

The 2008 IUCN red listings of the world's small carnivores

Jan SCHIPPER^{1*}, Michael HOFFMANN¹, J. W. DUCKWORTH² and James CONROY³

Abstract

The global conservation status of all the world's mammals was assessed for the 2008 IUCN Red List. Of the 165 species of small carnivores recognised during the process, two are Extinct (EX), one is Critically Endangered (CR), ten are Endangered (EN), 22 Vulnerable (VU), ten Near Threatened (NT), 15 Data Deficient (DD) and 105 Least Concern. Thus, 22% of the species for which a category was assigned other than DD were assessed as threatened (i.e. CR, EN or VU), as against 25% for mammals as a whole. Among otters, seven (58%) of the 12 species for which a category was assigned were identified as threatened. This reflects their attachment to rivers and other waterbodies, and heavy trade-driven hunting. The IUCN Red List species accounts are living documents to be updated annually, and further information to refine listings is welcome.

Keywords: conservation status, Critically Endangered, Data Deficient, Endangered, Extinct, global threat listing, Least Concern, Near Threatened, Vulnerable

Introduction

The *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* is the most authoritative resource currently available on the conservation status of the world's biodiversity. In recent years, the overall number of species included on the IUCN Red List has grown rapidly, largely as a result of ongoing global assessment initiatives that have helped expand its coverage both geographically and taxonomically (Rodrigues *et al.* 2006). The *2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* holds species-based information on more than 45,000 individual species, including assessments for many never before assessed, such as all reef-building corals. The 2008 IUCN Red List also provides a complete reassessment of the Class Mammalia, marking the first time that all mammals have been globally assessed since 1996 (see IUCN 1996). Such reassessments are vital because IUCN Red List assessments lapse after 10 years – indeed some 3,300 mammal species assessments have been flagged as 'out-of-date' since 2006 – and because re-evaluation permits determination of the changing status of biodiversity over time (Butchart *et al.* 2006).

In contrast to the 1996 assessment for mammals, a significant advance for 2008 is the move towards 'comprehensive' assessments, in which each species-level assessment is underpinned by a detailed set of peer-reviewed supporting documentation. Textual information was collected about the distribution, population, habitat and ecology, threats, and conservation measures for each species. In addition a digital map of current known limits of distribution was created for each species in a Geographic Information System. General information was derived from the literature, refined at workshops and via correspondence by expert knowledge, and later cross-checked for consistency. The result is a documented and peer-reviewed assessment for all mammals of the world.

The current paper reports briefly on the results of the 2008 IUCN Red List for small carnivores. The term 'small carnivore' is used herein to define the subset of the Order Carnivora that falls under the remit of the IUCN/SSC Small Carnivore Specialist Group (SCSG) and the IUCN/SSC Otter Specialist Group (OSG). Family-level taxonomy within these groups has been relatively unstable, and the analysis used the following families: Ailuridae (Red Panda *Ailurus fulgens*; one species), Eupleridae (endemic to Madagascar; nine species), Herpestidae (mongooses; 34), Mephitidae (skunks and stink-badgers; 12), Mustelidae (weasels, martens, otters, badgers and allies; 59), Nandiniidae (African Palm-civet *Nandinia binotata*; one), Prionodontidae ([Asian] linsangs; two), Procyonidae (raccoons, coatis and allies; 14), and Viverridae (civets, including oyans [= 'African linsangs']; 33). The data reported on herein are freely and publicly available via the 2008 IUCN Red List website (www.iucnredlist.org/mammals).

The processes and the methodologies used in the assessment of the world's mammals are detailed elsewhere (Schipper *et al.* 2008). Specifically, as concerns small carnivores, the nine species of Malagasy carnivores (Eupleridae) were reviewed at a workshop held in Antananarivo, Madagascar, in April 2005, as part of a larger workshop to assess the status of the island's entire mammal fauna. European and Asian small carnivores were assessed at a workshop held in Cuc Phuong National Park, Vietnam, over 3–7 July 2006, where all species were evaluated by more than 20 participants. Although the status of the mainland African species was also considered during this workshop, the latter were subjected to a process of additional expert consultation between 2006 and 2008, with documentation compiled in partnership with the forthcoming *Mammals of Africa* (Kingdon & Hoffmann in press). Additional information on the small carnivores of Europe and the Mediterranean countries was collected through initiatives to undertake regional IUCN Red Lists for mammals of these two regions. Finally, New World species were evaluated via expert consultation during 2006–2008, and a mini-workshop held in Zamorano, Honduras, on 30 January 2008, to review the assessment results.

