

Servaline Cat—Kleingevlekte Bostierkat*Leptailurus ogilbyi* Schinz¹

LEPTAILURUS OGILBYI LARSENI.

Felis servalina larseni Thomas, 1913, Ann. Mag. N.H. (8), XII, p. 91.

Type (in the British Museum) from near Bembe, Congo Dist. of North Angola.

NATIVE NAME:Sikololo: *Nzuzi* (Lancaster—a small species of Serval).

DISTRIBUTION.—The tropical-forest regions of West and Central Africa

Recorded from Northern Rhodesia (Bangweolo), N.E. Angola, the Belgian Congo, Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Senegal.

The flat skin of a servaline cat, sent to the British Museum some years ago from Northern Rhodesia, was said at the time to have come from somewhere within the Victoria Falls Region—'possibly' not many miles (across the Zambesi) from the eastern end of the Caprivi. This skin is here referred to *L. o. larseni*, the most southern of the described races of *L. ogilbyi*.

"A servaline cat lived in the London Zoo for a little over 8½ years."—Flower.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES.—Owing to the occurrence of apparently intermediate forms where the two occur, it is suspected that *L. ogilbyi* may be a localised mutation of *L. serval*, with a range restricted to the forests of Central Africa.

"The two have been stated to occur in the same litter."—Pocock.

The Hunting Leopard or Cheetah*Acinonyx**Acinonyx* Brookes, 1828, Cat. Anat. & Zool. Mus. Joshua Brookes, p. 16; genotype *A. venaticus* Smith, 1837, Griffith's Cuvier, vol. 5, p. 166. The Indian Cheetah.**Hunting Leopard or Cheetah—Luiperd, Jagluiperd***Acinonyx jubatus* Erxleben

ACINONYX JUBATUS JUBATUS.

Felis jubata Erxleben, 1777, Syst. Reg. Anim., p. 510.

Type (not in existence) from the Cape of Good Hope.

NATIVE NAMES:

PERSONALLY COLLECTED

Herero: *Oshitóna*, *Oshitotóngwi* (*Oslulolóngwi*).Ovambo: *Eshinga*. Bechuana: *Lēngau* (*Lingau*), *Linghao*.Mambakushu: *Deshúmbwa*. Ovadirico: *Deshúmbu*.Ovacuangari: *Ahúmbu*.Berg Damara, Nama Hottentot: *!Arub*.Hei||kum Bushman: *!Aru*. ||K'au||en & !Kung Bushmen: *!Gaob*.Naron Bushman: */Noeb*.

¹ Mr. Pocock tells me he thinks *servalina* is merely a mutant form of *serval*. *Felis ogilbyi* Schinz, 1844, Synop. Mamm., I, p. 469 (= *Felis servalina* Ogilby, 1839, P.Z.S., p. 94—name preoccupied): from Sierra Leone.

OTHER SOURCES

Bechuana: *Lēnau* (Kirby); *Nki* or *Nkwani* (Smith).

Sikololo: *Lingau* (Lancaster).

Tonga: *Lēngau* (or *Massagessa* ?) (Lancaster).

Chinkoya: *Lumpumbwa* (Lancaster). Chila: *Malama* (Lancaster).

Chilavale: *Lisumbu* (Lancaster). Kaonde: *Mpumpunta* (Lancaster).

||K'au||en Bushman: *K'au* (Bleek).¹

!Kung Bushman: *Kauo* (Zukowsky). /Auni Bushman: ||*Kóü* (Bleek).

Masarwa (Kakia) Bushman: ||*Kwi* (Bleek).

||N!ke Bushman: ||*Kwe*: (Bleek). /Kam-ka!ke Bushman: /*Kwanxu* (Bleek).

!O!kung Bushman (Central Angola): ||?*Halu* (Bleek).²

DISTRIBUTION IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.—The Cheetah has a widely scattered range through South-West Africa and is considered to be quite plentiful in the eastern sand-veld regions. It appears to be somewhat scarce in the Kaokoveld where a single individual was observed close to Kaoko-Otavi. Steinhardt never met with cheetah in the Kaokoveld, although he saw skins in the possession of natives and also observed the spoor.

In Ovamboland cheetah skins were seen in native villages on one or two occasions. Cheetah are not uncommon in the Namutoni Game Reserve. In Grootfontein District they are well-known to the !Kung Bushmen around Karakuwisa. They have been recorded by Wilhelm from various parts of the Omaheke (Okahumba, Otjomikambo, Neitsas, and the Okavango).

I did not hear of their occurrence in the coastal desert strip, and they are apparently scarce in the neighbourhood of the Orange River, the western and south-western parts of Great Namaqualand, and the highlands of western Damaraland. Farther east, in Gobabis District and elsewhere in the sand-plain country adjoining Bechuanaland, cheetah increase in number, and in some localities are considered to be as numerous as ordinary leopard. Considerable numbers of cheetah skins are brought into Windhoek and Keetmanshoep annually by natives from the eastern portions of South-West Africa and Bechuanaland.

