poisoning could affect local abundance. Side-striped jackals appear well capable of exploiting urban and suburban habitats, a factor which may help to ensure their persistent occurrence.

Commercial use There appears to be little or no trade in jackal products.

Occurrence in protected areas The side-striped jackal occurs in many protected areas across its range, including Niokola-Koba National Park (NP) in Senegal, Comoe NP in Ivory Coast, Queen Elizabeth NP in Uganda, Serengeti NP in Tanzania, Hwange NP in Zimbabwe, and Kruger NP in South Africa.

Protection status CITES – not listed.

Current legal protection Jackals have no legal protection outside protected areas.

Conservation measures taken None.

Occurrence in captivity
The species has been kept and bred in zoos, but it is not a common zoo exhibit and there are none currently listed on ISIS. Captive animals have been used in experiments testing rabies vaccine efficacy (Bingham *et al*. 1995).

Current or planned research projects
Although there are no current projects specifically focusing on this species, the side-striped jackal will likely become part of larger carnivore guild studies that are increasingly being conducted around the continent.

Gaps in knowledge
For many years the only major studies on the species' ecology remained those of Kingdon (1977) and Smithers and Wilson (1979), with additional observations by other authors. In the last five years, studies conducted in Zimbabwe by the authors have gone some way to increasing our understanding of this jackal species, particularly as concerns their role in rabies transmission. However, in comparison with the better-known black-backed jackal, the side-striped jackal has a much wider distribution, such that there are large parts of their range for which no information on populations or status is available.

Core literature
Atkinson 1997a,b ; Atkinson *et al*. 2002a,b; Kingdon 1977; Loveridge 1999; Loveridge. and Macdonald 2001, 2002, 2003; Moehlman 1979, 1989; Skinner and Smithers 1990.

Reviewers: Todd Fuller, Chris Stuart, Tilde Stuart. **Editors:** Michael Hoffmann, Claudio Sillero-Zubiri.

6.2 Golden jackal
Canis aureus Linnaeus, 1758
Least Concern (2004)

Y.V. Jhala and P.D. Moehlman

Other names
English: Asiatic Jackal, Common Jackal; **Albanian:** Cakalli; **Arabic:** Ibn Awee; **Croatian:** Èagalj; **Czech:** Šakal Obecný; **Danish and Swedish:** Sjakal; **Dutch:** Jakhals; **Estonian:** Šaakal; **Finnish:** Sakaali; **Faeroese:** Sjakalur; **French:** Chacal Doré, Chacal Commun; **German:** Goldschakal; **Greek:** Tóáêáë; **Hungarian:** Aranysakál; **Italian:** Sciacallo Dorato; **Latvian:** Zeltainais Đakâlis; **Maltese:** Xakall; **Norwegian:** Gullsjakal; **Polish:** Szakal Zlocisty; **Portuguese:** Chacal-dourado; **Romanian:** Şakal; **Slovakian:** Šakal Obyèajný; **Slovenian:** Šakal; **Spanish:** Chacal; **Turkish:** Çakal; **Indigenous names:** Amharic: Tera Kebero (Ethiopia); Fulani: Sundu; Hausa: Dila; Hindi: Giddhad; Kanada: Nuree; Kiswahili: Bweha wa Mbugani, Bweha Dhahabu (Tanzania); Marathi (India): Kolha; Nepali (Nepal), Bengali, Gujarati and Kutchi (India): Shiyal; Singhelese: Nariya; Songhai: Nzongo; Tamil (India): Peria Naree; Wolof: Tili.

Taxonomy
Canis aureus Linnaeus, 1758. Syst. Nat., 10th edn. 1: 40 Type locality: "oriente"; restricted by Thomas (1911) to "Benna Mountains, Laristan, Southern Persia" [Iran, *c.* 27°30'N, 55°15'E].

Chromosome number: 2n=78 (Wurster-Hill and Benirschke 1968).