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Threat status of small carnivores

Presented here is a brief synopsis of the results of the 2008 IUCN Red List for small carnivores; a more detailed analysis and discussion of the findings and their implications for conserving small carnivores is in preparation and will appear elsewhere. Small carnivores are ecologically diverse, including species that spend time on land, in freshwater and/or in the sea; ranging from entirely arboreal to entirely ground-dwelling; and occupying a range of habitats from desert to moist tropical forests to taiga, and from below sea level to more than 4,000 m asl.

As with mammals in general, small carnivores are not equally distributed around the world, being more concentrated in tropi-

cal areas. The greatest number of species occur in the Afrotropical realm (57 species/30%): 48 occur on the mainland, and nine live only in Madagascar. The second highest richness is the Indomalayan realm (47 species/26%), followed by the Neotropical realm (33 species/18%), the Palearctic realm (16 species/16%) and the Nearctic realm (18 species/10%). Percentages exceed 100% because a number of species inhabit more than one realm. No native small carnivores are known from the Antarctic, Australasian or Oceanic realms.

Of the 165 species assessed (Appendix 1), two (Sea Mink *Neovison macrodon* and Giant Fossa *Cryptoprocta spelea*) are extinct (EX), one (Malabar Civet *Viverra civettina*) is Critically Endangered (CR), ten are Endangered (EN), 22 Vulnerable (VU), ten Near Threatened (NT), 15 Data Deficient (DD), and 105 Least Concern (Figure 1). Therefore, some 22% of the small carnivores for which sufficient information was available to make a reliable assessment of extinction risk were categorised as threatened (CR, EN and VU). However, given that around 9% of small carnivores are listed as Data Deficient, the actual percentage of species that are threatened could lie anywhere between 20% and 30% (if, respectively, none or all DD species are in fact threatened).

In general, populations of small carnivores were assessed as decreasing (40%) or unknown (35%), with fewer being stable (22%) and only 2% (three species) increasing.

Threats and criteria for listing

Although some species of small carnivore thrive in human-dominated landscapes (such as Northern Raccoon *Procyon lotor* and Hooded Skunk *Mephitis macroura*), most do not. They are increasingly impacted by habitat conversion, overexploitation (hunting; intentionally or as by-catch), contamination (especially in freshwater), and disease.

The IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria (2001) facilitates the evaluation of each species against quantitative thresholds for population decline, geographic range size, small populations and decline and very small or restricted populations. This makes it pos-

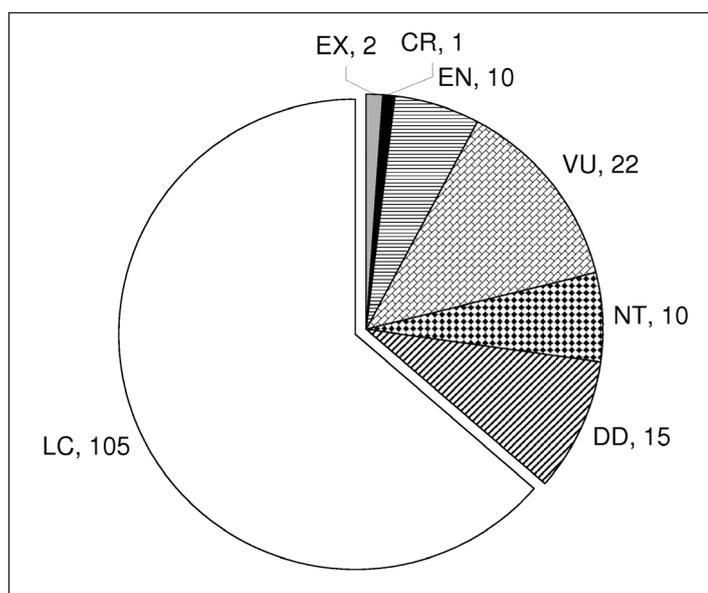


Figure 1. Summary of IUCN Red List results for small carnivores, by categories. Letters refer to categories and number to the number of species in each category.

sible to compare species using the same standards and methods. However, the precision and accuracy of the species assessment is often driven by the state of knowledge for the species: the more that is known, the better the criteria can be applied. Therefore, the species accounts in the 2008 IUCN Red List are 'living documents' and further information on all species is welcomed. Full documentation for the categories and criteria used are available at http://www.iucnredlist.org/info/categories_criteria2001.

