Every December 4th, the world comes together to celebrate the fastest animal on land. International Cheetah Day is a day to learn about the cheetah, share its story, and join the effort to keep it running wild.

internationalcheetahday.org

Celebrate the Cheetah

THE CHEETAH WHO STARTED IT ALL

International Cheetah Day begins with one cheetah. In 1977, Dr. Laurie Marker brought Khayam, a cheetah she had raised from a cub at Oregon's Wildlife Safari, to Namibia for the first research project of its kind: could a captive-born cheetah be taught to hunt? Khayam could, and did. But on that trip Dr. Marker witnessed something else: farmers were removing wild cheetahs from the landscape in enormous numbers as perceived threats to their livestock. Because of Khayam, she dedicated her life to becoming the cheetah's champion, founding the Cheetah Conservation Fund in 1990 and moving to Namibia to solve the conflict at its source.

In 2010, Dr. Marker designated December 4th, Khayam's birthday, as International Cheetah Day, in remembrance of the cheetah who showed her the path.

A DAY THE WHOLE WORLD CELEBRATES

At CCF's Centre in Namibia, International Cheetah Day draws school groups, sports clubs, and cultural performers from across the country, including traditional perspectives on what it means to live alongside cheetahs. In Somaliland, the day has become a national occasion: the Education and Training Complex at CCF's Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre was officially opened by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on International Cheetah Day itself. In classrooms around the world, teachers bring the cheetah to their students with CCF's International Cheetah Day Conservation Passport, and supporters everywhere carry the celebration across social media with #SaveTheCheetah.

NAMIBIANS, THIS IS YOUR DAY TO CELEBRATE WITH CCF!

If you are in Namibia, the best place in the world to spend December 4th is at CCF's Centre near Otjiwarongo, celebrating the cat your country is famous for. The day is a true festival: cultural groups perform and share traditional perspectives on living alongside cheetahs, educational stalls run interactive games with prizes to win, and a volleyball tournament keeps the energy high from morning to afternoon, with teams and visitors arriving from across the country.



Schools, sports clubs, families, and first-time visitors are all welcome, and every year the celebration grows.

And of course, the guests of honor are here. Meet CCF's resident cheetahs, watch a cheetah feeding, explore the museum, and see the working farm, the guarding dogs, and the laboratory where cheetah science happens every day. Entry to the celebration is a chance to see everything CCF does, on the one day of the year built for exactly that. Bring your family, bring your team, and celebrate Namibia's cheetah with the people working to keep it running wild.

HOW TO CELEBRATE

Share your favorite cheetah fact with someone who has never heard it. Bring the cheetah into your classroom, your workplace, or your community with a celebration of your own, and tell CCF about it. Follow and share @ccfcheetah on December 4th, and explore internationalcheetahday.org for materials, events, and ways to get involved, every year, on the cheetah's day.

Continued on back ->

CHEETAH FACTS, THE QUICK WAY



FAST - Top speed up to 70 mph (112 kph). From standing still to 60 mph in about 3 seconds. A single stride covers 22 to 26 feet, and twice in every stride, no feet touch the ground at all.

THE HUNT - Cheetahs hunt in the cooler hours, stalking to within 30 to 90 feet before the chase. Most chases last around 20 seconds, and about half succeed.

THE BODY - Adults weigh 75 to 125 pounds, measure 40 to 60 inches with 24 to 32 inches more of tail, and stand 28 to 36 inches at the shoulder. The flexible spine, oversized heart and lungs, wide nostrils, and rudder tail are all speed equipment.

THE VOICE - Cheetahs cannot roar. They chirp like birds, bark, growl, hiss, and purr, and they are the only big cat that purrs continuously, breathing in and out.

THE SPOTS - Solid black spots (a leopard's are open rings), spotted skin beneath the spotted fur, and black tear marks that cut the sun's glare like an athlete's eye black.

THE CUBS - Born with a silver mantle of long fur that disguises them as honey badgers, one of the few animals predators refuse to bother. Cubs learn to hunt at their mother's side and climb "play trees" with their siblings.

THE BROTHERS - Male cheetahs from the same litter often stay together for life, forming coalitions that hunt and defend territory better than any male alone. Home ranges are enormous: roughly 1,500 to 2,300 km^2 (580 to 890 mi^2) in Namibian research.

THE SURVIVOR - The cheetah is one of the oldest cats on Earth, and one of the luckiest: around 20,000 years ago the Ice Age wiped out most large mammals, and the species squeezed through a genetic bottleneck it still carries today.

THE GENTLE ONE - Built for speed, not for fighting. A cheetah's answer to trouble is to run, and cheetahs are not a danger to people.

THE NEIGHBOR - Most cheetahs live outside protected parks, on the farmlands and rangelands they share with people, which is why cheetah conservation is really about people and cheetahs thriving together.

THE THREATS - Declining prey, shrinking habitat, poaching, and the illegal wildlife trade press the cheetah across its range in Africa, with a small, critically endangered population surviving in Iran.captivity typically live for 8-12 years, while some of CCF's resident orphan cheetahs in Namibia reach up to 18 years. Cub mortality is high, with around 23 percent of captive cubs dying within a month and about 90 percent in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park not surviving beyond 3 months due to predation. In Namibia, approximately 50 percent of a litter achieves independence.

ABOUT CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND

The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) is an international non-profit organization dedicated to the long-term survival of the cheetah and its ecosystems, founded in 1990 by Dr. Laurie Marker and built on three pillars: research, conservation, and education. CCF works from two field centres on two sides of the cheetah's world. In Namibia, a global stronghold for the wild cheetah, CCF's Field Research and Education Centre near Otjiwarongo is a working conservation campus, open to the public 364 days a year, where a genetics laboratory, veterinary clinic, model farm, and education programs operate side by side. In Somaliland, at the crossroads of the illegal wildlife trade, CCF's Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre at Geed-Deeble is the first facility of its kind in the Horn of Africa, giving cheetahs confiscated from the pet trade a permanent home in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. Learn more at cheetah.org.



International Cheetah Day

Cheetah Conservation Fund
P.O. Box 1755, Otjiwarongo, Namibia

Namibia: +264 067 306 225
US +1 866 909 3399

ccfinfo@iway.na
info@cheetah.org