

ISSUE Nº
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2nd 2025

CHEETAH STRIDES

The Newsletter of the Cheetah Conservation Fund



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10k Rabies Vax

FCA and IEEP

35th Anniversary


Cheetah
CONSERVATION FUND



DONATE

PO Box 2496
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info@cheetah.org
1.866.909.3399
cheetah.org/donate

VISIT & VOLUNTEER

International Research and Education Centre

Otiwarongo, Namibia
open 364 days per year

Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre

Geed-Deeble, Somaliland

CCF's Headquarters USA

200 Daingerfield Rd.
Alexandria, VA. 22314

Volunteer to help CCF save the cheetah!

cheetah.org/get-involved/volunteer/

Keep up with the cheetahs on social media!



@CCFCheetah



THANKS TO YOU

Unlike most NGOs, which rely mainly on institutional grants and large foundations, **over half of Cheetah Conservation Fund's (CCF) support comes directly from individuals.** Just as the savanna grasslands provide the foundation for life in cheetah country, our grassroots supporters provide the foundation for everything CCF does

WAYS TO GIVE

Donor Advised Funds (DAF)

Recommend a grant to CCF directly from your DAF account

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC #12164)

Federal employees can support CCF through payroll deduction during the annual campaign

Corporate Matching Gifts

Check our donation form online to see if your company participates.

Bequests (Chewbaaka Society)

Leave a lasting legacy by including CCF in your will, life insurance, or retirement plan.

Recurring Donations, Sponsorships, and Stock Gifts

Provide steady support for CCF's work, sponsor a cheetah or Livestock Guarding Dog, or make a gift of stock.

EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL CHEETAH DAY

DECEMBER 4, 2025

Annual Global Celebration of the cheetah - Join Us!

DR. LAURIE MARKER US TOUR

SPRING 2026

EVENTS TBA

Contact info@cheetah.org to request a speaking appearance by Dr. Laurie Marker

FROM FROM THE FOUNDER



This is the 30th issue of Cheetah Strides and CCF's 35th anniversary year!

In 1990, I arrived in Namibia with the dream of creating a future for the cheetah. What began as a small operation in the bush has grown into a global effort that unites science, community, and care for wildlife.

Over three and a half decades we have built the longest-running cheetah conservation program in the world. Today we manage more than 143,000 acres of habitat in Namibia, where our team monitors cheetahs in the wild, provides lifelong care for those that cannot return, and develops land restoration strategies that support both ecosystems and communities. Our Livestock Guarding Dog (LGD) program, with more than 780 placements, continues to transform coexistence between farmers and predators.

In Somaliland we are caring for nearly 120 confiscated cheetahs at the Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre (CRCC). These young animals symbolize both the tragedy of trafficking and the hope of survival. We just opened our new Educational Centre Complex, supported by the Royal Commission for AlUla, which will serve as a hub for ranger training, conservation education, and community engagement to help increase awareness.

This year we also reached our 10,000th vaccination through the One Health program, protecting livestock, domestic animals, and wildlife from disease. Our research continues to advance understanding of cheetahs and other carnivores, with several new peer-reviewed publications in 2025.

As we celebrate 35 years, I am grateful for the partners, supporters, and communities who have stood with us. Each cub rescued, each farmer trained, and each acre restored is part of a much larger story. With fewer than 7,500 cheetahs left in the wild, our mission remains urgent. With your continued support, we will secure a future where cheetahs can thrive.

Dr. Laurie Marker
Founder & Executive Director

HELP US KEEP THE CHEETAH WHERE IT BELONGS

in the wild.



RETURN OF THE CHEETAH 2

DISCOVERY CHANNEL, JETOUR, CCF TEAM UP AGAIN

In December 2025, Discovery Channel will premiere *Return of the Cheetah 2*, hosted by adventurer and naturalist Hazen Audel. The documentary, filmed in Namibia and Somaliland, continues the story begun in 2024 and once again brings Cheetah Conservation Fund's work to international screens.

The project is made possible through the ongoing partnership with Jetour, whose support has extended far beyond the lens. Last year, Jetour adopted two cheetahs, one in Namibia that was released into the wild and named "Jet." The second was named "Gaia" and is a female resident cheetah at the CRCC. Gaia's name was chosen for its symbolism related to the Earth and renewal, her name represents resilience in the face of adversity.

