



## INTRODUCTION

JORDAN BADIA RESEARCH AND  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME LIBRARY  
SAFAWI

An investigation into the biodiversity, abundance and community ecology of mammal species within representative habitats of the Badia desert region. These habitats range from densely vegetated sites such as the Hazeem oasis with large date palms to the barren salt flats or qas. There are seven distinct habitats, each with an exclusive fauna. These include flat open river flood plains (marabs), meandering dried up river beds (wadis), open chertz plains (harrats), rolling red sand dunes and fresh water pools which are probably used as watering holes for large carnivores and are very important in the seasonal migration of many species of birds and mammals. Habitats can change dramatically with the seasons; a flourishing wadi with knee high dense vegetation in the spring can in a few months of intense summer heat be reduced to a barren dry and dusty plain. Desert conditions are extreme with temperatures soaring to well over 40°C in the summer and dropping below freezing point on some nights. It is remarkable how animals survive in such a hostile environment but first impressions are misleading and adaptations, both physiological and behavioural, are the key to their success.

Very little is know of the ecology of the Badia region, although it comprises nearly one fifth of Jordan. This is probably due to it remoteness, inaccessibility and barren appearance. One of the aims of this project is to encourage long term monitoring of the sites and to stimulate further studies into some important aspects of faunal ecology.