Cheetah are sparsely distributed through the Caprivi; Wilhelm records them from the Hukweveld.

"They are found rarely in the Serengveld."—Wilhelm.

They also occur in small numbers in Southern and South-Eastern Angola.

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.—In Southern Africa the Cheetah has almost if not completely disappeared from the Cape Province, the Orange Free State, Natal, and the Southern Transvaal, but may still be met with in some of the more sparsely populated districts of the Northern Transvaal, Zululand, Swaziland, and probably the inland portions of Portuguese East Africa. It is widely distributed in Bechuanaland and still comparatively plentiful in the central and northern portions of that territory.

¹ Miss Bleek gives this name for the Ordinary Leopard (*P. pardus*), but I think it should refer to *Acinonyx*.

² ? denotes a glottal stop.

"Cheetah are sparsely distributed throughout Southern Rhodesia; they are fairly numerous in Lomagundi District."—Fleming (1931).

North of the Zambesi, cheetah occur sparsely through the greater part of Northern Rhodesia.

"Widely distributed in Northern Rhodesia; recorded from most districts though absent from the greater part of the Luangwa Valley and regions of unbroken woodland."—Pitman.

According to Lyell, they are extremely rare in Nyasaland.

They extend in a north-easterly direction through Tanganyika Territory, Kenya Colony, Uganda, Somaliland, Abyssinia, and along the Nile Valley to at least as far north (to-day) as Kordofan, and west as far as Lake Chad and Northern Nigeria.

Beyond Africa, the Cheetah inhabits much the same geographical area as the Caracal, ranging through Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and India (west of the Bay of Bengal).

HISTORICAL.—Unlike the Leopard, and doubtless owing to its diurnal and open country habits, the Cheetah is retreating rapidly before settlement in Southern Africa, and it is doubtful if there are any to be found to-day south of the Vaal River.

According to W. Sclater (1901), cheetah still occurred sparingly in the western and midland districts of the Cape and in the Drakensberg Range in Natal. He refers specimens in the South African Museum to Beaufort West, Natal, and the Lydenburg District of the Transvaal.

"Cheetahs became extinct in the Albany District about the year 1888, when two were killed by Bowden. Within the last thirty years, a few have been killed in the open country of the Middelburg, Cradock, and Colesberg Districts."—Hewitt.

HABITS.—In South-West Africa the Cheetah may sometimes be met with on stony ridges as well as in the sand-veld, and also, more sparingly, in country clothed with comparatively dense bush, or, in the Grootfontein and Etosha Pan Regions, with fairly thick 'dry' forest.

Cheetah are partly diurnal, often hunting—even during the hot season—in the early morning and late afternoon, as well as on moonlight nights; in cool or cloudy weather they may be observed on the move at any hour of the day. Owing to their extreme shyness and wariness, cheetah, even where comparatively numerous, are not very often seen, notwithstanding their semi-diurnal habit. I have known them, when put up in the open, make off straight across country, holding their heads high and galloping, trusting to speed like wild dogs rather than to seeking cover in any adjacent thickets. They lie up, however, in clumps of bush or belts of high grass.

"They make their lairs among rocks or in grass jungle."—Kirby.

"Though more strictly monogamous than lions, cheetahs are fairly sociable, generally hunting in twos or threes—while parties of from four to five have been recorded."—S. Hamilton.

A cheetah occasionally takes to a tree when pressed by dogs.

Before the claws have become worn and blunted, the young are said to be quite expert climbers, like lion cubs.

One of the outstanding characteristics of a cheetah is its timidity so far as man is concerned. Its size approximates to that of a leopard, and the two animals prey upon equally powerful game; yet there are very few recorded cases of cheetah attacking human beings or taking the offensive, even when wounded or in defence of their cubs. This is well known to natives who treat them with nothing of the caution observed when dealing with leopard. Roosevelt mentions an instance of a cheetah making a determined charge. Steinhardt also records having been himself attacked in South-West Africa by a pair of cheetah, but he believed the charge to have been unpremeditated and caused by panic.

If approached when wounded or trapped a cheetah snarls and strikes out with its claws like a leopard, but does so half-heartedly and puts up a poor fight for an animal of its size. I have seen a large dog dispatch a cheetah with some ease: probably more so than if its opponent had been a full-grown caracal or a ratel.

When stalking antelope cheetah seldom attempt to run them down without first making use of every available bush or mound in order to approach unseen as close as possible: after which, if unsuccessful in the first rush, they do not prolong the chase, but reserve energy for the next opportunity.

