

# MEET THE CHEETAH

## ABOUT ME

I have about **2000 spots**, this is how we are identified in the wild. My spots cover most of my body, this helps me hide when I am hunting for prey in the wild. We actually have our own unique spots and ring pattern around our tails, much like your fingerprints.

**Have you got any special spots on your body that makes you, you?**

## DID YOU KNOW?

We are the World's Fastest Land Mammal.

We can run up to **120 kph**.

We usually only get up to these speeds in short sprints when we attack our prey, with a cheetah's average speed being around **64 kph**.

We have the ability to go from **0 to 96 kph** in only 3 seconds!

**How fast can you run?**

## DID YOU KNOW?

We don't roar.

The bones of our voice boxes are structured the same as that of "small" cats, which means we actually meow!

We can make a few different sounds. We growl and hiss when we feel threatened and we usually let out a loud yelp when signalling a warning.

**What sounds can you make?**

## WE AREN'T CRYING

We have an excellent sense of vision, which enables us to spot and chase prey from 5 kilometers away. We also have black tear marks called **malar stripes** that run from our eyes down the sides of our face. This attracts the sun away from our eyes and stops the glaring sun from obstructing our view.

**How do you protect your eyes from the sun?**

## MY FAMILY

Mommy cheetahs can have up to 8 cubs at a time, unfortunately we don't all survive. Baby cheetahs have a dusty-grey colouring with long hair running down our backs with is called a mantle. We are big and strong enough to hunt at 6 months old.

**How old were you when you could eat all by yourself?**

## WHY WE ARE IMPORTANT

As predators, we control the number of prey species in our ecosystem. Our main prey are herbivores. Without us, these populations grow. This can cause problems such as "over grazing": when animals eat all the vegetation.

## OUR BIGGEST THREAT

We are facing extinction pressure from climate change, hunting by humans, and habitat destruction, which is reducing the size of our populations. There are less than 7000 of us left in Africa!

## WHAT WE LIKE TO EAT

We are **CARNIVORES**. We eat small antelope, springbok, steenbok, duikers, impala and gazelles, as well as the young of larger animals, such as warthogs, kudu, hartebeest, oryx, roan and sable.

An adult cheetah eats about **2.8kg** of meat per day, we don't drink much water and can survive up to 10 days without it.

**How much water do you drink everyday?**

## MY NAMES

My name, 'cheetah', comes from the Hindi word **'CHITA'** which means 'spotted one'.

**How many names do you have?**

