

Extant Hyena Species

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Extant Hyena Species Latest News

International Hyena Day 2025 (27th April): The four extant species of hyena or hyaenids found on the African continent are facing increasing threats, leading to population declines, according to conservation organisation, Wild Africa.

About Hyenas

- **Hyenas are dog-like carnivores** belonging to the **family Hyaenidae**, native to **Asia and Africa**, noted for their **scavenging habits**.
- **There are four extant hyena species:**
 - **Spotted Hyena** (*Crocuta crocuta*)
 - **Striped Hyena** (*Hyaena hyaena*)
 - **Brown Hyena** (*Parahyaena brunnea*)
 - **Aardwolf** (*Proteles cristatus*)
- **Habitat:** Forest edges, grasslands, savannas, sub-deserts, and mountains up to **13,000 feet elevation**.

- **Distribution:** Across **Africa**, parts of the **Middle East**, and **Asia**.

Physical Features

- **Hyenas are four-legged animals** with **scraggly fur** and **large ears**.
- They have **long forelegs**, a **powerful neck**, and **strong shoulders**, allowing them to **dismember and carry prey**.
- **Excellent sight, hearing, and sense of smell** make them proficient **scavengers and hunters**.
- **Hyenas are predominantly nocturnal**, being most active during the night.
- Their **lifespan averages 12 years**, although they can live up to **25 years**; **Brown hyenas** typically have a shorter lifespan.

Conservation Status (IUCN)

- **Spotted Hyena: Least Concern** but declining, with fewer than **50,000** individuals remaining.
- **Striped Hyena: Near Threatened**, with less than **10,000 mature individuals**.
- **Brown Hyena: Near Threatened**, with just over **10,000** in the wild.
- **Aardwolf: Least Concern**, though exact numbers are **unknown** due to their elusive nature.

Extant Hyena Species FAQs

Q1. How many extant species of hyenas are there?

Ans. There are four extant species of hyenas: the spotted hyena, brown hyena, striped hyena, and aardwolf.

Q2. Which hyena species is most common in India?

Ans. The striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*) is the most common species found in India.

Q3. Are hyenas more closely related to dogs or cats?

Ans. Despite appearances, hyenas are more closely related to cats (Feliformia suborder) than to dogs.

Source: [DTE](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/extant-hyena-species/>

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