

📖 Topic Page: [Meerkats](#)

Definition: **meerkat** from *The Macquarie Dictionary*

1.

any of several small, burrowing, southern African carnivores, especially *Suricata suricatta*, with dark bands across the back, related to the mongoose.

Plural: meerkats

Etymology: Afrikaans : literally, sea cat, suricates



Image from: [Line watch Adult meerkats keep a watchful eye... in Animals: A Visual Encyclopedia](#)

Summary Article: **meerkat**

From *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*

Colonial species (*Suricata suricatta*) of the mongoose family (Herpestidae). It is a burrowing carnivore found in southwestern Africa that differs from mongooses in having four (rather than five) toes on each foot. Meerkats are noted for their constant vigilance for predators. This sentinel behaviour involves one member of the group finding an elevated position, standing on its hind legs, and alerting the group of danger when it is seen. The meerkat grows to a total length of 17–24 in. (43–60 cm). Insects and other small animals

constitute most of its diet, but bulbous roots are also eaten for the water they contain. It is diurnal and easily tamed as a pet. The yellow mongoose (*Cynictis penicillata*) is sometimes called the red meerkat.

Keywords: meerkat

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meerkat. (2017). In Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Britannica concise encyclopedia*. Chicago, IL: Britannica Digital Learning. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/meerkats>



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