

Cheetah

by
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People mistake as leopards. Cheetahs have spots that look like tear drops coming down from its eyes. The Cheetahs' coats are tan with black spots. Cheetahs weigh 80-140 pounds (36-64 kilograms). The male cheetahs are a little bigger than the female cheetah. Cheetahs are endangered because people kill them and peel their skin off for clothing. Some people kill them just for fun. People also kill cheetahs for sport. That is why they are an endangered species.

Cheetahs live in Saharan Africa which is south of the Sahara Desert. Cheetahs like deserts because there are no trees only long grasses. Cheetahs need grass so they can sneak up on their prey. There are some cheetahs that live in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America. Cheetahs love to eat small antelope, gazelle, birds, and rabbits. Cheetahs can go for weeks without water. Cheetahs are the prey of the lions and the hyena. Female cheetahs have babies. Baby cheetahs are called cubs. Mother cheetahs have 3-6 cubs. When cubs are born they are helpless and blind. The mother cheetah cares for its cubs by bringing them food to eat. Once they are about 12 or 18 months old they start to take care of themselves. Cheetahs are mammals. They are mammals because they have hair like people. Humans are mammals just like the cheetah. The cheetah also has whiskers like cats. The scientific name for the cheetah is *Acinonyx jubatus*. The word *Acinonyx* means Genus and *jubatus* is a kind of Species. There are many interesting facts about the cheetah. Some people name cheetahs like cinnamon. Cheetahs have lived for over three and a half to four million years. Cheetahs have weak jaws and small teeth. Cheetahs cannot fight bigger animals. Cheetahs live in Africa because there are not that many people that can hunt them. In 1900, a lot more than 100,000 cheetahs were found in 44 countries. A long time ago cheetahs were kept for royalty. The cheetah is not an aggressive animal. Bigger animals can eat cheetahs. The tear marks on both eyes of the cheetah shorten the glare of the sun when the cheetah is running.