Description
Medium-sized canid, considered the most typical representative of the genus *Canis* (Clutton-Brock *et al*. 1976). There is approximately 12% difference in body weight between sexes (Moehlman and Hofer 1997) (Table 6.2.1). Basic coat colour is golden but varies from pale creamy yellow to a dark tawny hue on a seasonal basis. The pelage on the back is often a mixture of black, brown, and white hairs, such that they can appear to have a dark saddle similar to the black-backed jackal (*Canis*

Table 6.2.1. Body measurements for the golden jackal from Gujarat, India (Y. Jhala unpubl.).

HB male	793mm (760–840) n=6
HB female	760mm (740–800) n=3
T male	220mm (200–240) n=6
T female	205mm (200–210) n=3
E male	76mm (68–90) n=6
E female	80mm (75–85) n=3
WT male	8.8kg (7.6–9.8) n=6
WT female	7.3kg (6.5–7.8) n=4

Golden jackal, age and sex unknown. Bandipur National Park, Karnataka State, India, 1997.

Krupakar Senani

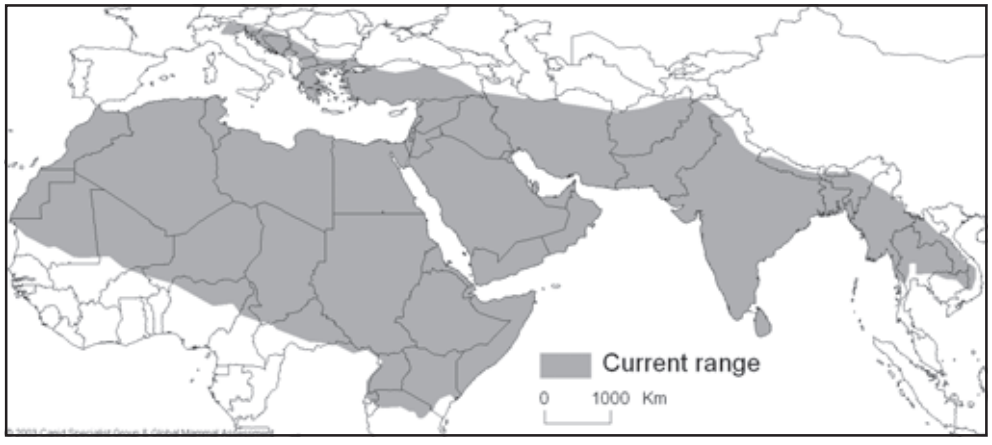

Figure 6.2.1. Current distribution of the golden jackal.

mesomelas). Jackals inhabiting rocky, mountainous terrain may have a greyer coat shade (Sheldon 1992). The belly and underparts are a lighter pale ginger to cream. Unique lighter markings on the throat and chest make it possible to differentiate individuals in a population (Macdonald 1979a; Moehlman 1983). Melanistic and piebald forms are sometimes reported (Jerdon 1874; Muller-Using 1975). The tail is bushy with a tan to black tip. Legs relatively long, and feet slender with small pads. Females have four pairs of mammae (Sheldon 1992).

The skull of the golden jackal is more similar to that of the coyote (*C. latrans*) and the grey wolf (*C. lupus*), than that of the black-backed jackal, side-striped jackal (*C. adustus*), and Ethiopian wolf (*C. simensis*) (Clutton-Brock *et al*. 1976). The dental formula is 3/3-1/1-4/4-2/3=42.

Moehlman and Hofer (1997) give mean body mass for females as 5.8kg, and for males 6.6kg.

Subspecies As many as 12 subspecies are distinguished across the range (Ellerman and Morisson-Scott 1951; Coetzee 1977). However, there is much variation and populations need to be re-evaluated using modern molecular techniques.

Similar species Black-backed jackal (*C. mesomelas*): Distinguished by the reddish flanks and limbs, the shape of its skull, the position and angle of its ears, and usually the prominent dark saddle (the dark saddle is sometimes apparent in the golden jackal though usually not as prominent).

