

African painted dogs spotted in Uganda after four decades

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The African painted dog is on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list of endangered species.

African painted dogs, a species thought to have become extinct in Uganda four decades ago, have been spotted in the far northeast of the country, the wildlife authority said.

The canines are on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of endangered species.

"African painted [dogs](#) (commonly known as [wild dogs](#)), which went extinct in Uganda in the 1980s, were sighted on Monday morning around the Narus River in Kidepo Valley National Park," the Ugandan Wildlife Authority said in a statement sent to AFP Wednesday.

"One of our resident rangers spotted the African painted dogs hastily before the pair skipped out of view," it said, adding that a team would follow up on the sighting to obtain further data vital for conservation.

The animals each have their own unique coat pattern of irregular, mottled fur with patches of red, black, brown, white and yellow.

The [species](#), whose [scientific name](#) is *Lycaon pictus*, have large rounded ears and four toes on each foot, unlike domesticated dogs, which have five on their front paws and four on their rear ones.

The ICUN said in 2020 that the population of African painted dogs was estimated at about 6,600 adults.

"Population size is continuing to decline as a result of ongoing habitat fragmentation, conflict with human activities, and infectious disease," it said.

Ugandan wildlife conservationist Paul Oketcho described the discovery of the dogs as a boost in a country already rich in biodiversity.

"This is a major development but Uganda has a history of not conserving such wildlife as many such including rhinos, elephants and lions are facing extinction due to poaching and mismanagement by those in charge of wildlife," Oketcho told AFP.

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