Of the 33 species identified as threatened (CR, EN and VU), 23 (69%) are listed using the A Criterion (population decline), seven (20%) using the B Criterion (geographic range size), three (8%) using the C Criterion (population size and decline; one of which is also listed under B), one (3%) using the D Criterion (very small or restricted population), and none using the E Criterion (quantitative analysis).

Of the 23 species identified as threatened based on population decline, only one listed the decline as reversible and having ceased: Sea Otter *Enhydra lutris*. Nineteen species were listed using data from the past (over a three-generation time-span defined per species) and six species were listed using projected future declines (three used both past and future). Of all these 23 species, 95% are declining because of a reduction in area of occupancy (AOO), extent of occurrence (EEO) and/or habitat quality, while 60% are assessed as declining from actual or potential levels of exploitation.

The future of small carnivores

Some small carnivore species have proven resilient and adaptable to various threats. Some have recolonised areas from which they were extinguished or have recovered from low populations when threats were reduced. Thus, if threats can be reduced significantly, many species currently threatened are likely to recover. An example is Black-footed Ferret *Mustela nigripes*, formerly Extinct in the Wild (EW) which is now, following a massive conservation effort to reintroduce populations in its native range, categorised as Endangered (EN).

Small carnivores may be faring slightly better than mammals overall: 22% of the small carnivore species for which a category was assigned other than DD were assessed as threatened (CR, EN and VU), compared with 25% for all mammals. Overexploitation can be devastating, as was the case with the now extinct Sea Mink. As suitable habitats decline (most notably in Southeast Asia), exploitation may result in additional localised extirpations leading, in aggregate, to losses of species.

Emerging threats that could affect small carnivores include contagious disease and climate change. Among the most susceptible to numerous threats are the aquatic and semi-aquatic species, partially due to their restricted, often linear, distribution along rivers and water bodies (where humans also frequent) and because freshwater systems themselves are threatened by contamination, eutrophication, overexploitation (of prey and even water itself) and, increasingly, water shortage and/or flooding. Among small carnivores, otters are most threatened, with seven (58%) of the 12 species for which a category was assigned identified as threatened (CR, EN and VU).

Acknowledgements

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et al. (2008); we repeat our thanks to all these bodies and individuals here. Specifically for the small carnivores, most of all we thank the many workshop participants and correspondents who assessed these species. The Old World small carnivore workshop was hosted by IUCN in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC Small Carnivore Specialist Group, the Carnivore & Pangolin Conservation Program, and the Institute of Applied Ecology, Rome. Particular thanks are due Scott Robertson and Tran Quang Phuong for their help with the local logistics; Wes Sechrest, Mike Hoffmann, Jan Schipper, Noura Bakkour, Beth Polidoro, Hank Shugart, Monica Rulli and Gianluca Catulo facilitated. Participants at this meeting included: Alexei Abramov, Amy Dunham, Annette Olsson, Anwaruddin Choudury, Mohd Azlan J., Barney Long, Belden Gimán, Budsabong Kanchanasaka, the late Chris Wozencraft, Nguyen Xuan Dang, Divya Muddapa, Jason Hon, Michael Lau, Philippe Gaubert, Pralad Yonzon, Rob Timmins, Scott Robertson, Than Zaw, Wang Ying-xiang and Will Duckworth. Madagascar mammals, including the small carnivores, were assessed with support from the CI-Madagascar Center for Biodiversity Conservation, and we are grateful to Leon Rajaobelina and Frank Hawkins for facilitating this support and to Harison Randrianasolo for helping with logistics. Frank Hawkins, Joanna Durbin, and Luke Dollar, among others, provided useful input, and Frank Hawkins kindly reviewed the final assessments and supporting documentation. An impromptu evaluation of the proposed assessments of New World small carnivores was made during an IUCN Red List workshop in Honduras, and we would like to especially thank those who contributed: Alfredo Cuarón, Louise Emmons, Jose Gonzalez-Maya, Kris Helgen, Tim McCarthy, Fiona Reid, Ramael Samudio and Robert Timm.

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¹IUCN Species Programme, IUCN, 28 Rue Mauverney, 1196 Gland, Switzerland and IUCN/SSC-CI/CABS Biodiversity Assessment Unit, c/o Center for Applied Biodiversity Science, Conservation International, 2011 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA 22202, USA.

