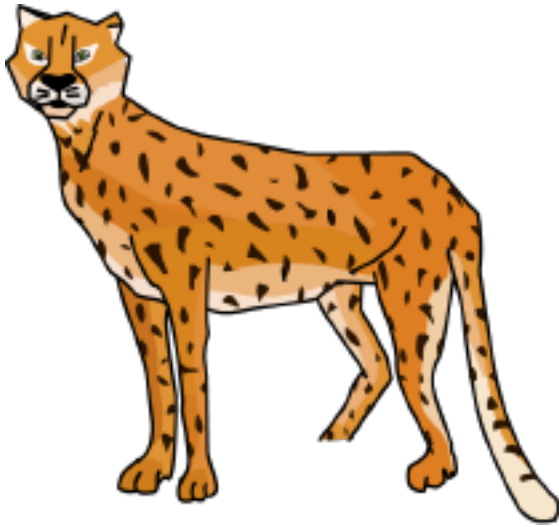


Cheetah Profile



Cheetah Family Tree

Kingdom: Animalia
 Phylum: Chordata
 Subphylum: Vertebrata
 Class: Mammalia
 Order: Carnivora
 Family: Felidae
 Subfamily: Felinae
 Genus: Acinonyx
 Species: Acinonyx jubatus

Hello! I am a Cheetah. My species is found roaming in sub-Sahara Africa and Northern Iran. My name is Ziba, which means 'beautiful' in Persian. My coarse fur is the color of sand and my spots are black. My face is beautiful- I have teardrop shaped patches of black fur from my eyes to my mouth. Since cheetahs look alike, our tails help us identify one another. My tail has five black rings and bushy white fur at the very tip and doesn't look exactly like any other cheetah tail. My teeth are small compared to other large cats but my nostrils are quite large and they help me take in big breaths when I'm running. I have very long powerful legs that help me run faster than cars travel on the highway. Because of this, I am the fastest mammal on the planet.

If you're on a safari you'll find me high on a tree limb or on top of a termite mound. It's the best place to watch for gazelles roaming below. As a female cheetah, I'm usually alone; I prefer to be myself rather than hang around with the males. I just had a litter of cubs and I'm nervous about other animals eating them so I move our home every few days to keep them safe from lions. But when I hunt for food I must leave my cubs by themselves. At six weeks old, they will follow me as I hunt and by three months they are starting to be a little more adventurous. Sadly, my babies will leave me to start they own lives when they are just over a year old. I'll miss them but I will have taught them to hunt well and they'll grow to be fast and strong cheetahs.

I am a carnivorous cat. I prey on other animals like gazelles, impalas, birds, rabbits, and warthogs. Sometimes I hunt animals that belong to farmers and then the farmers hunt me! But humans also like to hunt the cheetah because of our fur and even to capture us as pets! Luckily humans aren't doing that as often because we cheetahs have become popular tourist attractions for those on safari, and if they kill us the tourists will be disappointed. Even though humans are more careful with cheetahs than they used to be we are still an endangered.