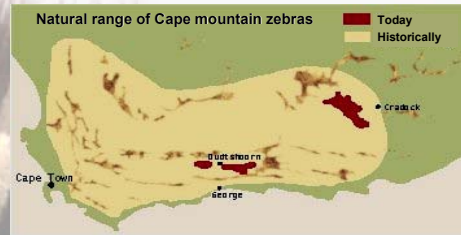
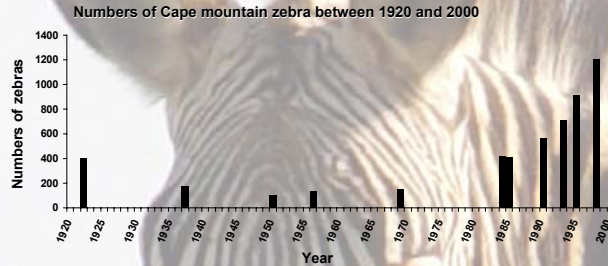


Cape Mountain Zebra

Equus zebra zebra

Conservation needs

- In the 1930s the Cape mountain zebra was almost extinct as a result of hunting and competition for grazing with farm stock.
- Conservation initiatives such as the formation of Mountain Zebra National Park in 1937 led to a steady increase in numbers.
- Cape mountain zebras are still rare and classed as endangered (IUCN Endangered; CITES Appendix I).
- The conservation priority is to build up numbers as quickly as possible to ensure long-term survival.



Can you tell the difference?

Cape mountain zebra
(*Equus zebra zebra*)



- Stripes narrower
- No shadow stripes
- Legs striped
- Stomach white
- Grid-iron pattern on rump
- Mostly vertical stripes
- Dewlap on throat

Burchell's zebra
(*Equus burchellii*)



- Stripes broader
- Shadow stripes on southern races
- Legs not fully striped
- Stomach striped
- No grid-iron pattern
- Stripes angled ⇒ Y-shape saddle
- No dewlap on throat

Social life

Cape mountain zebras live in two types of herds:

Breeding herds

- A stallion with up to five females and their young.
- Females can foal every two years and at any time of year.
- Once in a breeding herd females remain for life.



Bachelor herds

- Up to 15 animals that are too young or too old to breed.
- Mainly males but may include young females.
- Animals regularly move between bachelor herds, and once old enough will form a breeding herd.

Individual stripe patterns



No two zebras have the same stripe pattern; in fact each side of a zebra is unique. Therefore, just like a fingerprint the stripes can be used to identify individuals. This means that animals can be monitored throughout their lives, providing data such as number of foals produced and life span. Stripes help to camouflage zebras and make them almost invisible in their rocky mountain habitat.

Can you see the difference in these two stripe patterns?

De Hoop Nature Reserve

Between 1963 and 1975, ten Cape mountain zebras from the Kammanassie mountains and Mountain Zebra National Park were released in De Hoop. As all other animals released in new conservation areas have originated just from Mountain Zebra National Park, De Hoop has the most genetically diverse zebra population. This makes it vital for the long-term survival of the sub-species.

Today De Hoop has over 90 zebras.

Darwin Initiative Project



- Researchers from Durham University (UK) are helping CapeNature to re-establish long-term monitoring of the Cape mountain zebra in De Hoop, Kammanassie and Gamkaberg Nature Reserves.
- The project involves updating photographic and population records and training field rangers to collect regular population data using the unique stripe patterns to identify the zebra.
- Long-term monitoring will allow managers to assess whether populations are increasing or decreasing and will enable the development of effective management strategies to ensure the long-term survival of the Cape mountain zebra.
- The Darwin Initiative is a grants programme run by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs that aims to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of resources around the world.