²IUCN/SSC Small Carnivore Red List Authority; current address PO Box 5573, Vientiane, Lao PDR

³Celtic Environment Ltd, 10 Old Mart Road, Torphins, Banchory, Kincardineshire, AB31 4JG, UK.

***Corresponding author email: j.schipper@conservation.org**

Appendix 1. The 2008 IUCN Red List for small carnivores.

Taxon ¹	English Name	Category	Criteria
Family AILURIDAE			
<i>Ailurus fulgens</i>	Red Panda	VU	C1
Family EUPLERIDAE			
<i>Cryptoprocta ferox</i>	Fossa	VU	A2cd
<i>Cryptoprocta spelea</i>	Giant Fossa	EX	
<i>Eupleres goudotii</i>	Falanouc	NT	A2cd
<i>Fossa fossana</i>	Fanaloka	NT	A2cd
<i>Galidia elegans</i>	Malagasy Ring-tailed Mongoose	LC	
<i>Galidictis fasciata</i>	Broad-striped Mongoose	NT	
<i>Galidictis grandidieri</i>	Giant-striped Mongoose	EN	B1ab(i,ii,iii,v); C2a(ii)
<i>Mungotictis decemlineata</i>	Malagasy Narrow-striped Mongoose	VU	B1ab(ii,iii,v)
<i>Salanoia concolor</i>	Brown-tailed Mongoose	VU	B1ab(ii,iii)
Family HERPESTIDAE			
<i>Atilax paludinosus</i>	Marsh Mongoose	LC	
<i>Bdeogale crassicauda</i>	Bushy-tailed Mongoose	LC	
<i>Bdeogale jacksoni</i>	Jackson's Mongoose	NT	A2cd
<i>Bdeogale nigripes</i>	Black-footed Mongoose	LC	
<i>Bdeogale omnivora</i> ²	Sokoke Bushy-tailed Mongoose	VU	A2c
<i>Crossarchus alexandri</i>	Alexander's Cusimanse	LC	
<i>Crossarchus ansorgei</i>	Ansorge's Cusimanse	DD	
<i>Crossarchus obscurus</i>	Common Cusimanse	LC	
<i>Crossarchus platycephalus</i>	Cameroon Cusimanse	LC	
<i>Cynictis penicillata</i>	Yellow Mongoose	LC	

Taxon ¹	English Name	Category	Criteria
<i>Dologale dybowskii</i>	Pousargues's Mongoose	DD	
<i>Helogale hirtula</i>	Somali Dwarf Mongoose	LC	
<i>Helogale parvula</i>	Common Dwarf Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes brachyurus</i>	Short-tailed Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes edwardsii</i>	Indian Grey Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes² flavescens</i>	Kaokoveld Slender Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes fuscus</i>	Brown Mongoose	VU	A2c
<i>Herpestes ichneumon</i>	Egyptian Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes javanicus</i>	Small Asian Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes naso</i>	Long-nosed Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes² ochraceus</i>	Somali Slender Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes² pulverulentus</i>	Cape Grey Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes² sanguineus</i>	Slender Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes semitorquatus</i>	Collared Mongoose	DD	
<i>Herpestes smithii</i>	Ruddy Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes urva</i>	Crab-eating Mongoose	LC	
<i>Herpestes vitticollis</i>	Stripe-necked Mongoose	LC	
<i>Ichneumia albicauda</i>	White-tailed Mongoose	LC	
<i>Liberiictis kuhni</i>	Liberian Mongoose	VU	A2cd
<i>Mungos gambianus</i>	Gambian Mongoose	LC	
<i>Mungos mungo</i>	Banded Mongoose	LC	
<i>Paracynictis selousi</i>	Selous's Mongoose	LC	
<i>Rhynchogale melleri</i>	Meller's Mongoose	LC	
<i>Suricata suricatta</i>	Meerkat	LC	
Family MEPHITIDAE			
<i>Conepatus chinga</i>	Molina's Hog-nosed Skunk	LC	
<i>Conepatus humboldtii</i>	Humboldt's Hog-nosed Skunk	LC	
<i>Conepatus leuconotus</i>	American Hog-nosed Skunk	LC	
<i>Conepatus semistriatus</i>	Striped Hog-nosed Skunk	LC	
<i>Mephitis macroura</i>	Hooded Skunk	LC	
<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>	Striped Skunk	LC	
<i>Mydaus javanensis</i>	Sunda Stink-badger	LC	
<i>Mydaus marchei</i>	Palawan Stink-badger	LC	
<i>Spilogale angustifrons</i>	Southern Spotted Skunk	LC	
<i>Spilogale gracilis</i>	Western Spotted Skunk	LC	
<i>Spilogale putorius</i>	Eastern Spotted Skunk	LC	
<i>Spilogale pygmaea</i>	Pygmy Spotted Skunk	VU	A2c
Family MUSTELIDAE			
<i>Aonyx capensis</i>	African Clawless Otter	LC	
<i>Aonyx cinereus³</i>	Asian Small-clawed Otter	VU	A2acd
<i>Aonyx congicus²</i>	Congo Clawless Otter	LC	
<i>Arctonyx collaris</i>	Hog Badger	NT	
<i>Eira barbara</i>	Tayra	LC	
<i>Enhydra lutris</i>	Sea Otter	EN	A1a
<i>Galictis cuja</i>	Lesser Grison	LC	
<i>Galictis vittata</i>	Greater Grison	LC	
<i>Gulo gulo</i>	Wolverine	NT	
<i>Ictonyx libycus³</i>	Libyan Striped Weasel	LC	
<i>Ictonyx striatus</i>	Zorilla	LC	
<i>Lontra canadensis</i>	North American Otter	LC	
<i>Lontra felina</i>	Marine Otter	EN	A3cd
<i>Lontra longicaudis</i>	Neotropical Otter	DD	
<i>Lontra provocax</i>	Southern River Otter	EN	A3cd
<i>Lutra lutra²</i>	Eurasian Otter	NT	
<i>Lutra maculicollis</i>	Spotted-necked Otter	LC	
<i>Lutra sumatrana</i>	Hairy-nosed Otter	EN	A2cd