To support conservation operations on the ground, Jetour also donated two hybrid electric vehicles to CCF Somaliland. These vehicles, already in daily use at the CRCC, provide sustainable transport for staff and supplies across the rugged Geed-Deeble landscape.

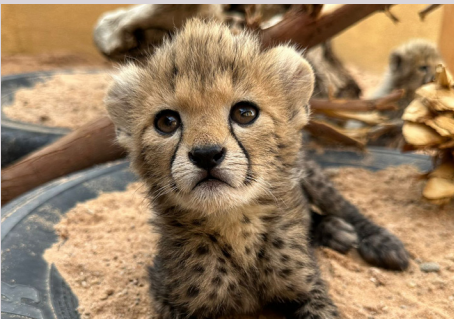


Photos: This page: top: Dr. Marker and Teresia with representatives of Jetour **bottom:** Discovery film crew with CCF Staff and Hazen Audel **Opposite page: left:** Resident cheetah Gaia **right:** Jetour Truck G700

Through Discovery's reach across Asia, Africa, and Europe, and Jetour's creative campaign celebrating Gaia, millions of viewers will see cheetahs as they truly are: fast and graceful, but also vulnerable, complex, and in need of protection. Whether through playful glimpses of Gaia exploring her world, or through sobering reminders of the threats facing wild cheetahs, this collaboration invites a global audience to connect with conservation in a new way.

Discovery has asked that details remain under wraps until the documentary airs, but supporters can look forward to another wave of global promotion and storytelling around its release. With partners like Jetour and Discovery, CCF is expanding both awareness and action for cheetahs, building momentum for their protection across borders and generations.

CHEETAH NAMED GAIA



Rescued at only a week old with her three siblings, Gaia arrived at CCF Somaliland weighing just 500 grams. With round-the-clock care she has grown into a healthy, playful cub now weighing nearly 4 kilograms. Gaia was named by Jetour, whose sponsorship supports her care at the CRCC.

GAIA AT A GLANCE

- Age: 4.5 months
- Weight: 4 kg
- Rescued: June 2025
- Location: CRCC, Somaliland

JETOUR G700



As part of its partnership with CCF, supporting cheetah care in Somaliland, Jetour donated two vehicles now in use at the CRCC. These vehicles provide essential transport for staff and supplies across rugged terrain while lowering environmental impact.

G700 AT A GLANCE

- Model: Jetour G700 (GAIA platform)
- Type: Hybrid off-road SUV
- Donated: 2 vehicles to CRCC
- Role: Supporting cheetah care and transport in Somaliland

BECOME A SPONSOR

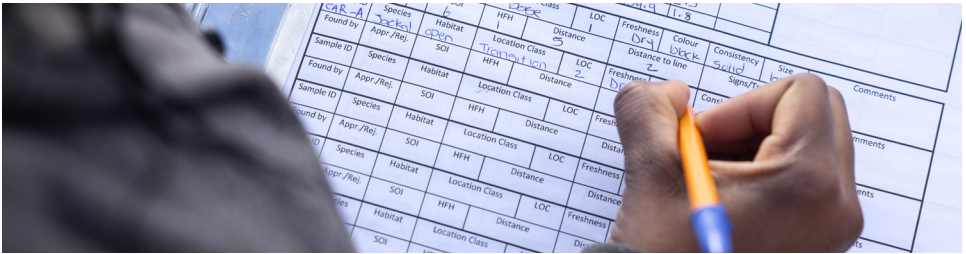
Support CCF's cheetah rehabilitation efforts
www.cheetah.org/donate/sponsor/

RESEARCH PUBLISHED AND IN REVIEW

CCF's resource library has many interesting papers being published by scientific peer-reviewed journals. Many more are published and available online, in review, or pending publication. To read the papers in full visit: cheetah.org/resource-category/scientific-papers/

CHEETAH & CARNIVORE ECOLOGY

Published - Journal of Wildlife Management, *Enhancing performance of detection dog field surveys through experimental transects*. **Authors:** Hofmann T, Schmidt-Küntzel A, Verschueren S, Jenkins SF, Neumann S, Signer J, Balkenhol N, Marker L. 2025



GENETICS & POPULATION STUDIES

Published - Ecology and Evolution, *Identifying cryptic mammals with non-invasive methods: an effective molecular species identification tool to survey southern African terrestrial carnivores*. **Authors:** Wong A, Eizirik E, Koepfli K-P, de Ferran V, Shihepo T, Lay A, Zumbroich J, Rooney N, Marker L, Schmidt-Küntzel A. 2025

