

## Introduction



The treeless East African savanna shimmers in the summer heat. A herd of Thomson's gazelles, a type of antelope, nibbles quietly on the dry grass. There are few trees or rocks to hide the Tommies from predators. Instead, the antelopes are protected by the large number of animals in the herd. If danger threatens, one of the gazelles is sure to spot it in time for the whole herd to run away. Healthy adult antelopes can outrun most predators.

But crouched in the long grass near the herd is one hunter the Tommies cannot outrun—a cheetah. Its spotted yellow coat helps it blend into the grass as it creeps

## 内容介绍



树木稀少的东非大草原在炎炎夏日中蒸腾着。一群汤姆森瞪羚（羚羊的一种）安静地啃食着地上的干草。草原上几乎没有树木或岩石供这些汤姆森瞪羚躲避食肉动物。然而，羚羊是用羊群的巨大数量来保护自己的。如果危险降临，必定有一只瞪羚会及时发现危险，整个一群羚羊就会逃跑。健康的成年羚羊能够逃脱大多数食肉动物的追赶。

但是在离羊群不远的草丛中，蜷伏着一个让汤姆森瞪羚无法逃脱其魔掌的猎手——猎豹。猎豹慢慢潜近这群正在吃草的动物，带有斑点的黄色

closer to the grazing animals. Suddenly the cheetah stands up, startling the gazelles. The frightened herd begins to run. With stunning speed, the cheetah runs down the antelope it has chosen as its prey. The cheetah bites the young gazelle's throat to strangle it. The rest of the herd stops in the distance and begins to graze again under the hot sun.

The cheetah is the world's fastest land mammal. But speed does not guarantee survival. In fact, the cheetah's biology and way of life make it difficult for the cheetah to survive. Many male cheetahs are infertile—unable to father cubs. Only 5 percent of cheetah cubs live to become adults. The remainder die from disease, starvation, or attacks by other predators, such as lions. The swift cats have been victims of humans, too. They have been hunted for their fur and destroyed as threats to livestock. Their

皮毛使它与周围的野草融为一体。突然，猎豹站起身来，瞪羚惊恐万状。这群受到惊吓的羚羊开始逃命。猎豹以电掣雷鸣般的速度扑倒了它已经选定的猎物。猎豹咬住一只小瞪羚的喉咙，使其窒息而死。其余的瞪羚在远处停下来，在炽热的太阳下继续吃开了草。

猎豹是世界上跑得最快的陆地哺乳动物。然而，速度并不能保证生存。事实上，猎豹的生态和生活方式使其难以继续生存下去。许多雄性猎豹没有生育能力——无法做父亲。只有 5% 的猎豹幼崽能够长大成年。其余的都死于疾病、饥饿或其他食肉动物（例如狮子）的攻击。这种敏捷的猫科动物还是人类的受害者。人类为了豹皮而捕杀猎豹，猎豹还被当作家畜的威胁而遭捕杀。它们的狩猎场被农民

hunting grounds have been fenced in by farmers and cattle ranchers. Where cheetahs cannot run free, they cannot survive. In much of their range, cheetahs have lost the race against extinction and have disappeared. Cheetahs are considered an endangered species.

Although humans have contributed to the cheetah's disappearance, human beings are making an effort to see that cheetahs do not die out altogether. In some areas, cheetahs are protected by law. Zoos and animal parks Europe, Africa, and the United States are breeding and raising the cats. Scientists are studying them to learn more about their behavior. The more we know about cheetahs, the better we can help the cheetahs that still run free.

和牛仔们圈走，在不能自由奔跑的地方，猎豹就无法生存。在它们的大多数领地里，猎豹输掉了与灭绝的竞争，已经消失了。猎豹已被列为濒临灭绝的动物。

虽然人类对猎豹的消失负有责任，但人类正在努力使猎豹不致彻底灭绝。一些地方，猎豹已经受到法律的保护。在欧洲、非洲和美国的动物园和野生动物园正在繁殖和哺育这种猫科动物。科学家正在研究它们，以便更多地了解它们的习性。我们对猎豹了解得越多，就越能更好地帮助那些至今还在野外自由生活着的猎豹。

## Living on the Edge of Extinction



The cheetah is considered an endangered animal. “Endangered” animals are in immediate risk of becoming extinct. They could die out within a very short time – five to ten years – if humans do not take steps to protect them.

