

Fact Sheet

About Arabian Leopard Day

Arabian Leopard is an environmental protection and conservation initiative with a global reach and a strong regional focus to highlight the plight of the Arabian Leopard and far-reaching plans to save the species. Held for the first time in 2022, Arabian Leopard Day is fully aligned with the commitment of RCU and Saudi Arabia to safeguard the future of the Arabian Leopard as part of the sustainable development of the wider AlUla region.

About the Arabian Leopard

- The total adult population probably numbers fewer than 200 in the wild. The remnant populations are small, isolated, fragmented and under threat. In Saudi Arabia there are probably fewer than 50 adult Arabian Leopards remaining. Therefore, a need for urgent action to save the species from extinction has been recognised by Saudi Arabia and across the wider region. The leopards' habitat, which formerly spanned the Arabian Peninsula and reached into the Levant, is now restricted to three countries: Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen.
- The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species has assessed the Arabian Leopard as Critically Endangered since 2008. This level of risk is more severe than Vulnerable or Endangered. If the leopards' population continues to decline, the next stages on the Red List are Extinct in the Wild and, lastly, Extinct.
- For the region's inhabitants the Arabian Leopard – known in Arabic as *An Nimr Al 'Arabi'* – has long represented beauty, tranquillity, physical strength, fearlessness and freedom. The animal has occupied a special place in the imagination for millennia and is found in ancient rock art, stories and even everyday expressions. A common Bedouin expression 'ana anmar minnak' means 'I am more courageous than you are'; literally 'more of a leopard'. A strong brave man may be called Nimr or Nimran and a clever and courageous woman Nimrah.
- It is not too late to save the Arabian Leopard but RCU cannot do it alone. For this reason RCU is actively supporting Arabian Leopard Day in February 2022 to complement partnerships already formed across the global conservation network. In September 2021 we announced a three-year cooperation agreement with the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Our other allies include organisations such as Panthera and Catmosphere that concentrate on saving big cats. With Panthera, for example, we collaborate on workshops, studies, and developing strategies to conserve the Arabian Leopard.
- RCU will adhere to a doctrine of best practice conservation science, applying a rigorous standard for the management of species and environment. Our core objectives in Nature and Wildlife are: To create nature reserves to conserve the region's ecosystems, fragile habitats and biodiversity: To restore and enhance degraded ecosystems, ecological processes through protection, management, research and community engagement, for the benefit of present and future generations: To conserve and reintroduce native species of outstanding universal value.