Published - Genetics and Molecular Biology, *Inferring the historical demography of southern African cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*) using Bayesian analyses of molecular genetic data*. **Authors:** Fabiano EC, Bonatto SL, Schmidt-Küntzel A, O'Brien SJ, Marker LL, Eizirik E. 2025

WILDLIFE HEALTH & DISEASE

Published - Frontiers in Veterinary Science, *Case report: Acute lead poisoning from bullet ingestion in a captive cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) in Namibia: implications for wildlife management*. **Authors:** Hauw C, Schmidt-Küntzel A, Basto A, Yabe J, McCann N, Díez-León M, Marker L. 2025)

In Review - African Journal of Wildlife Research, *Seroprevalence survey of domestic dogs in the NE Communal Conservancies of Namibia: potential implications for free-roaming African wild dogs (*Lycaon pictus*)*. **Authors:** Deans K, Gieling R, Le Roux N, Anderson N, Robbins A, Marker L.

Published - Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine, *Effective antibody response of African wild dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) to canine distemper vaccination with a live attenuated vaccine*. **Authors:** Gieling R, Schmidt-Küntzel A, Flores-Pineda K, Bailey M, Rooney N, Marker L. 2025

FEATURED STAFF AT CCF

CHRIS WADE

COUNTRY MANAGER - CCF SOMALILAND



Chris Wade joined CCF in 2022 and now serves as Country Manager for Somaliland, a role that places him at the center of one of the toughest battle-grounds for cheetah conservation. Based in Hargeisa, Chris oversees the daily operations of the Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre (CRCC), manages staff, and works closely with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change on enforcement and policy.

Chris came to CCF with field experience in wildlife protection, including work with Game Rangers International, where he was involved in anti-poaching and ranger support in Zambia. That background prepared him for the unique challenges in Somaliland, where the illegal wildlife trade threatens cheetahs at their most vulnerable stage.

In 2025 alone, Chris coordinated with police and government authorities on several confiscations, including the dramatic August rescue of ten cubs in the Sillaxley district. He also joined Dr. Laurie Marker in meetings with new ministers to advance CCF's education and conservation agenda. His leadership is hands-on: moving between policy discussions, field operations, and direct oversight of the cubs' rehabilitation.

Reflecting on that August rescue, Chris described entering a small hut to cut the cubs free from their restraints as "one of the most difficult days of my career." His words remind us that each confiscation is not only a milestone in enforcement but also a vivid reminder of the cruelty behind the trade.

Later this year, Chris will appear in *Return of the Cheetah 2*, Discovery Channel's follow-up documentary filmed in Namibia and Somaliland. His presence will help bring global attention to the realities of wildlife trafficking and to the ongoing efforts required to give cheetahs a future in the wild.



A TEAM EFFORT IN SOMALILAND

At the CRCC in Somaliland, dozens of staff members and volunteers come together every day to care for nearly 120 rescued cheetahs. From feeding and veterinary care to enrichment and rehabilitation, their work gives each cub the best chance at recovery and a safe future.



CONSERVATION - NAMIBIA

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AND WILDLIFE THROUGH ONE HEALTH

This year, CCF's One Health program in Namibia achieved a major milestone. With support from the Foundation for Human Rabies Education & Eradication (FHREE) and other partners, more than 10,000 rabies vaccinations were delivered to domestic dogs and cats in the Greater Waterberg Landscape Communal Conservancies. Protecting pets against rabies protects families from a deadly disease and reduces the risk of transmission to livestock and wildlife.

At the same time, CCF's small-stock team conducted vaccination and parasite control campaigns for goats and sheep. Healthy herds mean fewer losses, less incentive for predator persecution, and stronger trust between farmers and conservationists. These coordinated efforts show how veterinary care directly contributes to predator survival. Rabies prevention also reduces fear of carnivores in local communities, creating more tolerance for predators living alongside people.

By addressing animal health across households, kraals, and landscapes, One Health provides a framework where people and wildlife both benefit. Every vaccination delivered is a step toward safer communities and stronger coexistence with predators.