Taxon ¹	English Name	Category	Criteria
<i>Lutrogale perspicillata</i>	Smooth-coated Otter	VU	A2acd
<i>Lyncodon patagonicus</i>	Patagonian Weasel	DD	
<i>Martes americana</i>	American Marten	LC	
<i>Martes flavigula</i>	Yellow-throated Marten	LC	
<i>Martes foina</i>	Stone Marten	LC	
<i>Martes gwatkinsii</i>	Nilgiri Marten	VU	B1ab(iii,iv)
<i>Martes martes</i>	European Pine Marten	LC	
<i>Martes melampus</i>	Japanese Marten	LC	
<i>Martes pennanti</i>	Fisher	LC	
<i>Martes zibellina</i>	Sable	LC	
<i>Meles anakuma</i>	Japanese Badger	LC	
<i>Meles leucurus</i>	Asian Badger	LC	
<i>Meles meles</i>	Eurasian Badger	LC	
<i>Mellivora capensis</i>	Honey Badger	LC	
<i>Melogale everetti</i>	Bornean Ferret Badger	DD	
<i>Melogale moschata</i>	Small-toothed Ferret Badger	LC	
<i>Melogale orientalis</i>	Javan Ferret Badger	DD	
<i>Melogale personata</i>	Large-toothed Ferret Badger	DD	
<i>Mustela africana</i>	Amazon Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela altaica</i>	Altai Weasel	NT	
<i>Mustela erminea</i>	Ermine	LC	
<i>Mustela eversmanii</i>	Steppe Polecat	LC	
<i>Mustela felipei</i>	Colombian Weasel	VU	B1ab(ii,iii)
<i>Mustela frenata</i>	Long-tailed Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela itatsi</i>	Japanese Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela kathiah</i>	Yellow-bellied Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela lutreola</i>	European Mink	EN	A2ce
<i>Mustela lutreolina</i>	Indonesian Mountain Weasel	DD	
<i>Mustela nigripes</i>	Black-footed Ferret	EN	D1
<i>Mustela nivalis</i>	Least Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela nudipes</i>	Malay Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela putorius</i>	European Polecat	LC	
<i>Mustela sibirica</i>	Siberian Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela strigidorsa</i>	Stripe-backed Weasel	LC	
<i>Mustela subpalmata</i>	Egyptian Weasel	LC	
<i>Neovison macrodon</i>	Sea Mink	EX	
<i>Neovison vison</i>	American Mink	LC	
<i>Poecilogale albinucha</i>	African Striped Weasel	LC	
<i>Pteronura brasiliensis</i>	Giant Otter	EN	A3cd
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American Badger	LC	
<i>Vormela peregusna</i>	Marbled Polecat	VU	A2c
Family NANDINIIDAE			
<i>Nandinia binotata</i>	African Palm-civet	LC	
Family PRIONODONTIDAE			
<i>Prionodon linsang</i>	Banded Linsang	LC	
<i>Prionodon pardicolor</i>	Spotted Linsang	LC	
Family PROCYONIDAE			
<i>Bassaricyon alleni</i>	Allen's Olingo	LC	
<i>Bassaricyon beddardi</i>	Beddard's Olingo	LC	
<i>Bassaricyon gabbii</i>	Gabbi's Olingo	LC	
<i>Bassaricyon lasius</i>	Harris's Olingo	DD	
<i>Bassaricyon pauli</i>	Chirique Olingo	DD	
<i>Bassariscus astutus</i>	Ringtail	LC	
<i>Bassariscus sumichrasti</i>	Cacomistle	LC	
<i>Nasua narica</i>	White-nosed Coati	LC	
<i>Nasua nasua</i>	South American Coati	LC	