Side-striped jackal (*C. adustus*): Typically with relatively longer legs, a pale side stripe and a white-tipped tail.

Distribution

The golden jackal is widespread in North Africa and north-east Africa, occurring from Senegal on the west coast of Africa to Egypt in the east, in a range that includes Morocco, Algeria, and Libya in the north to Nigeria, Chad and Tanzania in the south. They have expanded their range from the Arabian Peninsula into western Europe to Austria and Bulgaria (Genov and Wassiley 1989; Sheldon 1992), and eastwards into Turkey, Syria,

Iraq, Iran, Central Asia, the entire Indian subcontinent, then east and south to Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand and parts of Indo-China.

Range countries Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Austria, Bahrain, Bhutan, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Central African Republic, Chad, Croatia, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Greece, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco (including Western Sahara), Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Vietnam, Yemen, and Yugoslavia (Rosevear 1974; Kingdon 1977; Roberts 1977; Prater 1980).

Relative abundance

The golden jackal is fairly common throughout its range. High densities are observed in areas with abundant food and cover. In several parts of India, high densities of low-quality cattle are maintained. Due to religious beliefs, most people do not consume beef, and cattle carcasses are freely available for scavenging.

Estimated populations/relative abundance and population trends In India, jackal populations achieve high densities in pastoral areas such as Kutch, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Haryana. Based on intensive observations on breeding pack units and radio-collared individuals, jackal densities in the semi-arid Velavadar National Park were estimated between one and two jackals per km^2 (Y. Jhala *et al.* unpubl.); see Sharma (1998) for densities quoted for the Thar Desert in India. On the African continent, in the Serengeti National Park, densities can range as high as four adults per km^2 (Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989).

Based on known density estimates for parts of India and considering that about 19% (i.e., about 637,000km^2) of the geographical area of India has forest cover with jackal populations (and that jackals are also found outside forested habitats), a minimum population estimate of over 80,000 golden jackals would not be unreasonable for the Indian sub-continent. Population estimates for Africa are not available.

Habitat

Due to their tolerance of dry habitats and their omnivorous diet, the golden jackal can live in a wide variety of habitats. These range from the Sahel Desert to the evergreen forests of Myanmar and Thailand. They occupy semi-desert, short to medium grasslands and savannahs in Africa; and forested, mangrove, agricultural, rural and semi-urban habitats in India and Bangladesh (Clutton-Brock *et al.* 1976; Poche *et al.* 1987; Y. Jhala pers. obs.). Golden jackals are opportunistic and will venture into human habitation at night to feed on garbage. Jackals have been recorded at elevations of 3,800m in the Bale Mountains of Ethiopia (Sillero-Zubiri 1996) and are well established around hill stations at 2,000m in India (Prater 1980).

Food and foraging behaviour

Food Golden jackals are omnivorous and opportunistic foragers, and their diet varies according to season and habitat. In East Africa, although they consume invertebrates and fruit, over 60% of their diet comprises rodents, lizards, snakes, birds (from quail to flamingos), hares, and Thomson's gazelle (*Gazella thomsoni*) (Wyman 1967; Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989). In Bharatpur, India, over 60% of the diet comprised rodents, birds and fruit (Sankar 1988), while in Kanha, Schaller (1967) found that over 80% of the diet consisted of rodents, reptiles and fruit. In Sariska Tiger Reserve, India, scat analysis (n=136) revealed that their diet comprised mainly mammals (45% occurrence, of which 36% was rodents), vegetable matter (20%), birds (19%), and reptiles and invertebrates (8% each) (Mukherjee 1998). Great quantities of vegetable matter occur in the diet of jackals and, during the fruiting season in India, they feed intensively on the fruits of *Ziziphus* sp., *Carissa carvanda*, *Syzigium cuminii,* and pods of *Prosopis juliflora* and *Cassia fistula* (Kotwal *et al.* 1991; Y. Jhala pers. obs.).

