

Aboalfotooh A.A.H., Baeshen O. & Saif R. 2024. Arabian leopard in Yemen – an update. Cat News 79, 11-13. Supporting Online Material.

Editor's note: The following report was submitted to the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group to raise awareness for the fate of the Arabian leopard in Yemen. We publish it as Supporting Online Material to *Aboalfotooh A.A.H., Baeshen O. & Saif R. 2024. Arabian leopard in Yemen – an update. Cat News 79, 11-13*. It is impossible to verify the accuracy of all cases listed in this summary, but it sheds light on the magnitude of illegal removals of leopards from the wild in Yemen. For legal considerations, we have blackened the faces of people and have removed some critical information from the report.

A Report on the Arabian Leopards in Yemen

Since the outbreak of the armed conflict in Yemen at the end of 2014, there were many Arabian leopards that have been subjected to over-hunting both in their original habitats and the natural protected areas where they reside, according to the cases monitored by the organization.

According to Sanid Organization for Nature Conservation (SONC), the most important areas in which leopards were subjected to over-hunting and illegal trade were the governorates of (Lahij - Al-Dhal' - Abyan - Shabwa - Al-Mahra). These areas are characterized by their environmental elements that are punctuated by cracks, caves and deep valleys suitable for protection, and the abundance of water and diverse trees that provide good food for the wild animals preyed upon by the Arabian leopards, which keep them alive and preserve their abundance.



In this report, the violations that SONC was able to document from several local sources will be highlighted, as SONC tried as much as possible to investigate the information that was documented through picture, place, date and location on the map. SONC has not relied on any information about such cases of violations which have not been directly confirmed. SONC has also communicated with all relevant social characters, activists and officials in the areas where violations are reported.

Recorded Trapping Cases:

On July 6, 2014

A group of hunters hunted 3 Arabian leopards in the Al Shuaib area, Al Dhale' Governorate, as shown in the attached photos. See picture no. (1a &1b)

On October 22, 2014

3 hunters hunted 2 Arabian leopards in the Hudub area in the Hawf Natural Protected Area, in Al-Mahra Governorate. See picture no. (2a&2b)

December 5 2014

A man in his forties, with his friend, hunted an Arabian leopard in the (Lab'ous Hateeb) area in Yafa' District, Lahj Governorate. (13.865651,45.284277) See picture no. (3)

November 5 2016

A hunter killed a leopard with a Kalashnikov (machine gun) while gambling with his friends if he could shot the leopard or not, in Juban area of Al-Dhal' Governorate (13.984565, 44.852080). See picture no. (4)

February 22, 2017

A young man in the third decade of age hunted a leopard in the "Hallak" mountains in the Madiyah district of Abyan governorate, after the people in the Talh region suffered from fear as a result of the leopard devouring their sheep and threatening their lives. See picture no. (5)

December 22, 2017

A group of hunters in the Juban area of Al Dhale' Governorate (13.984565, 44.852080), hunted an Arabian leopard and then slaughtered it and slipped its skin on a tree trunk as shown in the picture. See picture no. (5)

May 21, 2018

Two leopards were killed in the mountains of Al-Shuaib area, Al Dhale' Governorate, 13.841652,44.879431 See picture no. (6)

January 09, 2020

A group of hunters hunted an Arabian leopard in the Hadd area of Yafa' District - Lahij Governorate (13.996128, 45.302339) and slaughtered it. Attached is a video documenting a terrible hunting operation. See Picture (7).

April 5 2021

A citizen of the Al-Barakani family in Wadi Shi'b Al-Dhabi (Gazelle Valley) in the village of "Yari" in Al-Hawzn area, Lauder District, Abyan Governorate (13.907841, 46.085867), set a special trap for hyenas hanging on a tree, and was able to hunt a female Arabian leopard late at that night. Residents of the region said that they heard the cries of the Arabian leopard in the early hours of the morning after she fell into the trap, but none of them went to check the source of the sound, and in the morning they found the Arabian leopard caught by a tree trunk.

An activist in the region said that an amount of 6 million Yemeni riyals (12,000 USD) was offered to the Al-Barakani family in order to buy the leopard, but the family rejected the offer and demanded double the amount in order to sell. See Picture (8)

On July 2, 2021

Citizens hunted two Arabian leopards, in the "Yari" valley in Shi'b Al-Dhabi (Gazelle Valley), near to Jabal Thara, 9 km east of Lawdar District, Abyan Governorate (13.907841, 46.085867).

Local citizens said that one of the leopards escaped from the chains while trying to catch him and attacked a citizen close to him, before he was shot and killed. While the other leopard died in the trap moments after the incident, without being shot. (see picture no. (9))

In April 2022

Two Arabian leopards were hunted, one of them in the "Aqtan" area of Wadi Bana in the Halaymin District of Lahj Governorate, after a shepherd put a quantity of poison in a dead sheep and left it to be eaten by the leopard that died due to poisoning. The people said that more than 13 goats were died because of leopards while grazing in a mountain in the area. Killing this leopard came a month after a leopard crashed with an 85-year-old citizen in the Labous district of Lahj governorate, southern Yemen. See picture no. (10).

As for the other incident, it was a female leopard that was killed in the Al-Dabianiya Protected Area, north of Abyan Governorate, and her four less-than-month babies were captured. See picture no. (11).

Smuggling Arabian Leopards out of Yemen:

[Editor's note: This paragraph refers to cases of smuggling Arabian leopards. As it contains unconfirmed information of juridical relevance, we have removed this information.]



