

Outdoor Recreation

is

Outdoor Education

Learning About New Mexico's Wildlife Oryx

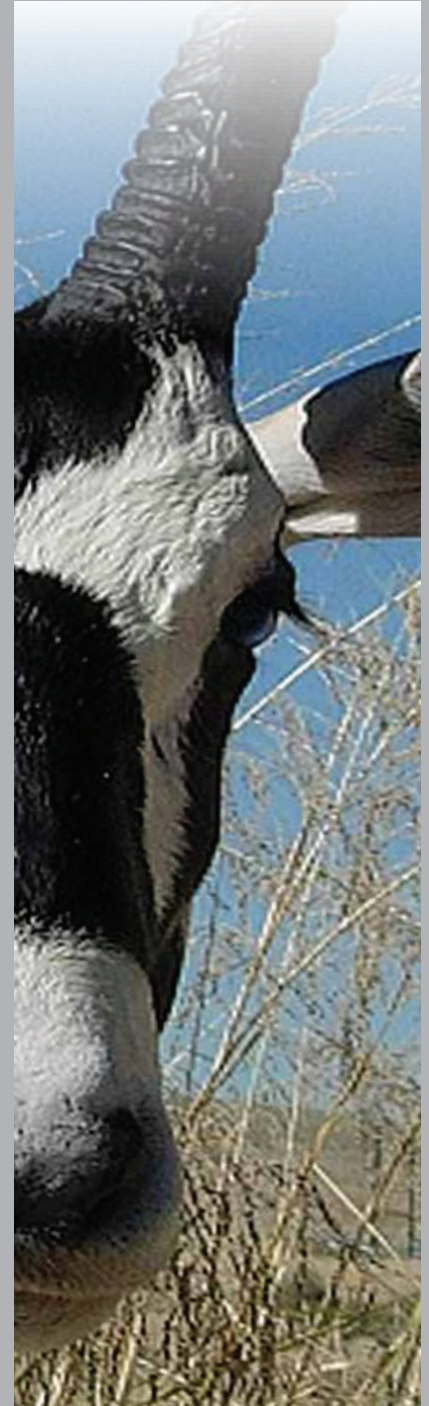
Oryx (*Oryx gazella*)

Also known as gemsbok, the oryx is visually striking antelope with distinct markings and long, straight horns (30–40 inches) grown by both sexes. Approximately 46 inches at the shoulder and six feet in length, oryx often weigh near 500 pounds.

Oryx are found in desert, steppe and savanna ecosystems of Africa and the Middle East at elevations between 3,500–4,800 feet. The Chihuahuan Desert in White Sands Missile Range is remarkably similar to the arid, native habitats where oryx subsist with very little water.

Oryx primarily live in herds of 10–40 animals, comprised of one dominant male, a harem of females and a few nondominant males. Many males remain solitary and defend a sole territory by marking it with dung deposits.

Oryx usually feed in the early morning and late afternoon when dew on vegetation provides moisture, enabling them to survive days or even weeks without another water source. Oryx in New Mexico primarily eat desert grasses, yucca, buffalo gourds, mesquite bean pods and tumbleweeds.



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

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