Foraging behaviour Single jackals typically hunt smaller prey like rodents, hares and birds. They use their hearing to locate rodents in the grass and then pounce on them by leaping in the air; they also dig out gerbils (*Tatera indica*) from their burrows. They have been observed to hunt young, old, and infirm ungulates that are sometimes 4–5 times their body weight (Van Lawick and Van Lawick-Goodall 1970; Eisenberg and Lockhart 1972; Kotwal *et al.* 1991; Y. Jhala pers. obs.). During calving peaks of blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*), in Velavadar National Park, India, jackals were observed searching for hiding calves throughout the day with searches intensifying during the early morning and late evening (Y. Jhala pers. obs.). Although single jackals were observed hunting (n=4) and killing blackbuck calves (n=1), jackal packs (2–4 jackals) were more successful (n=4), as has been observed for predation on African antelope fawns (Wyman 1967; Kruuk 1972; Rosevear 1974). Indeed, cooperative hunting permits them to harvest much larger prey in areas where it is available, and cooperative hunting of langurs (*Presbytis pileata* and *P. entellus*) has been reported (Newton 1985; Stanford 1989). Aggregations of between five and 18 jackals have been sighted scavenging on carcasses of large ungulates (Y. Jhala pers. obs.), and Macdonald (1979a) reports similar aggregations on clumped food resources in Israel.

In Velavadar National Park, India, hundreds of harriers (*Circus macrourus* and *C. pygargus*) roost communally in the grasslands during the course of winter migration.

Jackals were observed to stalk close to roosting harriers and then rush at them attempting to catch one before the harriers could take off and gain height. In several areas of India and Bangladesh, jackals subsist primarily by scavenging on carrion and garbage (Poche *et al.* 1987; Y. Jhala pers. obs.). They have the habit of caching extra food by burying it (Kingdon 1977).

Damage to livestock or game Golden jackals cause damage to melon, peanut, grape, coffee, maize and sugarcane crops; they sometimes take to killing lambs, kids, weak sheep, goats and poultry (Jerdon 1874; Kingdon 1977; Prater 1980; Poche *et al.* 1987).

Adaptations

Jackals are generalists, adapting to local abundance of food resources. This adaptability permits them to occupy a wide variety of habitats and utilise a variety of food resources. A lithe body with long legs allows jackals to trot for large distances in search of food. They are reported to have the ability to forego water (Kingdon 1977), and jackals have been observed on Pirotan Island in the Gulf of Kutch, India, where there is no fresh water (Y. Jhala pers. obs.). Jackals can commute between this island and the mainland by traversing through mangroves and small islands that are exposed during extreme low tides.

Social behaviour

The social organisation of golden jackals is extremely flexible depending on the availability and distribution of food resources (Macdonald 1979a; Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989; Fuller *et al.* 1989; Moehlman and Hofer 1997; and see Food and foraging behaviour). The basic social unit is the breeding pair, which is sometimes accompanied by its current litter of pups and/or by offspring from former litters (Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989). In Tanzania, golden jackals usually form long-term pair bonds, and both members mark and defend their territories, hunt together, share food, and cooperatively rear the young (Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989). Of a total of 270 recorded jackal sightings in the Bhal and Kutch areas of Gujarat, India, 35% consisted of two individuals, 14% of three, 20% of more than three, and the rest of single individuals (Y. Jhala unpubl.). Moehlman and Hofer (1997) give average group size as 2.5 in the Serengeti, Tanzania, while average pack size in Velavadar National Park, India, was 3.0 (n=7) (Y. Jhala unpubl.).

