**Basic Information: Squirrels (*Xerus inauris & Paraxerus cepapi*)**

**Names: Ground squirrel, tree squirrel**

**Identification pointers: Ground squirrel:** Light brown to grey coat with white a stripe down each side; tail thick and bushy, sometimes held above head in bright sunlight; always found on the ground; **Tree Squirrel:** Smaller than ground squirrel; yellowish to reddish-brown coat, uniformly coloured with no distinct markings; tail thin; found in trees and on ground.

**Can be confused with:** each other, meerkats, mongooses

**Activity period:** Diurnal

**Ground Squirrel:**

**Length:** 40-50cm **Height:** 25m **Weight:**  500-1000g

**Tree Squirrel:**

**Length:** 35cm **Height:** 20cm **Weight:**  100-300g

**Gestation period:** ±45-55 days

**Lifespan:** ±8 years

**Diet:** seeds, grass, fruit, bulbs and other plant material. Occasionally eat insects.

**Predators:** a variety of small and large predators, including birds of prey, larger carnivores such as mongooses, caracal or leopard as well as snakes.

**Preferred habitat:**  **Ground squirrels** occur in dry, open habitat, usually in areas with a hard substrate; **Tree squirrels** occur in well wooded habitats from savannahs to semi deserts.

**Red List status:** Least concern

**Population:** Stable

**Threats:** No major threats, ground squirrels sometimes considered an agricultural pest.