

I've got purrr-sonality.

# CHEETAHS

(Acinonyx jubatus)

Why couldn't the cheetah play hide-and-seek? It was always spotted.

About a million years ago, there were approximately 100 cheetahs in the area. Hunting by humans, habitat and competition from other predators have greatly reduced the number of cheetahs worldwide.

How did the antelope survive a cheetah attack? It had an escape clause (claws).

Cheetahs are the only cats that do not have retractable claws.

For more information on cheetahs, go to your local library and check out these books:

"Cheetahs: Fleetest of Foot" by Eulalia Garcia (Gareth Stevens Publishing) or "Cheetah" by Caroline Arnold (Morrow Junior Books).

The name "cheetah" comes from the Hindi word "chita," which means "the spotted one."

The cheetah is the fastest mammal on earth. A cheetah can run at speeds as fast as 110 km/h (70 mph) over short periods of time.

Today, scientists believe that there are fewer than 10,000 cheetahs remaining in the wild. Hopefully, this trend can be reversed before the fastest predator on earth loses in its quest for survival.

Cheetahs have a set of distinctive black stripes called "tear streaks" that run from their eyes to their mouths.

Cheetahs are an endangered species.

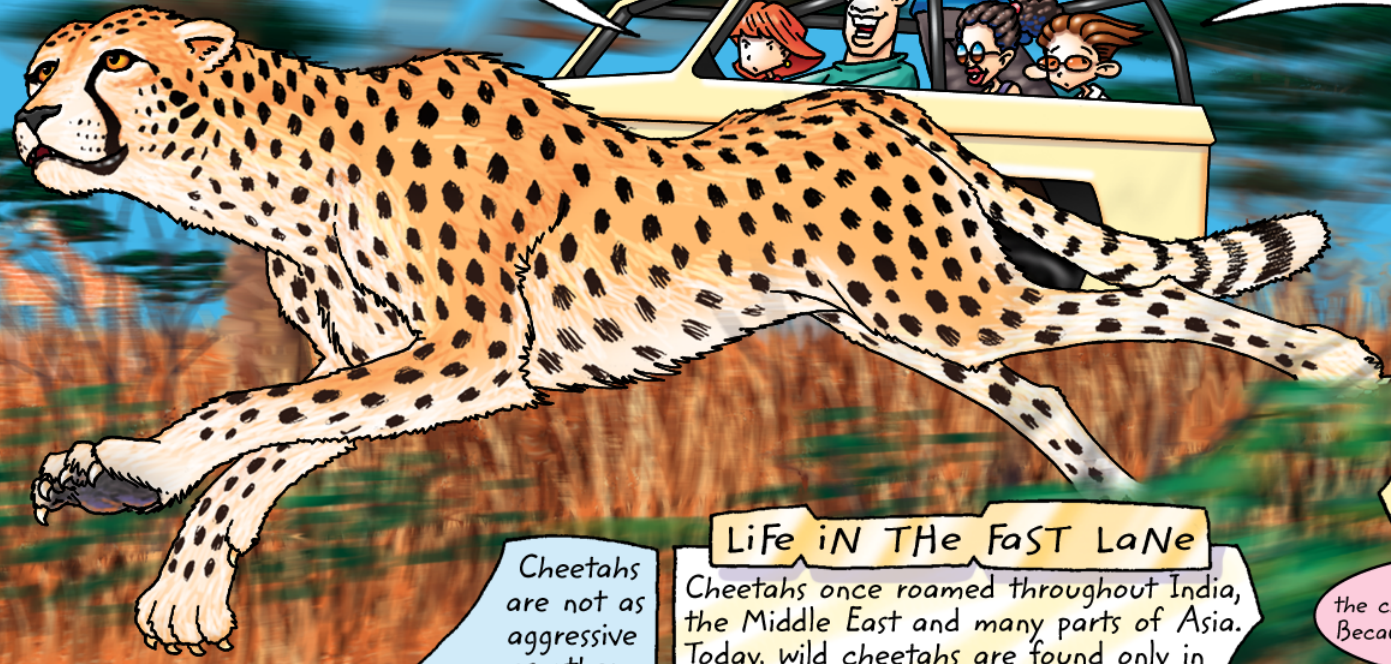
A running cheetah may travel more than 7 m (23 ft) between each stride.

What do you get when you mix a cheetah with a fast ball? A fast ball.

Many artists have depicted cheetahs as they became about 10,000 years ago.

The backbone of a cheetah flexes like a spring to help the cheetah run at high speeds.

Cheetahs tire very quickly, so they will give up a chase if they do not catch their prey within a few hours.



Cheetahs do not grow a mane on the back of their neck. This makes them appear smaller than lions, which actually do.

Why didn't the cheetah enter the race? Because cheetahs can never win.

## LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

Cheetahs once roamed throughout India, the Middle East and many parts of Asia. Today, wild cheetahs are found only in eastern, central and southern Africa.

In the wild, most cheetahs live alone, but some prefer to live in small groups.

Cheetahs prefer to hunt in the daytime.

Cheetahs are not as aggressive as other predators and often lose their prey to predators such as lions or hyenas.

## WORD SEARCH

Can you find the hidden words? Search carefully because some words are backward or upside down.

- PREDATOR HUNT
- CHEETAH LONG
- STRIDE SPOTS
- STREAK TEAR
- QUICK PREY
- CLAW FAST
- I S L A N D S P A R
- G O J A G U A R P A
- A T E A C H E E T A
- B A N A N A N D Y E
- W A S P O T S A S G
- S T O R E K A T N U
- A B L E S C R O R C

## BUILT FOR SPEED

A cheetah's heart and lungs are larger than those of most other cats. These larger organs allow more oxygen to flow through the cheetah's body. The increased levels of oxygen provide the cheetah with more energy for running.

A cheetah's long legs, small head and flexible spine help it to run extremely fast.

## NEWS TRAVELS FAST

Can you help this cheetah deliver the mail?

