNHM048 (skin), 4.10.1982, Eshatafena, Ajloun. – JNHM051 (skin), 24.10.1982, Eshatafena, Ajloun. – JNHM159 (♀ skin) July 1987, Madaba. – JNHM304 (skin), 5.3.1987, Ibbin, Ajloun. – JUNHM (skin without number), 15.2.1982, Qatranah, Karak. – JUNHM (skin without number and date), Abu Enssair, Amman. – JUNHM038 (skull), 1987, Wadi Arabah.