Scent marking by urination and defecation is common around denning areas and on intensively used trails. Such scent flag posts are considered to play an important role in territorial defence (Rosevear 1974). Although Moehlman (1983) reports maintenance of year-round exclusive territories in Tanzania, aggregations in Israel (Macdonald 1979a) and India (Y. Jhala pers. obs.) point towards the flexibility of social organisation depending on available food resources. Recent data obtained by telemetry from the Bhal area of India suggest that most breeding pairs are spaced well apart and likely maintain a core territory around their dens (Y. Jhala unpubl.). Feeding ranges of several jackals in the Bhal overlapped, as also reported by Van Lawick and Van Lawick-Goodall (1970). Jackals were observed to range over large distances in search of food and suitable habitat, and linear forays of 12–15km in a single night were not uncommon (A. Aiyadurai and Y. Jhala unpubl.). Non-breeding members of a pack may stay near a distant food source like a carcass for several days prior to returning to their original range. Recorded home range sizes vary from 1.1–20km^2 (Van Lawick and Van Lawick-Goodall 1970; Kingdon 1977; Poche *et al.* 1987; Y. Jhala unpubl.), depending on the distribution and abundance of food resources.

Affiliative behaviours like greeting ceremonies, grooming, and group vocalisations are common in jackal social interactions (Van Lawick and Van Lawick-Goodall 1970; Golani and Keller 1975). Vocalisation consists of a complex howl repertoire beginning with 2–3 simple, low-pitch howls and culminating in a high-pitched staccato of calls. Jackals are easily induced to howl and a single howl evokes responses from several jackals in the vicinity. Golden jackals often emit a warning call that is very different from that of their normal howling repertoire in the presence of large carnivores like tigers, hyaenas and wolves (Jerdon 1874; Y. Jhala pers. obs.). In India, howling is more frequent between December and April, a time when pair bonds are being established and breeding occurs, perhaps suggesting a role in territory delineation and defence (Jaeger *et al.* 1996).

Reproduction and denning behaviour

Reproductive activity commences from February to March in India and Turkmenistan, and from October to March in Israel (Golani and Keller 1975; Ginsberg and Macdonald 1990). In Tanzania, mating typically occurs from October to December with pups being born from December to March (Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989). As with other canids, mating results in a copulatory tie that lasts for several minutes (Golani and Mendelssohn 1971; Golani and Keller 1975). Timing of births coincides with abundance of food supply; for example, the beginning of the monsoon season in northern and central India, and the calving of Thomson's gazelle in the Serengeti (Moehlman 1983; Ginsberg and Macdonald 1990). Females are typically monoestrus, but there is evidence in Tanzania of multiple litters (P. Moehlman pers. obs.). Gestation lasts about 63 days (Sheldon 1992). Moehlman and Hofer (1997) give mean litter size as 5.7 (range=1–8) in Tanzania, while in the Bhal area in India, average litter size was 3.6 (range=2–5; n=11) (Y. Jhala unpubl.). In Tanzania, Wyman (1967) reported an average of two pups emerging from the den at three weeks of age. Pups are born blind and their eyes open at

approximately nine days and their teeth erupt at 11 days after birth (Moehlman and Hofer 1997). Lactation usually lasts for 8–10 weeks.

In India, den excavations begin in late April to May, with dens primarily located in natural and man-made embankments, usually in scrub habitat. Rivulets, gullies, road, and check-dam embankments are prime denning habitats (Soni *et al*. 1995; Y. Jhala pers. obs.), although drainage pipes and culverts have served as dens on several occasions in the Bhal. Dens may have 1–3 openings and typically are about 2–3m long and 0.5–1.0m deep. Young pups could be moved between 2–4 dens prior to joining their parents. In Tanzania, both parents and 'helpers' (offspring from previous litters) provision and guard the new pups. The male also feeds his mate during her pregnancy, and both the male and the 'helpers' provision the female during the period of lactation (Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989; Moehlman and Hofer 1997). The 'helpers' are full siblings to the young pups that they are provisioning and guarding, and the presence of 'helpers' results in a higher pup survival (Moehlman 1986).

Competition

The existence of three sympatric species of jackals (golden, black-backed and side-striped) in East Africa is explained in part by resource partitioning and the high relative diversity of prey and predators in Africa (Fuller *et al*. 1989; Wayne *et al*. 1989).