Picture (1a)

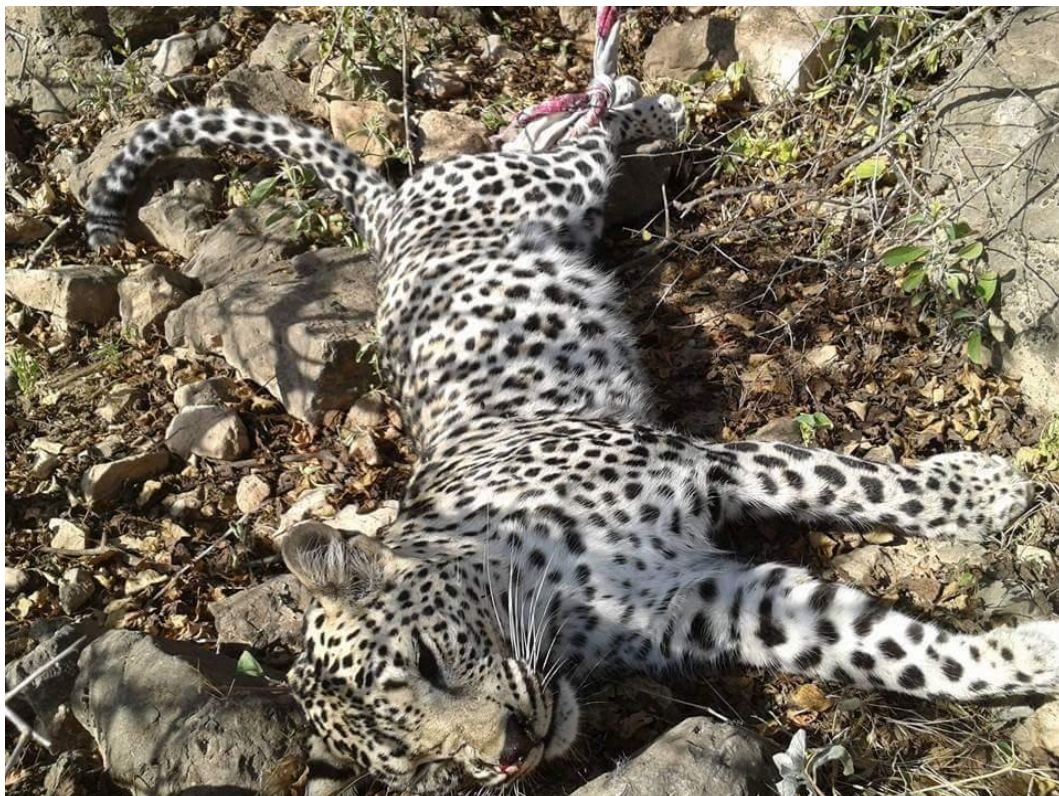


Picture (1b)

SONC



Picture (2a)

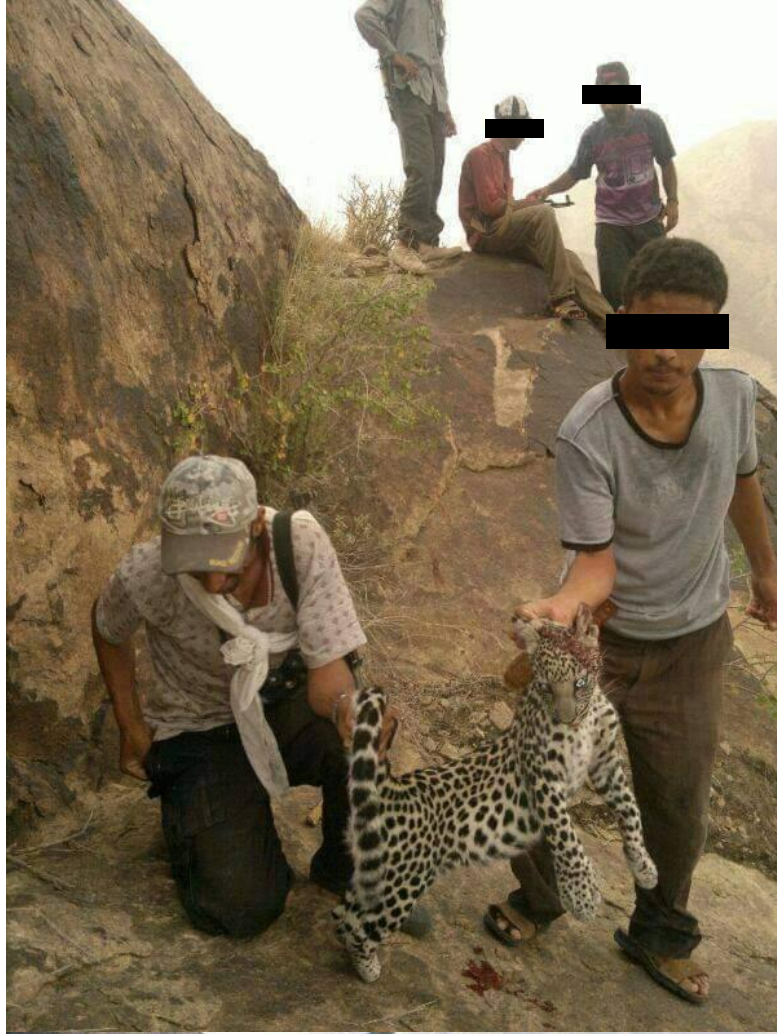


Picture (2b)



Picture (3)

SONC



Picture (4)



Picture (5)



Picture (6)

SONC



Picture (7)



Picture (8)



Picture (9)



Picture (10)



Picture (11)