Animals can become endangered as the result of hunting or disease. They can become endangered when their habitat is reduced or destroyed. Often, animals become endangered because of human activities. But animals can become extinct due to natural changes in the environment, too. For example, warming temperatures at the end of the last ice age (about 10,000 years ago) may have caused the extinction of animals such as the woolly mammoth.

Sometimes animals are described as “threatened”. This means that they are not in immediate danger of extinction, but the animals or their habitats are under pressure – usually from humans. Threatened animals may become endangered if

## 挣扎在灭绝的边缘



猎豹被认为是濒危动物。“濒危”动物处于即时灭绝的危险之中。如果人类不采取措施保护的话，它们可能会在很短的时间——5 到 10 年内死光。

动物会因为被猎杀和患疾病而变得濒危；当动物的栖息地减少或被破坏时，它们会变得濒危；另外，动物还会因为人类的行为而变得濒危。但是，动物也会因为环境的自然变化而灭绝。例如，在最后一个冰川季里（大约在 10 000 年前），不断变暖的气候可能导致了例如猛犸一些动物的灭绝。

有时，一些动物被列为“受到威胁”（threatened）。这意味着它们并没有立即灭绝的危险，但是这些动物或它们的栖息地正处于压力之中——通常是由人类引起的。如果人类不控制对这些

humans do not control trade in those animals or protect their habitats.

It is necessary to have international agreement about the protection of animals. Migrating animals, such as caribou, songbirds, and wildebeest, may move from country to country. Other animals, such as seals and whales, live in oceans used by all countries.

In 1973, representatives of 80 countries signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). By the mid – 1990s, more than 120 countries had signed the treaty. These countries agreed to follow the CITES guidelines, which are put out in a publication called the *Red Data Book*.

The *Red Data Book* includes three appendices, each of which lists a particular category of animals. Endangered animals are listed in Appendix I. All trade in these animals, or products made from parts of these animals (such as skins and horns), is prohibited. Appendix II lists animals that may be hunted or exported if the hunter or exporter has a government permit. Appendix

动物的贸易或保护它们的栖息地，“受到威胁”的动物就会变成濒危动物。

在保护动物方面达成国际协定是十分必要的。迁徙动物，例如驯鹿、鸣禽和羚羊，会从一个国家迁徙到另一个国家。其他一些动物，例如海豹和鲸鱼，生活在所有国家都使用的海洋中。

1973年，80个国家的代表签署了《关于濒危野生动植物国际贸易协定》(CITES)。到90年代中期已有120多个国家签署了该协定。这些国家同意遵循CITES的原则，这些原则也被写进一本叫做《红色资料》的出版刊物里。

《红色资料》包含三个附录，每一个都列出了一种特定的动物种类。濒危动物被列在该书的附录Ⅰ上，所有有关这些动物的贸易，或者由这些动物的身体部分（例如皮或角）生产的产品都被禁止。附录Ⅱ列出的动物在猎手或出口商持有政府许可证的情况下可以被捕猎或出口。附录Ⅲ限制从

III restricts international trade in individuals of some species coming from certain countries. The animals listed here are rare in these particular countries, although they may not be rare somewhere else.

The CITES treaty cannot guarantee protection of endangered animals. The governments of the countries have to do that themselves. Not all countries have signed the CITES agreement. And even those countries who have signed it do not always abide by its rules.

Sometimes a government thinks that protecting particular animals will hurt its economy. Perhaps its people earn money taking hunters out to find animals such as cheetahs. The government may be afraid that the protected animals will attack livestock or destroy crops. It may cost too much to set up and protect animal preserves. And sometimes the government does not consider the animals to be endangered in its country. It sees no reason to protect them.