RESTORING HABITAT ON NAMIBIA'S MODEL FARM

CCF's headquarters spans more than 143,000 acres, making it one of the largest integrated conservation-focused Model Farms in Africa. Here, agriculture and wildlife are managed side by side, providing a living example of how productive land can also be protective.

Photo: this page: CCF staff delivering the 10,000th rabies vaccine in its One Health Initiative **opposite page:** Two cubs being named by Brown & Brown - one of CCF's dedicated corporate donors

Through rotational grazing and strategic bush thinning, grasslands are being restored and hunting corridors reopened. Once overgrown areas now support higher prey densities, with oryx, warthog, duiker, and steenbok regularly recorded. Predator sightings, including cheetah, leopard, jackal, and bat-eared fox, confirm that restored habitats are being used as intended.

Every improvement on the land strengthens the ecological balance, ensuring that Namibia's farmlands can support both livelihoods and wildlife. The Model Farm demonstrates that conservation is not about separating people from predators, but about creating landscapes where both can thrive.

SPOTlight ON SPONSORS

BROWN & BROWN INSURANCE



Gritta and **Link** were the names chosen for two orphaned cheetahs by CCF partner Brown & Brown Insurance as part of their annual teammate giving initiative. The names reflect two of the company's core competencies: *Be Gritty and Be the Link*.

As Brown & Brown describe it, "The cheetah embodies our company culture and has served as a symbol for Brown & Brown since the 1980s." That inspiration has grown into a lasting partnership with Cheetah Conservation Fund.

Through the **Teammate Giving Program**, Brown & Brown matches employee donations up to **\$15,000 annually**, turning individual contributions into meaningful support for cheetah care and conservation.

This year, the company sponsored two cubs rescued from a recent confiscation in Somaliland. The effort was organized and led by **Communications Specialist Kelis Patel**, whose energy helped rally teammates around the campaign. When she first saw photos of the cubs, her response captured the mood perfectly: "They are all so cute!"

By connecting Brown & Brown's culture to conservation, the company has made this sponsorship drive a highlight of the company's giving program.



CONSERVATION – SOMALILAND

BUILDING A HOLISTIC MODEL FROM THE GROUND UP

The Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre (CRCC) is becoming more than a safe haven for confiscated cubs. It is part of a growing conservation model that combines animal care, sustainable land management, and education to create lasting change in the Horn of Africa.

This year, staff and local workers cleared invasive Prosopis and Prickly Pear from nearly 20 hectares around the centre. These plants, spread by heavy rains, choke out native grasses and reduce space for wildlife. Their removal has begun to restore open savannah, improving grazing conditions and creating habitat where cheetahs could one day be released. Alongside this work, a new solar power system now runs the centre fully off-grid, reducing reliance on diesel and cutting operational costs. Together, these efforts show how conservation here is being designed to protect both wildlife and ecosystems into the future.

The next major milestone will be the completion of CCF's Education Centre Complex, supported by the Royal Commission for AlUla. Once open, the facility will host rangers, students, and community leaders, building local capacity and spreading awareness of the threats facing cheetahs. The goal is not only to care for cubs already rescued, but to prevent cheetahs from being taken in the first place.

This shift reflects a broader movement across the region. In Muslim countries, where demand for cheetahs as pets has historically fueled trafficking, governments are now strengthening laws and increasing enforcement. Awareness campaigns are helping reshape attitudes, and prosecutions are sending a clear signal that wildlife trade will not be tolerated. As Somaliland authorities affirmed at a press conference after a recent confiscation, "Wild animals have their own dignity, as granted by God, and should be protected."

The ten cubs rescued in August, along with the more than 100 now in care, are immediate beneficiaries of these combined efforts. But their survival also stands as proof that determined action by government, communities, and conservation partners can turn the tide against trafficking. Through land restoration, education, and growing regional support, Somaliland is laying the foundation for a future where cheetahs remain in the wild, protected by the people who share their landscape.



FROM CCF EAST: A FAMILY RETURNS TO THE WILD

In early 2025, CCF East assisted the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) in rescuing a female cheetah and her two young cubs from illegal captivity. After a period of care and evaluation, the mother was fitted with an Early Warning System (EWS) collar to allow monitoring of her movements and to help reduce conflict with local farmers.

The trio was released at Elandsvreugde, where open landscapes and careful monitoring provide the best chance for survival. This effort highlights not only the importance of enforcement against illegal captivity, but also the tools and partnerships that make reintroduction possible.

