

# The use of wild mammals in traditional medicine

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In an analysis of published research, investigators identified 565 mammalian species that have been used to source products used in traditional medicine around the world, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Credit: Itamar Barbosa

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mammalian species that have been used to source products used in traditional medicine around the world, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The analysis, which is published in *Mammal Review*, also found that 155 of these mammalian species are considered threatened (vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered), and a further 46 are near threatened.

The findings suggesting that overexploitation for medicinal use could be an overlooked source of threat for mammalian species.

"Our study revealed that an impressive [mammalian species](#) richness—9% of the 6,399 known species—is used in traditional medical systems worldwide. We also highlight that closely [related species](#) are used to treat similar diseases," said lead author Rômulo Romeu Nóbrega Alves, Ph.D., of the Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, in Brazil.

"The widespread utilization of mammals in [traditional medicine](#) (including threatened species) is evidence of the importance of understanding such uses in the context of mammal conservation. Sanitary aspects of the use of wild mammals by humans, and their implications for public health, are also key aspects to consider."

**More information:** *Mammal Review*, [DOI: 10.1111/mam.12233](https://doi.org/10.1111/mam.12233)

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