"The Cheetah kills its game in fair chase, for it is perhaps the fastest animal on earth for a quarter of a mile, or perhaps half a mile. It stalks up to within a hundred yards or so, and then gallops into the fleeing quarry; but it is winded in a long run."—Roosevelt and Heller.

Cheetah prey mostly upon medium-sized antelope, from steinbok and duiker up to the size of impala, springbok, reedbuck, and even cow kudu. There are recorded instances of such powerful game as the bulls of sassaby, kudu, and waterbuck having been brought down.

"In the Kruger National Park, 1932, cheetah concentrated chiefly on impala and waterbuck."—S. Hamilton.

When opportunity offers they kill sheep, goats, and ostriches, which last are driven into wire fences and cornered. Cheetah are generally credited to be less persistently destructive of stock than leopard, but allowance must be made for the fact that the former retreat more rapidly before European settlement. Cheetah are said invariably to kill by strangulation, and seldom to relax their first grip on the throat until the animal is dead. Instances of cannibalism are on record. Owing to their distaste for carrion, cheetah are less readily trapped than leopard. They rarely return a second time to their kills, and, according to Stevenson-Hamilton, cannot be depended upon doing so even once: on account of their killing more frequently, he believes them to be more destructive of game than leopard. Lion, tiger, and leopard, where undisturbed, may return to a kill night after night, however decomposed the carcass may become.

Cheetah appear to be rather silent; their cry has been described as a hoarse 'cough,' somewhat resembling that of a leopard; this I think is very doubtful. In a trap they growl and snarl like others of the cat family.

"The Cheetah seldom uses its voice by night."—Bryden.

"They utter a very peculiar bird-like chirp."—Roosevelt and Heller.

"The usual sound made by the adult is a kind of mewing, rather similar to that of a domestic cat on a very large scale. Tame animals when pleased keep up an incessant loud rumbling purr. The newly-born cubs utter a bird-like chirp, sometimes followed by a purring noise, and when annoyed spit like domestic cats—the chirp altering to the adult mew after about three months."—Stevenson-Hamilton.

Cheetah spoor may be distinguished from the larger spoor of leopard by the more elongated slots in which the claws are sometimes indicated—particularly in the hind which are much larger than the fore-feet.

The curiously tractable nature of a Cheetah is well known. In Northern India and Persia, where they are sometimes trained to hunt Blackbuck and Chinkara, it is said to be essential to capture adult animals for this purpose, since the cubs do not develop the required skill unless first taught by their parents. They resemble dogs to some extent, yet always retaining a large amount of the aloofness of the Cat Tribe.

"A cheetah lived in the Giza Zoo for 15 years, 7½ months."—Flower.

BREEDING HABITS.—"In the Eastern Transvaal the young are born during the last half of the year, although very young animals have been recorded in August and September. Usual number in a litter from two to four."—S. Hamilton.

Wilhelm records two young cheetah captured in a burrow by Bushmen near Neitsas (Grootfontein Dist., S.W. Africa) in February or March, these he estimated must have been born in December or January. He remarked upon the peculiar bird-like whistling sounds made by these animals, and mentioned having often heard the same sounds produced by the adults in the Omaheke and the Kaukauveld.

Period of gestation, 90 days, approx. (Wilhelm).

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES.—"The female is slightly smaller than the male, the sexual discrepancy in size being much less than in the true cats."—Roosevelt and Heller.

Iris, bright amber-brown; pupil, round.

In immature individuals the front claws may be almost as sharp as those of leopard, though less incurved.

The cubs, which are born blind, have a coat of long and uniformly grey hair, but, on turning the hair back, more or less distinct traces of spots are noticeable on the shorter underfur.

"They are covered on their upper parts with long blue-grey silky hair, while the sides, tail, belly and legs are coated with tawny fur thickly pitted with dark solid spots. Eyes, brown. After three months the pronounced greyness of the back had begun to disappear, and the spotting had become general all over the bodies; the fur throughout, however, was much longer than in adult animals."—Stevenson-Hamilton.

"The mane is conspicuous at birth."—Pitman.

Pocock (P.Z.S., Pt. 3, pp. 814-816, 1932), describes the skin of a young cheetah from Mwumba, Northern Rhodesia (collected by Pitman) as follows:

