

## REGULATIONS OF THE PARK

- Do not disturb or damage animals and plants.
- Do not collect or damage rocks, minerals or geological features and archaeological evidences.
- Do not drive off of market tracks.
- Do not write, paint or carve graffiti.
- Do not leave any garbage, toilet paper or body waste.
- Do not use wild plants for firewood.
- Camp only in designated areas.

Offenders are subject to prosecution according to the terms of Law n. 102 of 1983

## TAKE NOTHING WITH YOU LEAVE NOTHING BEHIND



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## Ruppell's Fox

*Vulpes ruepellii*

This small animal, also known as the "sand fox," weighs only two kilograms and is the most common fox in Egypt, the distribution of which is the entire Western Desert and the oases. It has



large ears that are, however, more in proportion with the size of the body than those of the fennec fox (*Vulpes zerda*), while the color of its coat is

reddish or sandy on the back and gradually lighter along the sides, becoming white on the stomach and throatlatch. It has an extremely hairy tail, which is reddish and then white on the tip. Ruppell's fox also has fur on the pads of its paws to protect them from the hot sand.

This canine is an omnivore and is not particularly wary of humans; in fact, if hungry it may even come quite close to them in search of scraps. Despite the fact that it is a nocturnal creature, it may sometimes be spotted in daytime as well.



## Dorcas Gazelle

*Gazella dorcas*

Known as one of the most beautiful and graceful gazelles, for centuries this animal was the subject of Arabic poems and to this day the people who live in the Sahara Desert use its name to describe the beauty of a young girl.

The Dorcas gazelle lives mostly in the wadis of the Western Desert. It has a marked pattern on its muzzle and along its sides, as well as stupendous horns that are slightly curved toward the tip in the shape of a lyre.

It lives in small groups, consisting of from two to eight members, in acacia woods and valleys with *Nitraria retusa* plants.

Unfortunately, this is an endangered species because of widespread poaching and also due to the growing number of safaris in the desert, which disturb these creatures.



## Lesser Egyptian Gerbil

*Gerbillus gerbillus*

The most common rodent in Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula and a great deal of the Sahara Desert is a nocturnal creature that lives in the sandy or rocky zones of the desert or along the edges of oases.



This small gerbil reaches a length of no more than 10 cm, while its tail is three times longer. Its coat is yellowish-orange and the eye sockets are

white, and its large auricles lend it a keen sense of hearing. By retaining the water in its body, it is perfectly adapted to desert life and can remain for long periods without drinking.

This small rodent is preyed upon by all types of carnivores; when attacked, it reacts by making zigzag leaps with its long rear paws to confound its predators and reach its burrowed lair safely.



## Sooty Falcon

*Falco concolor*

The common name of this extremely rare bird derives from the color of its plumage, which is grayish-blue and uniformly distributed over the entire body.

The adult sooty falcon has a wingspan of 78–90 centimeters, and the species is widespread only in Israel, Egypt and the Red Sea, while it migrates toward East Africa, where it stays during winter.

It lives in rocky



areas with vertical walls both in the deserts and along coasts, and one must observe these zones very carefully in order to spot its nests on the rocky protuberances and ledges, or in the crevices in the rocks.

## THE FAUNA OF THE WHITE DESERT NATIONAL PARK



[www.parkseggypt.com](http://www.parkseggypt.com)

## Hoopoe Lark

*Alaemon alludipes*

The scientific Latin name of this species, which lives in desert and semi-desert zones, means “hoopoe with a lark’s legs” because of the great resemblance with the latter and the similar birdsong.

The upper part of its plumage is of a sandy color, while the lower parts are whitish, with a very noticeable black and white pattern along the wings; the throatlatch is white with black spots and the beak is curved at the tip.

This bird feeds mostly on seeds and insects, which also supply it with all necessary liquid nourishment. It builds its nest on the ground and the eggs are brooded by both the male and female.

It can be approached easily up to a distance of ten meters or so.



## Brown-Necked Raven

*Corvus ruficollis*

This bird inhabits almost all North Africa. Its head and neck are brown, while it has a blackish beak and body.

It is a sedentary animal that lives mainly in desert environments, and its diet consists of carcasses, serpents, seeds and fruit. Its nests can be spotted on trees, on rock walls and in uninhabited houses.

This raven is wary and very timid, so that it is often very difficult to approach.



## Saharan Horned Viper

*Cerastes cerastes*

This creature is one of the most common reptiles in the Egyptian desert. Its vernacular name derives from its two large upraised scales, which look like horns. However,



not all specimens of this species have “horns”, and the pale grayish-brown coloration with darker, vaguely outlined spots running along the dorsal area and the S-shaped

marks it leaves on the sandy ground are the most easily identifiable characteristic features of this creature.

This snake usually hides under the loose sand, with only its head above ground, ready to attack its prey, while in order to discourage its predators it produces a sound much like that of a saw by rubbing its scales against one another.

The venom of the Saharan horned viper is toxic to the blood and extremely dangerous for humans as well.



## Desert Monitor

*Varanus griseus*

A large lizard that can be as much as 1.5 meters long, this creature lives mostly in the deserts and the large wadis with



vegetation in Egypt. Like snakes, it has a long forked tongue, and its back is grayish-yellow, with some brown stripes on the upper part of its neck and tail. It feeds on small mammals, reptiles and eggs.



The Tuareg nomads call it *aghâta*, and since they believe they have descend-

ed from this animal they treat it with all due respect and never eat its meat. Unfortunately a large number of monitors are captured and sold illegally, and their skin is sometimes used to make handbags and other such items, as occurs in the case of crocodiles.



## Desert Agama

*Trapelus mutabilis*

This small reptile, whose habitat ranges from the Mediterranean coast to the arid deserts of Egypt, has a head that is quite large and out of proportion with its body, which can be as much as 19 centimeters long.

Thanks to the greyish hues and brown stripes on its back, the desert agama blends in perfectly with the sand, thus confusing any possible predators; when it feels it is in danger, it remains immobile in full daylight, becoming almost “invisible”.

Such effective camouflage also helps this creature to find its food, which consists mainly of insects.



## Egyptian Yellow Fattail Scorpion

*Androctonus amoreuxi*

The scientific name of this creature derives from the ancient Greek word meaning “killer of men”, since its venom is so potent it can kill a human being in a very short time.

This scorpion may be as much as 12 cm long and has yellowish coloration, which becomes darker on the tip of its tail. It feeds on insects and worms, and among the animals that have adapted to life in the desert it is the one with the lowest rate of water loss. There are several serums against scorpion stings on the market but they are very specific and therefore not always effective, so it is best to be very careful in the desert: do not move rocks with your hands

