

# Carnivores News Bites

The newsletter of the Tanzania Carnivore Project

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### Carnivore monitoring project update

By Maurus Msuha

The Tanzania Carnivore Project wishes all stakeholders in the project a Happy and Prosperous New Year. In the year 2003 the Carnivore Project was engaged in office construction, staffing, production and distribution of leaflets and checklist to seek information on carnivores from various sources. This year we are moving towards enhancing the collection of information on carnivores, training of stakeholders and dissemination of information. We have established our website where you can learn much about us at: [www.habari.co.tz/carnivores](http://www.habari.co.tz/carnivores).

The Carnivore Project staff include Maurus Msuha (Project Manager), Alexander Laboro (Project Assistant Data Management), Jerome Kimaro (Project Assistant, Public Relations), Flora Kipuyo (Project Secretary) and Zawadi Mbwamba (Project Driver)

### Carnivore of the month - Dwarf Mongoose

By Charles Foley

Did you know that there are two species of Dwarf mongoose in Tanzania? Many East African wildlife books only mention *Helogale parvula* the Common Dwarf mongoose, which is profiled opposite. Yet there is another species called the Somali Dwarf mongoose *Helogale hirtula*, which ranges from northern Tanzania to central Ethiopia and Somalia. The two species are very similar in both appearance and habits - they are both diurnal, live in social groups, and frequent termite mounds, and because of this the Somali species may frequently be overlooked. The Somali Dwarf is the same size as *parvula*, but can be distinguished by its shaggier fur, grey back, and grizzled appearance, making the Common dwarf look very clean-cut by comparison.

There are few Tanzanian records for Somali dwarf mongoose and most are concentrated around Mkomazi and Same in the north-east of the country. Next time you see a dwarf mongoose please have a good look at it (and get a picture if at all possible); if it proves to be of the Somali variety you could well get a range extension for the country.



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