For CCF, the release is part of a broader commitment: ensuring that cheetahs live freely in the landscapes of Namibia, supported by both science and community cooperation.



Photos: This page: top: Ministry officials confiscate cheetah cubs in Somaliland **bottom:** Cheetah being released by CCF East staff **Opposite page:** Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre (CRCC)



TRAINING TOMORROW'S CONSERVATION LEADERS

Education has been a cornerstone of CCF since the beginning, and in 2025 it continues to expand through both classroom outreach and teacher training. Through the Future Conservationists of Africa (FCA) program, CCF reached 3,498 learners at 12 schools and provided training for 84 teachers between January and June. Lessons covered predator ecology, rangeland management, and strategies for coexistence, giving young people the tools to understand and protect the landscapes they call home.

A central part of this work is the International Environmental Education Program (IEEP), which strengthens conservation education by training the trainers. By giving teachers the tools and curricula they need, IEEP multiplies CCF's reach well beyond the classrooms we visit directly. Every trained educator carries conservation into their community year after year, creating long-term change. This approach aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4.7, which calls for quality education that fosters knowledge and skills for sustainable development.

CCF's headquarters also functions as a living classroom. Students and interns learn through hands-on work in livestock care, bush thinning, and wildlife monitoring. These opportunities are offered in cooperation with the University of Namibia (UNAM) and the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), ensuring that higher education is closely linked with practical conservation science.

The investment in education today is building the conservation leaders of tomorrow. Former students may go on to become teachers themselves, researchers contributing to the science of coexistence, or conservationists working in the field to protect Namibia's wildlife. Each student we reach has the potential to carry forward the mission of conservation, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond CCF's classrooms and Model Farm.

Photo: this page: Students learning about hydroponic gardening at CCF's greenhouse
Opposite page: Scat detection dog team at a study site

CCF RESEARCHER EARNS PHD ON PREDATOR MONITORING

Since 2018, Tim Hofmann has led CCF's scat detection dog program in Namibia, training and working with dogs to track the presence of elusive predators. What began with his Master's thesis has now grown into his PhD research at the University of Goettingen, Faculty of Forest Sciences and Forest Ecology, where he recently defended his dissertation in Wildlife Sciences. His work focuses on how detection dogs can transform monitoring of wide-ranging, low-density species like cheetahs and African wild dogs.

Scat detection offers a non-invasive way to understand wildlife. Samples collected in the field provide genetic information about individual animals, their sex, relatedness, and diet. This last piece is especially important in addressing human-wildlife conflict, as it confirms whether cheetahs or wild dogs are preying on livestock or hunting wild prey. These insights give farmers confidence and reduce pressure to retaliate against predators



Tim's PhD advances conservation science in Africa by showing how detection dogs can be deployed effectively in landscapes where traditional monitoring is difficult. His work has already broken new ground by identifying wild dog "latrine sites" that multiple packs use, a discovery that improves survey methods and provides critical data for population monitoring.

The project also strengthens future capacity. Students, interns, and rangers have joined Tim in the field, learning skills in dog handling, genetics, and wildlife monitoring. This knowledge transfer ensures that the benefits of his research extend far beyond one PhD, embedding new methods in Namibia's conservation practice.

Tim describes his work as "mankind's best friend working to save another species." By combining science, fieldwork, and the bond between people and dogs, his research is advancing both conservation methods and public awareness, ensuring that big cats and wild dogs have a better chance to survive in the landscapes they share with people. This year, his findings have been published in four papers across four journals, contributing to the global scientific community and reinforcing CCF's role as a leader in evidence-based conservation.



STORIES FEATURING THE WORK OF CCF'S YOUNG SUPPORTERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD.



When her 4th-grade class studied endangered animals, **Faye** chose to present on cheetahs. She donated her own money to CCF and inspired her parents to make a matching gift through work. "It made me happy to make a difference," she said, "and I hope other kids know they can too."



Simon is 7 years old from Grand Rapids, MI. He loves cheetahs and wants to help conserve them in the wild. He gives his candy money to CCF to help his favorite animal!



