

REQUEST FOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ROCK HYRAX (*PROCAVIA CAPENSIS*) IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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To design and implement effective conservation actions, an efficient and accessible resource for the identification of subspecies and species is required. An on-line interactive map, called 'Hyrax Photographic Map' (or 'Hyrax PhotoMap'), presents the phenotypic characters for Hyraxes (Procaviidae) throughout their geographical range. Besides photographs, the Hyrax PhotoMap holds sources to contact for recordings of Hyrax loud calls. Hyrax PhotoMap serves as a 'living' photographic and audio collection---a tool that we earlier designed for the primates and warthogs of East Africa (www.wildsolutions.nl). Anyone with an interest in Hyraxes can use this resource, add their Hyrax photographs, announce that they have audio recordings that are available for use by others, and provide observations, comments, references, and other information. Hyrax PhotoMap is a practical tool for documenting and discussing Hyrax diversity, taxonomy, biogeography, distribution and conservation status and, therefore, for developing and implementing conservation actions.

To access Hyrax PhotoMap, go to www.wildsolutions.nl. Clicking on a particular photograph will cause it to enlarge and related information will appear (e. g., species name, location, vegetation type, altitude, vocalizations). The locality of the photograph/recording will appear on a Google map on the right side of the screen (Figure 1). An overview of all photograph and audio localities can be readily accessed by clicking on the 'View Map' link in the lower right corner (immediately under the small map). The viewer can leave a comment with any photograph or audio entry by clicking the comment button for that photograph/audio entry. Audio recordings can not be downloaded from Hyrax PhotoMap directly, but a request can be made, via email, to the person who holds the recording.

The Middle East holds one species of Hyrax, the Rock hyrax (*Procavia capensis*) that is, according to current taxonomy, represented by one subspecies, the Middle East rock hyrax (*Procavia capensis syriacus*). *P.c.syriacus* is known to occur in Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, and, perhaps, Syria. Reports of *P. capensis* in Turkey (Shoshani 2005) are in error (Barry et al. 2008). Little is known about the variation of phenotypic characters and vocal repertoire, or of the limits of the range, of *P. capensis* in the Middle East (Harrison 1968, Harrison & Bates 1991).

We invite you to send us your photographs and audio recordings of *P. c. syriacus* and of any other taxa of Hyrax for which you have photographs and/or audio recording. For each photograph, please include as much detail as possible, most importantly the species name (or likely species), locality where the photograph was taken, coordinates (or describe the location so that we can plot it on the map), elevation, date, and whether you made audio recordings at the site. The more details the better (vegetation, the call, etc). Audio recordings cannot be uploaded onto Hyrax Photomap. If you have Hyrax vocalizations to share, please send us the locality details (not the actual recordings) and we will add a dummy image to the map to show the viewers that there are recordings available from you for this locality. Again, add as many details as possible.

If you have any comments please contact us. Photographs (not larger than 2 MB) can be sent to yvonne@wildsolutions.nl. A longer referenced version of this notice is available on the wmenews website.

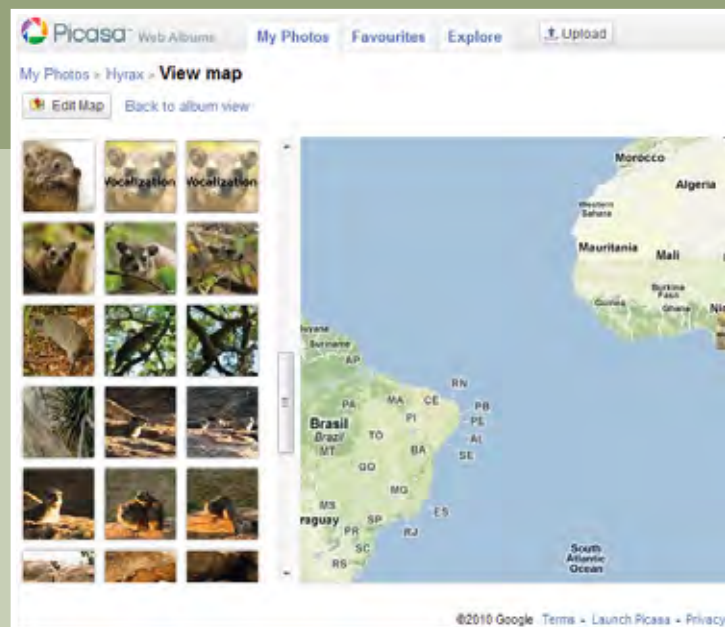


Figure 1. A screen shot from the Hyrax Photomap.

E-Book announcement



Better Buildings. Enhanced Water-, energy and Waste management in Arab urban ecosystems – globally applicable.

UNESCO Doha is always looking for ways to engage in projects which tackle the pressing issues of its member states. That is why it should come as no surprise that the latest proposal to come from the office deals with one of the fastest changing environments in the Arab region, the urban environment.

The Better Buildings proposal is a call for action as well as for thought. The vast wealth that the natural resources have brought to the region have not come without the typical costs which rapid development brings. As conventional infrastructure, water, energy, and waste management practices become severely strained, planners and practitioners are left with limited options. But it does not have to be this way. The proposal highlights how there are in fact many options, all of which are tried and tested, can be done, and they all offer long term benefits.

A number of experts were brought together and each one contributed articles based on their specialties, yet written for the public. Topics include ways for improving freshwater management and awareness, the benefits of wetlands and the role they can play in wastewater treatment, and the role architecture plays in working with the elements. There is a section on what UNESCO Doha is doing in response to the waste management crisis that the region is facing. If society began implementing the suggested solutions in earnest, the problems we face today could rapidly become the problems we used to face yesterday.

The e-book is available on the wmenews website. For further information contact: Mark Sutcliffe m.sutcliffe@unesco.org