某些国家出口的特定种类动物的国际贸易。此处列出的这些动物在这些特定的国家里比较稀少，虽然它们在别处并不一定罕见。

CITES 协定并不能够保证对濒危动物的保护。这些国家的政府必须自己来行动。不是所有的国家都签署了 CITES 协定，而且即便是那些签署协定的国家也并不总是能够遵守其规定。

有时一个政府认为保护某种动物会损害其经济。也许，那里的人靠猎手去寻找像猎豹这样的动物来挣钱。某个政府也可能担心被保护的动物会攻击牧群或损坏庄稼。而且，建立动物保护区耗资巨大。有时，某个政府并不认为在他的国家里这些动物是濒危动物，似乎没有必要保护它们。

## 1. A Most Unusual Cat



Suppose someone told you about a large cat that was unable to roar, had claws that were blunt like a dog's, could not climb trees well, was very timid, chirped like a bird, and could run as fast as a speeding car. What would you say? You would say it was a cheetah.

The first cheetahs probably evolved in Asia, but fossils show that many different kinds of cheetahs once lived all over the world. Between two and four million years ago, for example, a species of cat called *Acinonyx pardinensis* lived in Europe. These giant cheetahs may have weighed as much as 200 pounds, which is twice as much as modern cheetahs

## 1. 最不寻常的猫



设想一下，如果有人告诉你有一只大猫，它不会吼叫，爪子像狗一样的钝，也不会爬树，而且很胆小，叫声像只鸟，跑起来像赛车一样快。你会说什么？你会说这是只猎豹。

猎豹最初很可能是起源于亚洲，但是化石显示出许多不同种类的猎豹曾经生活在世界各地。例如，在两百万到四百万年前，一种叫做 *Acinonyx pardinensis* 的猫科动物生活在欧洲。这些大型猎豹体重在 200 磅（1 磅 = 0.45 千克）左右，是现在猎豹体重的

weigh. In the mid – Pleistocene epoch (about a million years ago), a smaller cheetah species called *Acinonyx intermedius* roamed from China through India and the Middle East into southern Europe. *Acinonyx trumani* and *Acinonyx studei*, species that were about the size of the modern cheetah, lived in North America. About 20,000 years ago, during the last ice age, all species of cheetahs died out except for *Acinonyx jubatus*, the common cheetah.

In modern times, cheetahs are found primarily in central and southern Africa, in the countries of Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya, and South Africa. Researchers have reported that there are some cheetahs left in Iran. Cheetahs live on open plains, such as grasslands or deserts, where they have plenty of room to stretch their legs. They need to be fast because they usually

两倍。在中更新世时代（大约一百万年前），一种叫做 *Acinonyx intermedius* 的小猎豹从中国穿过印度和中东进入南欧。*Acinonyx trumani* 和 *Acinonyx studei* 猎豹体形大小与现在的猎豹差不多，它们生活在南美洲。大约两万年前，在最后一个冰川季，除了 *Acinonyx jubatus*（一种普通猎豹）以外，其他所有种类的猎豹都灭绝了。

现在，猎豹主要出没于中部和南部非洲的纳米比亚、博茨瓦纳、赞比亚、津巴布韦、坦桑尼亚、肯尼亚和南非等地。研究人员称在伊朗残存有一些猎豹。猎豹生活在开阔的平原上，例如草原和沙漠，这里有足够的空间供它们舒展自己的腿脚。它们需要速度，因为它们通常捕猎生活在亚洲和

hunt antelopes, fastrunning animals that live throughout Asia and Africa.

The cheetah is unique among cats, whether they are large or small, domestic or wild. Most cats are solitary. They live alone except when it is time to mate. Lions, which live in groups called prides, are truly social cats. Only cheetahs are both solitary and social. Some cheetahs live alone, while others live in small groups. Most large cats are nocturnal, which means they are active at night. Only cheetahs are primarily diurnal, or active during the day. Most large cats stalk their prey and pounce on it after a short run. Only cheetahs run their prey down over an extended distance. All cats except the cheetah have fully retractile claws. When relaxed, the claws slide back into claw sheaths. This helps to