"The whole of the dorsal surface from the head to the root of the tail is covered with a continuous mat of long hairs, widest in the middle of the back, gradually narrowing over the loins towards the tail, but still narrower over the shoulders, where it is only about half the width that it is on the back. Its colour is mostly a dirty-whitish grey, faintly streaked with dusky, darker grey. The rest of the skin is clothed with comparatively short hairs, and is profusely spotted with black, but the general effect is mostly dark grey, passing into whitish on the underside, the characteristic yellowish tawny hue of the adult cheetah being present only on the face, the fore limbs, and the hind limbs below the hocks; the tail is mainly black. The backs of the ears are black, the black streak from the eye to the mouth is manifest, and there are a few small spots on the cheeks. The skin shows that the mat is really spotted like the rest of the body of the cub, and like the dorsal area of the adults, except that the extreme tips of the black hairs composing the spots are pale and unpigmented like the entire hairs of the areas surrounding the spots. The result is that when the hairs of the mat are undisturbed they form a practically continuous grey field. The striped appearance depicted by Gray can only be reproduced by disarranging the hairs of the mat so as to display the black spots which, consisting of tufts of long black hairs, superficially resemble short narrow stripes. The skin of a rather older cheetah from S.W. Africa (collected by Shortridge) shows the mane moulted all over the back, but retained on the shoulders and nape to constitute the so-called 'mane' of the Cheetah which is always present in varying degrees of development in the adult animal. Apparently the youngest cheetah cub ever recorded was described by Jerdon (Mamm. of India, p. 114, 1867). It was only a few days old, and was clothed with long 'greenish fawn' hairs and was unspotted. Sterndale, however, who had a similar cub, detected spots by clipping the hair."

COLOUR VARIATION.—Two examples of incipient albinism—both from Beaufort West—have been recorded (*cf.* P. L. Sclater, P.Z.S., 1877, p. 532—*Felis lanea*).

I believe the so-called Striped Cheetah (*Acinonyx rex* Pocock, 1927, P.Z.S., pp. 245-252, pl.), which has so far been recorded only from Southern Rhodesia, to be a mutation of the ordinary species developed locally; and suspect it of being comparable with the presumed leopard mutation from Grahamstown. Striped Cheetah have been obtained from Mount Salinda and the Umvukwe Range N.W. of Salisbury.

"Striped Cheetah have been recorded from Ndanga and Nuanetsi districts."—Fleming.

"There are no records of *Acinonyx rex* from north of the Zambesi."—Pitman.

Weight 136½ lb. (Bellis—from N.W. Rhodesia). 90 lb. (Rendall).

Shoulder height: 2 ft. 8 in. to 2 ft. 10 in.

2 ft. 11½ in. (Kirby—of a large specimen); 2 ft. 6 in. to 3 ft. (Ward); 2 ft. 5 in. to 2 ft. 7 in. (Lydekker).

DIMENSIONS.—Total length (before skinning) of the three largest specimens recorded by Rowland Ward:

(1) 7 ft. 9 in. (Meinertzhagen—Kenya Colony).

(2) 7 ft. 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (Bellis—N.W. Rhodesia).

(3) 7 ft. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (Scott—N.W. Rhodesia).

(Of a female): 6 ft. 3 in. (Beavan—Kenya Colony).

The following are the dimensions of a specimen from the Eastern Transvaal recorded by Vaughan-Kirby:

Total length (straight) 6 ft. 8 in.; (over all) 7 ft. 7 in.; tail 2 ft. 9 in.

Kirby estimates the average length of a male cheetah (over all) to be about 7 ft., of which the tail would be about 2 ft. 7 in.

Family VIVERRIDAE

The Civets

Civettictis

Civettictis Pocock, 1915, P.Z.S., I, p. 134; genotype *C. civetta* Schreber, 1777, Säugth., III, p. 418. The African Civet from Guinea.

African Civet—Muskejaatkat, Siverkat

Civettictis civetta Schreber

CIVETTICTIS CIVETTA CIVETTA.

Viverra civetta Schreber, 1777, Säugth., III, pp. 418-587.

Type (not in existence ?) from Guinea.

CIVETTICTIS CIVETTA SCHWARZI.¹

Civettictis civetta schwarzi Cabrera, 1929, Mem. R. Soc. Esp. Hist. Nat., XVI, No. 1a, p. 36.

Type (in the Berlin Museum) from Zanzibar.

NATIVE NAMES:

Sikololo: *Lifungwe*, *Linyangongo* (Lancaster).

Chinkoya: *Lifungwe* (Lancaster).

Chila: *Ifungo* (Lancaster). Tonga: *Fungwe* (Lancaster).

Chilavale: *Luwakuti* (Lancaster).

Kaonde: *Katumpa* (Lancaster).

DISTRIBUTION IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.—In South-West Africa the Civet is apparently confined to the eastern Caprivi (near the Chobe and Zambesi

¹ = *Viverra civetta orientalis* Matschie (nec. Gray) 1891, Arch. f. Naturg., Bd. I, pp. 352-353; Type (in the Berlin Museum) from Zanzibar (Island) or Bagamoyo (adjacent coast); *orientalis* was given by Gray in 1847 to a civet from Nepal.

Civettictis c. matschiei Pocock, 1933, Journ. Bomb. Nat. Hist. Soc., 36, p. 429—is a synonym of *schwarzi*.