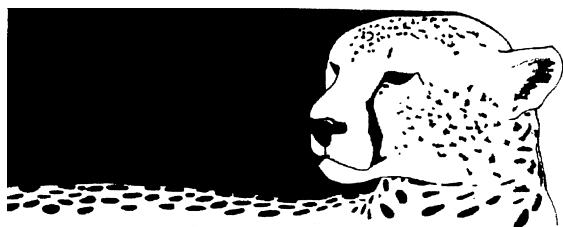


THE CHEETAH WATCH CAMPAIGN



HELP US MONITOR CHEETAHS

Your photographs of the cheetahs you see on your safari can help us to monitor cheetahs across Tanzania. Each cheetah can be individually recognised from photographs through its unique spot patterns. If you send us your photographs, together with some basic information about where and when your cheetahs were seen, you will help us keep track of individual cheetahs across the country. In return we will let you know whether the cheetahs you see on your safari are known to us, and if so, we will tell you a little of their history. We are looking for information on cheetahs all across Tanzania both inside and outside of protected areas – so please send us your information, no matter where your cheetahs were seen.

THE TANZANIA CARNIVORE CONSERVATION PROJECT

The Cheetah Watch Campaign is run by the Tanzania Carnivore Conservation Project at the Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute. This project is funded principally by the British Government through their Darwin Initiative scheme, but also gets support and funding from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL). The project aims to monitor and conserve carnivores, with a special emphasis on Cheetahs and Wild Dogs, two threatened species of which Tanzania holds globally important populations.

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT WILD CHEETAHS

The cheetah is the most unique and specialised member of the cat family. It can reach speeds of 64mph, making it the fastest creature on land. Tanzania is home to the Serengeti Cheetah Project, a 27 year study of known individual cheetahs that has told us much of what we know about wild cheetahs.

ECOLOGY AND BEHAVIOUR

Cheetahs do well in a wide variety of habitats, ranging from mountains and desert through to open grassland and bush. Cheetahs have a social system unlike any other cat species. Cheetah females are tolerant of other females, and do not maintain territories, whilst cheetah males are social, forming groups of 2 or 3, usually brothers, which stay together for the rest of their life. Males in groups are more likely than single males to take and retain a territory, which they will then defend against male intruders. In the Serengeti, male territories average 50km², whilst females and males without territories move over 800km² every year.

REPRODUCTION

Cheetahs give birth to their first litter at two years after a 3-month pregnancy. The cubs are kept in a lair for the first 2 months of their life, when their mother leaves them to hunt every morning, and returns at dusk. Cheetah cub mortality is high - out of 20 cheetah cubs born, only one will survive to independence. Cubs die mostly because they are killed by lions or hyaenas: their mother cannot defend them against these much larger predators. Cubs may also die from exposure or fire, or from abandonment if their mother is unable to find food. If they survive, the cubs will stay with their mother until they are 18 months old, after which they will roam with their littermates for another 6 months.

HUNTING

Cheetahs are predominantly active by day. They hunt by a stealthy stalk followed by a fast chase. Because of their unrivalled speed and acceleration cheetahs can hunt successfully even if they start a chase at a much greater distance than bulkier and heavier large cats, such as lions and leopards. They take a wide variety of prey, depending on habitat and geographic location, but they prefer prey of 15-30kg: the size of an adult Thomson's gazelle or impala.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please help us to monitor cheetahs in Tanzania by sending us your photographs and filling in the form below for each group of cheetahs seen:

Your Name

Your Address

Email

When did you see these cheetahs?.....

In which park or region in Tanzania did you see the cheetahs?
.....

How many cheetahs did you see in the group?.....

What was the sex of the cheetahs you saw (if known)?
.....

If there were cubs with the cheetahs you saw - how big were they (please tick box)?

Less than half size..... Half size.....

Three-quarter size..... Full-grown

What was the name of your safari company and guide?
.....

Where did you see the cheetahs (please give rough location)?:
.....

Please sign below if you would like us to post information about your sighting on the web on www.wcs.org/cheetahs:

Signature

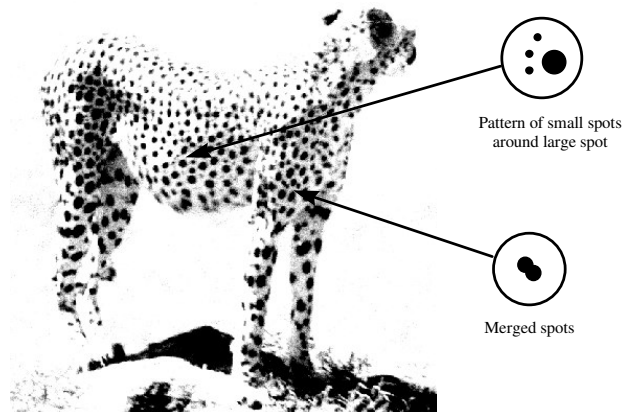
(this is an easy way for us to inform you about the cheetahs you have seen)

By signing this form I hereby give permission to the Wildlife Conservation Society to post my name and sighting information on their Web site, and I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless from any and all liability, cost or damage arising from their use of my name and sighting information on their Web site.