Taxon ¹	English Name	Category	Criteria
<i>Nasuella olivacea</i>	Mountain Coati	DD	
<i>Potos flavus</i>	Kinkajou	LC	
<i>Procyon cancrivorus</i>	Crab-eating Raccoon	LC	
<i>Procyon lotor</i>	Northern Raccoon	LC	
<i>Procyon pygmaeus</i>	Cozumel Raccoon	EN	B1ab(ii,iii) + 2ab(ii,iii)
Family VIVERRIDAE			
<i>Arctictis binturong</i>	Binturong	VU	A2cd
<i>Arctogalidia trivirgata</i>	Small-toothed Palm Civet	LC	
<i>Chrotogale owstoni</i>	Owston's Civet	VU	A2cd
<i>Civettictis civetta</i>	African Civet	LC	
<i>Cynogale bennettii</i>	Otter Civet	EN	A2ce
<i>Diplogale hosei</i>	Hose's Civet	VU	A2c+3c
<i>Genetta abyssinica</i>	Ethiopian Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta angolensis</i>	Miombo Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta bourloni</i>	Bourlon's Genet	NT	A2cd
<i>Genetta cristata</i>	Crested Genet	VU	A2cd
<i>Genetta genetta</i>	Common Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta johnstoni</i>	Johnston's Genet	VU	A2cd
<i>Genetta maculata</i>	Central African Large-spotted Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta pardina</i>	West African Large-spotted Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta piscivora</i>	Aquatic Genet	DD	
<i>Genetta poensis</i>	King Genet	DD	
<i>Genetta servalina</i>	Servaline Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta thierryi</i>	Hausa Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta tigrina</i>	South African Large-spotted Genet	LC	
<i>Genetta victoriae</i>	Giant Genet	LC	
<i>Hemigalus derbyanus</i>	Banded Civet	VU	A2cd+3c
<i>Macrogalidia musschenbroekii</i>	Sulawesi Palm Civet	VU	A2c
<i>Paguma larvata</i>	Masked Palm Civet	LC	
<i>Paradoxurus hermaphroditus</i>	Common Palm Civet	LC	
<i>Paradoxurus jerdoni</i>	Brown Palm Civet	LC	
<i>Paradoxurus zeylonensis</i>	Golden Palm Civet	VU	B1ab(i,iii,v)
<i>Poiana leightoni</i>	Leighton's Linsang	DD	
<i>Poiana richardsonii</i>	African Linsang	LC	
<i>Viverra civettina</i>	Malabar Civet	CR	C2a(i)
<i>Viverra megaspila</i>	Large-spotted Civet	VU	A2cd+3cd
<i>Viverra tangalunga</i>	Malay Civet	LC	
<i>Viverra zibetha</i>	Large Indian Civet	NT	
<i>Viverricula indica</i>	Small Indian Civet	LC	

¹Genus and species limits and spellings mostly follow Wozencraft (2005), selected to be a readily available, widely used, source.

²Divergences from Wozencraft (2005), to align the present list's limits with those of Kingdon & Hoffmann (in press), and to consider *Lutra nippon* conspecific with *L. lutra*.

³Divergences from Wozencraft (2005), reflecting that *Aonyx* and *Ictonyx* are masculine genera and these species' names are thus correctly *A. cinereus* and *I. libycus*, not *A. cinerea* and *I. libyca*.