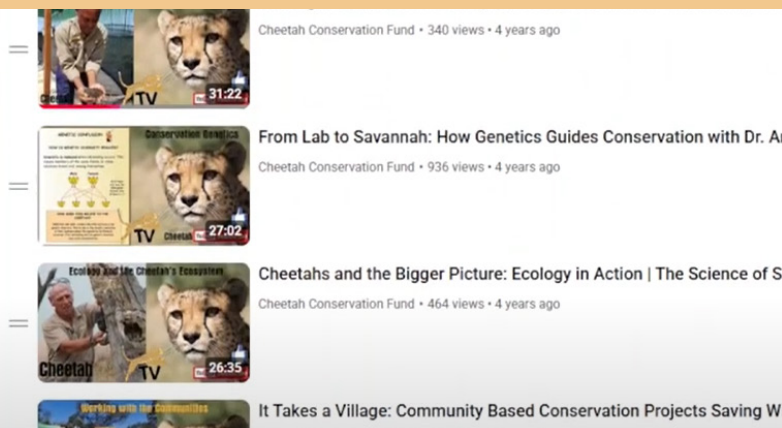
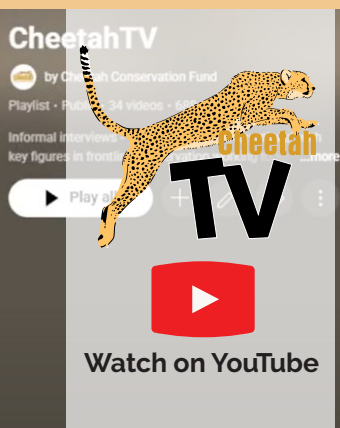
Mia joined the Cheetah Fit Challenge twice, raising over \$1,200, and added yard sales and birthday gifts to her efforts, more than \$500 this year alone. Her love of animals, especially cheetahs, has taken her from the Bronx Zoo to animal parks across the country. "I just want to help cheetahs wherever I can," she said.



Three friends - **Norah**, **Anzhou** and **Jojo** - ran a Lemonade Day stand and chose to donate part of their profits to CCF. Their teamwork turned a simple summer tradition into support for cheetahs.

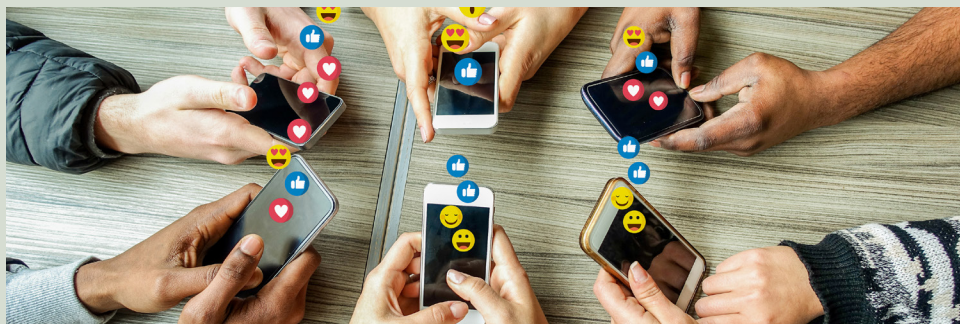
Do you have a story about a young supporter that you would like to share? Send us an email including a short description and some photos and we will include it in an upcoming issue of *Cheetah Strides* or on our website!

Email: info@cheetah.org



Watch new episodes of CheetahTV premiering every other Wednesday at 1:00pm ET. Subscribe @CCFCheetah and click the bell on YouTube to catch every premiere.

Cheetah Strides TikTok Challenge



Join the Wild Cheetah Challenge!

To celebrate International Cheetah Day, we're inviting you to take part in our *Wild Cheetah Challenge*, a fun way to show your love for cheetahs and help raise awareness for their conservation!

How to Join:

1. **Create a TikTok** showing why you're wild about cheetahs!
2. **Tag @ccfcheetah** and use the hashtag #WildCheetahChallenge so we can see and share your video.
3. **Spread the word** and encourage your friends to take the challenge too!

In the lead-up to International Cheetah Day (December 4), CCF will feature favorite videos and share stories about wild cheetahs, coexistence, and rewilding efforts across Africa.

Top videos will be spotlighted on CCF's official social media pages and help inspire more people to protect cheetahs in the wild.

Are you ready to go wild for cheetahs?



PO Box 2496
Alexandria, VA. 22301



EDUCATION PARTNERS AROUND THE WORLD

CCF works closely with education partners and interns from universities to share knowledge and build conservation skills. cheetah.org/about/what-we-do/education/