Please send your form and photographs to:
**The Tanzania Carnivore Conservation Project,
TAWIRI, Box 661, Arusha, Tanzania
Or you can email us at carnivores@habari.co.tz**

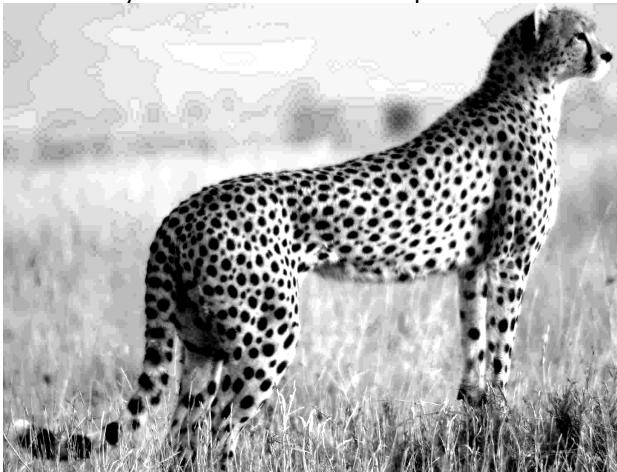
RECOGNISING INDIVIDUAL CHEETAHS

The spot patterns on a cheetah are unique for each individual. Look at the cheetahs you see - you will notice that in between the large bold spots are many small spots. The patterns of these small spots are the easiest to use for identification. You may see lines, or pairs, semi-circles, or even complete circles.



Cocoa is a mature female from the Serengeti, often seen at Simba kopjes.

Now see if you can tell this cheetah apart:



Fusili is a middle aged female, also from the Serengeti, often seen on the western edge of the plains ranging between Sopa valley and Maasai kopjes - she has five big cubs at present.

CHEETAH CONSERVATION



Cheetahs used to be widespread across Africa and across Asia through to India. However today, cheetahs have been wiped out in India, and very few survive in the Middle East. Now most of the cheetahs surviving are concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa. Namibia holds the largest surviving population, but Tanzania, Kenya, Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa also hold important populations. The world-wide cheetah population continues to decline due to persecution, particularly in southern Africa, and loss of habitat. Wherever they occur, cheetahs are rare and at low density.

We hope you are lucky enough to see cheetahs during your stay here. If you do, then please protect them by making use of cheetah friendly watching practices. The national parks and game reserves in Tanzania are a sanctuary for the cheetah, where they should be free of persecution of all times.

CHEETAH FRIENDLY WATCHING

Of all the large cats, cheetahs are the most vulnerable to disturbance, because they hunt during the day and are often shy. Even if you are lucky enough to find a cheetah which is relatively tame, bear in mind that if it is hunting, the prey which it seeks can easily be alerted to a cheetah by the presence of a large noisy vehicle close by. However if you follow a few simple rules you

may be rewarded with seeing a cheetah hunt - possibly one of the most dramatic spectacles in the natural world.

1. *Never drive directly at cheetahs.* Approach slowly at an angle or in a zig-zag fashion.
2. *Pause frequently as you approach and observe through binoculars.* Make sure you do not drive into the middle of a cheetah group by accident and scare cubs from their mother. Remember that cheetahs scared off of kills are unlikely to return.
3. *Always keep quiet in the vicinity of cheetahs.* Bear in mind that even if a cheetah appears relaxed you may still be having an effect. Cheetahs are sensible, they will not hunt if prey are alert because of noise and disruption.
4. *Do not move a vehicle if a cheetah is stalking.* Starting up an engine alerts prey, making them more likely to spot a stalking cheetah.

If you see harassment of cheetahs by other visitors then please note the number plate of the vehicle and report them to parks staff.

This campaign is supported by the Darwin Initiative, the Zoological Society of London and the Wildlife Conservation Society:



Frankfurt Zoological Society help support the Serengeti Cheetah Project:



Visit us and find out more about cheetahs at www.wcs.org/cheetahs