Golden jackals have been observed to appropriate the dens of Bengal foxes (*Vulpus bengalensis*) and porcupines (*Hystrix indica*), and also to use abandoned grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) dens (Y. Jhala pers. obs.). Jackals often scavenge off the kills of larger predators like lion (*Panthera leo*), tiger (*P. tigris*), leopard (*P. pardus*), spotted hyaena (*Crocuta crocuta*), dhole (*Cuon alpinus*) and grey wolf (Jerdon 1874; Schaller 1967; Van Lawick and Van Lawick-Goodall 1970; Kruuk 1972; Moehlman 1986; Jhala 1994). Jackals have been observed following grey wolves on a hunt and scavenging off wolf kills without evoking any hostile reactions from wolves (Jhala 1991, 1994).

Mortality and pathogens

Natural sources of mortality In Kutch, India, jackals are predated by striped hyaenas (*Hyaena hyaena*), and one hyaena maternity den had three jackal carcasses (Y. Jhala unpubl.). Spotted hyenas also have been observed to kill and feed on golden jackals (Kruuk 1972; Kingdon 1977), and the same probably holds true of other large carnivores. Singh (1983) reports that pythons (*Python morulus*) were a major predator of jackals in Corbett National Park, India. Jackals are often chased and sometimes killed by feral dogs when they approach human habitation.

Persecution In India, pastoralists occasionally use poison to kill predators like wolves and leopards that predate on livestock, and jackals are killed by scavenging such poisoned kills (Y. Jhala unpubl.).

Hunting and trapping for fur Some tribal communities like the *kolis*, *vaghris* in Gujarat and *Rajasthan* and *nari kuravas* in Tamil Nadu do kill and eat jackals. This occasional hunting currently does not pose a threat to jackal populations in these states of India. However, there is a threat from organised poaching for skins and tails which are sometimes marketed.

Road kills Besides dogs, jackals are the most common road kills on rural roads in India. The incidence of road kills increases during the breeding season from February to March (Y. Jhala pers. obs.).

Pathogens and parasites Since golden jackals live in close proximity to human habitation, they often come into contact with feral dog populations. Jackals in India are often infected with diseases like rabies and distemper, and rabid jackals frequently attack domestic livestock, dogs and humans (Y. Jhala unpubl.). Skin diseases like mange and ectoparasites like ticks and fleas are common in jackals in areas where they occur at high densities. In Tanzania, golden jackals had positive seriological test results to canine parvovirus, canine herpesvirus, canine coronavirus and canine adenovirus (W.B. Karesh pers. comm.).

Longevity The maximum life span recorded in the Serengeti was 14 years (Moehlman and Hofer 1997).

Historical perspective

The jackal features in mythological and cultural accounts of several civilisations spanning Africa, India and Europe. The ancient Egyptians worshipped the jackal-headed god Anubis, and the Greek gods Hermes and Cerberus probably derived their origins from the golden jackal. In India, jackals feature in ancient texts like the *Jatakas* and *Panchtatra* that abound with animal stories. The jackal normally is portrayed as an intelligent or wily creature in these stories. Some tribes in India believe that a horn-like growth appears on the heads of some jackals called *shiyal shingi*; the possession of this organ is believed to bring good fortune. Coffee beans that have passed through the gut of a jackal are believed to have an added flavour, and these are collected and marketed in certain parts of southern India (Jerdon 1874; A.J.T. Johnsingh pers. comm.)

Conservation status

Threats Over its entire range except in protected areas like National Parks and Sanctuaries, the jackal population may be declining. Traditional land use practices, like livestock rearing and dry farming that were conducive to the survival of jackals and other wildlife, are being steadily replaced by industrialisation and intensive agriculture;

wilderness areas and rural landscapes are being rapidly urbanised. Jackal populations adapt to some extent to this change and may persist for a while, but eventually disappear from such areas like other wildlife. There are no other known threats, except for local policies of extirpation and poisoning (for example, Israel).

Commercial use There is no significant trade in jackal products, although skins and tails are occasionally sold.

