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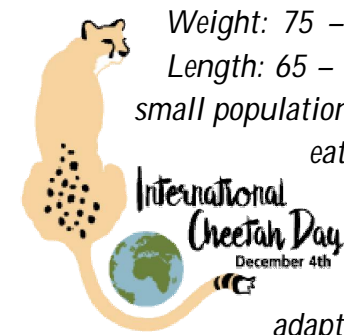
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Editorial Note

The world's fastest land animal is racing against extinction. Help us win the race!



CHEETAH (*Acinonyx jubatus*)



Weight: 75 – 120 pounds Height: 70 – 85 cm Body Length: 110 – 140 cm Tail Length: 65 – 80 cm Wild Life Span: ~ 12 Years Range: Sub-Saharan Africa with a small population in Iran Habitat: Open bushveld, grassland savannas Diet: Carnivore, eating small antelope and other small mammals and birds such as guinea fowl

The cheetah is the world's fastest land animal and Africa's most endangered big cat with only 10,000 left in the wild. Uniquely adapted for speed, the cheetah is capable of reaching speeds up to 70 miles per hour in just over 3 seconds, and at top speed their stride is 7 yards long. Cheetahs are carnivores and prefer to prey on small antelope species such as steenbok, duiker, springbok, and the calves of larger antelope like oryx, red hartebeest and kudu.

It is the birthday of Khayam, a cheetah Dr. Laurie Marker raised from a cub at Wildlife Safari, in Oregon. Khayam was trained for the first research project in rewilding and inspired her first trip to Namibia in 1977. Dr. Marker took Khayam to Africa to see if she could be taught to hunt in the wild. Through trial and error, Dr. Marker was successful in her efforts, and she eventually brought Khayam back to the US. It was during this time that Dr. Marker found out about how cheetahs were being exterminated by Namibian farmers who viewed them as vermin, and she vowed to do something about it. So Dr. Marker became the cheetah's champion because of Khayam, and chose this animal's birthday as a day to promote cheetah conservation in honor of her memory.

The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) needs your help as you celebrate International Cheetah Day. Make sure to gather more information about cheetahs and spread the word about wildlife conservation. Try making small changes in your everyday life to help your local wildlife and stay involved through service projects or fundraising to help international wildlife. In this conservation passport you will find important information about the cheetah and its race for survival.

Naturally yours

Vijikumar Sahadevan

Editor in Chief, IJONS

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