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|  |  | IMPALA  pronounced [/ɪmˈpɑːlə,-ˈpalə/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA_for_English) |

# Mating

The **impala** is a medium-sized antelope in eastern and southern Africa. The sole member of the genus *Aepyceros*, it was first [described](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_description) by German zoologist [Martin Hinrich Carl Lichtenstein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Hinrich_Carl_Lichtenstein) in 1812. Two [subspecies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subspecies) are recognised – the common impala, and the larger and darker black-faced impala. The impala reaches 70–92 centimetres (28–36 inches) at the shoulder and weighs 40–76 kilograms (88–168 pounds). It features a glossy, reddish brown coat. The male's slender, lyre-shaped [horns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horn_(anatomy)) are 45–92 centimetres (18–36 in) long.

Active mainly during the day, the impala may be gregarious or territorial depending upon the climate and geography. Three distinct social groups can be observed – the [territorial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Territory_(animal)) males, bachelor herds and female herds. The impala is known for two characteristic leaps that constitute an anti-predator strategy. [Browsers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Browsing_(herbivory)) as well as grazers, impala feed on [monocots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monocot), [dicots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dicot), [forbs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forb), fruits and [acacia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acacieae) pods (whenever available). An annual, three-week-long [rut](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rut_(mammalian_reproduction)) takes place toward the end of the wet season, typically in May. Rutting males fight over [dominance](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominance_(ethology)), and the victorious male starts an elaborate courtship with a female in [oestrus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oestrus). [Gestation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gestation) lasts six to seven months, following which a single calf is born and immediately concealed in cover. Calves are suckled for four to six months; young males, forced out of the group, join bachelor herds, while females may stay back.

The impala occurs in woodlands and sometimes on the interface ([ecotone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecotone)) between woodlands and [savannahs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Savanna); it inhabits places close to water. While the black-faced impala is confined to southwestern Angola and [Kaokoland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaokoland) in northwestern Namibia, the common impala is widespread across its range and has been reintroduced in [Gabon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabon) and southern Africa. The [International Union for Conservation of Nature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Union_for_Conservation_of_Nature) (IUCN) classifies the impala as a [species of least concern](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Least_concern); the black-faced subspecies, however, has been classified as a [vulnerable species](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulnerable_species); as of 2008, less than 1,000 individuals remain in the wild.