

# Taxkorgan Nature Reserve



## General features

<b>Country:</b>	China
<b>Date of establishment:</b>	1984
<b>Area:</b>	15,863 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Geographic location:</b>	Latitude: 37°30'N; Longitude: 76°00'E
<b>IUCN category:</b>	IV

## Overview

Taxkorgan Nature Reserve (TNR) is located in the east Pamir Plateau, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in China. The reserve is in Taxkorgan Tajik Autonomous County, within the jurisdiction of Kashgar Prefecture. The reserve is mountainous, with about half lying at or above 4,500 masl. It includes the northern flanks of the Karakoram, the western edge of the Kunlun, and the eastern rim of the Pamir Plateau. The climate is generally cool and dry.

## People

Tajik, Han, Kyrgyz, and Uygur

## Flora

Much of the terrain is too high or arid to support vegetation. However, there are extensive sedge barrens dominated by

*Kobresia* spp. and *Carex* spp. with moisture-tolerant forbs (*Ranunculus* spp., *Gentiana* spp., *Oxytropis* spp., *Potentilla* spp., *Primula* spp., and *Pedicularis* spp.) and grassy steppe vegetation (*Festuca* spp., *Stipa* spp., *Poa* spp., and *Ptilagrostis* spp.). Trees (*Salix* spp., *Tamarix* spp., *Populus* spp., and *Betula* spp.) are found only in low-lying valleys.

## Fauna

A number of flagship mammal species have been observed in the reserve, including ibex (*Capra sibirica*), blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*), Himalayan brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), and Himalayan lynx (*Lynx lynx isabellinus*) with some endangered species including the markhor (*Capra falconeri*) and Marco Polo sheep (*Ovis ammon polii*). There are 159 reported bird species in the reserve.

## Threats

- Overgrazing – endangers vertebrates such as the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*), wolf (*Canis lupus*), and Marco Polo sheep (*Ovis ammon polii*).
- Desertification of the alpine steppe habitat as a result of overgrazing and fuelwood collection.



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*Photos: Tao Zhang*