Occurrence in protected areas Golden jackals are present in all protected areas of India except for those in the high elevation regions of the Himalaya. In East Africa, they occur in the Serengeti-Masai Mara-Ngorongoro complex, as well as numerous other conservation units. Thus they have a wide coverage in terms of protected populations.

Protection status CITES – Appendix II (in India).

Current legal protection Jackals feature on Schedule III of the Wildlife Protection Act (1972) of India and are afforded the least legal protection (mainly to control trade of pelts and tails). However, no hunting of any wildlife is permitted under the current legal system in India. The golden jackal could be considered as a "species requiring no immediate protection" with caution and knowledge that populations throughout its range are likely declining.

Conservation measures taken Besides being represented in a wide array of protected areas covering several landscapes, no species-specific conservation efforts have been undertaken.

Occurrence in captivity
Almost all zoos in India have golden jackals. In March 2000, there were 67 males, 72 females, and 54 unsexed individuals in Indian zoos (Central Zoo Authority India pers. comm.).

Current or planned research projects
P. Moehlman (Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute) is conducting ongoing, long-term studies in the Serengeti, Tanzania.

Y. Jhala (Wildlife Institute of India) is continuing with ongoing studies on wolves, jackals, and striped hyaenas in Bhal and Kutch areas of Gujarat, India.

M. Jaeger (Department of ESPM, University of California at Berkley, USA) is investigating crop damage, densities and ranging patterns of golden jackals in Bangladesh.

Gaps in knowledge
Little quantitative information is available on jackal densities, habitat use, and ranging patterns in relation to food availability. Information on dispersal, survival and mortality factors of adults, pups and dispersing individuals is needed. Jackal ecology needs to be studied in forested ecosystems of Southeast Asia where a different set of factors are likely to operate affecting food availability, ranging patterns and survival. Aspects of canid diseases in relation to population dynamics of jackals and transmission need to be better understood.

Core literature
Fuller *et al*. 1989; Macdonald 1979a; Moehlman 1983, 1986, 1989; Moehlman and Hofer 1997.

Reviewers: Asir J.T. Johnsingh. **Editors:** Michael Hoffmann, Claudio Sillero-Zubiri.

6.3 Black-backed jackal *Canis mesomelas* Schreber, 1775
Least Concern (2004)

A.J. Loveridge and J.A.J. Nel

Other names
English: silver-backed jackal; **Afrikaans:** rooijakkals; **French:** chacal à chabraque; **German:** schabrakenschakal; **Indigenous names:** Amharic: tikur-jerba kebero (Ethiopia, Eritrea); Shona: hungubwe, gava (Zimbabwe); Ndebele: ikhanka (Zimbabwe); Zulu: mpungutshe, kanka (South Africa); Siswati: mpungutje; Shangaan: impungutshe (South Africa); Tswana: phokojwe (Botswana, South Africa); Venda: phungubwe (South Africa); Sotho: phokobje, phokojoe (South Africa); Herero/Ovambo: ombánji (Namibia); Nama/Damara: Girib, Gireb (Namibia); Kiswaheli: bweha nyekunda (East Africa).

Taxonomy
Canis mesomelas von Schreber, 1775. Die Säugethiere 2(14): pl. 95; text 1776, 3(21): 370. Type locality: "Vorgebirge der guten Hofnung" ["Cape of Good Hope", South Africa].

Chromosome number: 2n=78 (Wayne 1993).

Description
The black-backed jackal is somewhat fox-like in appearance, with a long, pointed muzzle. Diagnostic features include the dark saddle, black, bushy tail and reddish flanks and limbs; males are slightly larger and heavier than females (Table 6.3.1). The ears are large, erect, pointed and constantly mobile. The overall body colour is rufous brown, the colour gaining its greatest intensity on the ears, rump and flanks. A black stripe midway up each flank slopes obliquely from behind the shoulder to the top of the rump; the dark saddle is broadest at the shoulders and tapers to a narrow point at the base