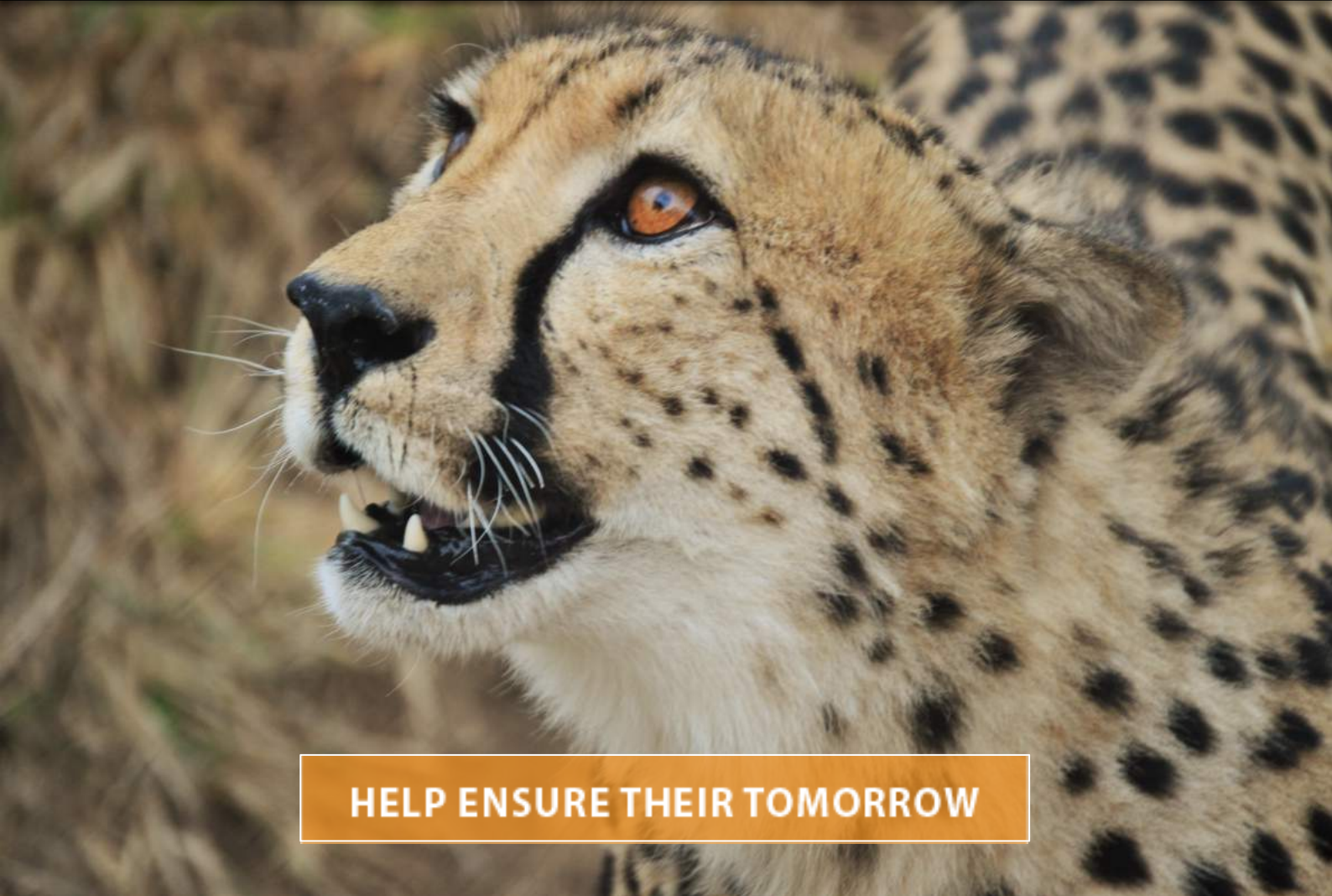




CHEETAH ADOPTION @ HESC



HELP ENSURE THEIR TOMORROW

CHEETAHS UNDER THREAT

Once, cheetahs could be found all over the continent of Africa (except in the Congo) and stretched into southwest Asia from Saudi Arabia through to India. Over the last 100 years the cheetah population has dropped from over 100 000 cats to just over 10 000. The cheetah has now become extinct in over 20 countries.

Although there are many reasons for the rapid decline in cheetah populations, they can be summed up in the following categories:

1. Habitat loss
2. Competition
3. Threat by farmers
4. Illegal wildlife trade

Habitat loss is caused primarily by the expanse of the human civilization throughout the world. This leads to wild lands being destroyed and fragmented, leaving less available land for cheetahs to live on.

Competition with other predators for dwindling food supply results in cheetahs being killed by larger opponents.

Cheetahs are often blamed for the loss of livestock on farms (although they are not the only culprits). This results in often-unnecessary killing for the protection of livestock. Cheetahs have long been kept in captivity as pets, or used for hunting. Today owning a cheetah is still a symbol of status and wealth in many countries. They are captured as cubs and are illegally shipped across the world to the highest bidder. Only 1 out of every 6 of these cheetah cubs survives the trip. This illegal trade has a major effect on the cheetah population, and on male: female ratios.

WHY ADOPT A CHEETAH?

- They are the fastest land mammal
- Their sleek and slender build
- They are the only big cats to purr
- The rare king cheetah
- Cheetahs probably have the most interesting mating and giving birth characteristics among the big cats
- Their dog like characteristics inside a cats body is irresistible

CHEETAH CONSERVATION AT HESC

Cheetah conservation has always been one of HESC's main concerns. A cheetah breeding programme is in place which has seen the birth of over 270 cheetahs over the years. In the wild, cheetah populations are genetically very uniform. They often occur in small isolated or patch populations, which lead to further narrowing of the gene pool. Attempts are made at the centre to ensure the genetic diversity of these captive-bred cheetahs (this includes the spreading of the king cheetah gene).

HESC facilitates the release and establishment of captive-bred cheetahs to the wild, as well as the relocation of cheetah that are threatened in particular areas to areas better suited to their needs.

A number of research projects on the cheetah are conducted too. This includes research on fertility in male cheetahs; DNA studies; the cause of illness and death of cheetah; kidney failure; safe anesthesia of captive bred cheetahs, to name a few.

The care of these cheetahs is extremely expensive. Firstly, each cheetah needs sufficient space to live (in the wild female cheetahs use about 8000 square meters of land while male cheetahs can use up to 2.5 hectares of land). Cheetahs need deworming, rabies and anthrax vaccines, as well as protection against fleas and ticks. There is also a cat flu vaccine called Felocell, administered to the cats. Adult male cheetahs get 2kgs of mince per day, adult females get 1.5kgs of mince per day, and cubs get 1 kg of mince per day.

Because of this high expense, of HESC's Cheetah Adoption Programme gives our supporters the opportunity to help in the conservation of these vulnerable animals.

ADOPTION TYPES

There are two adoption types from which to choose:

Junior Adoption

With this adoption type you will become part of a larger group, all jointly participating to adopt the same cheetah. The cheetahs up for adoption are Crunchie and Sheila.

This adoption comes at a cost of **R2 500** a year and includes an adoption certificate, electronic updates throughout the year and a subscription to HESC's Cheetah Chat.

Senior Adoption

With this adoption type you get the opportunity to become an independent adoptive supporter of any available cheetah.

This adoption comes at a cost of **R25 000** a year, and includes a personalized adoption certificate, a gift, electronic updates throughout the year, a subscription to HESC's Cheetah Chat, and a board with your name on it, in the specific cheetah's enclosure. On top of that, you will get the chance to name the cheetah you choose.

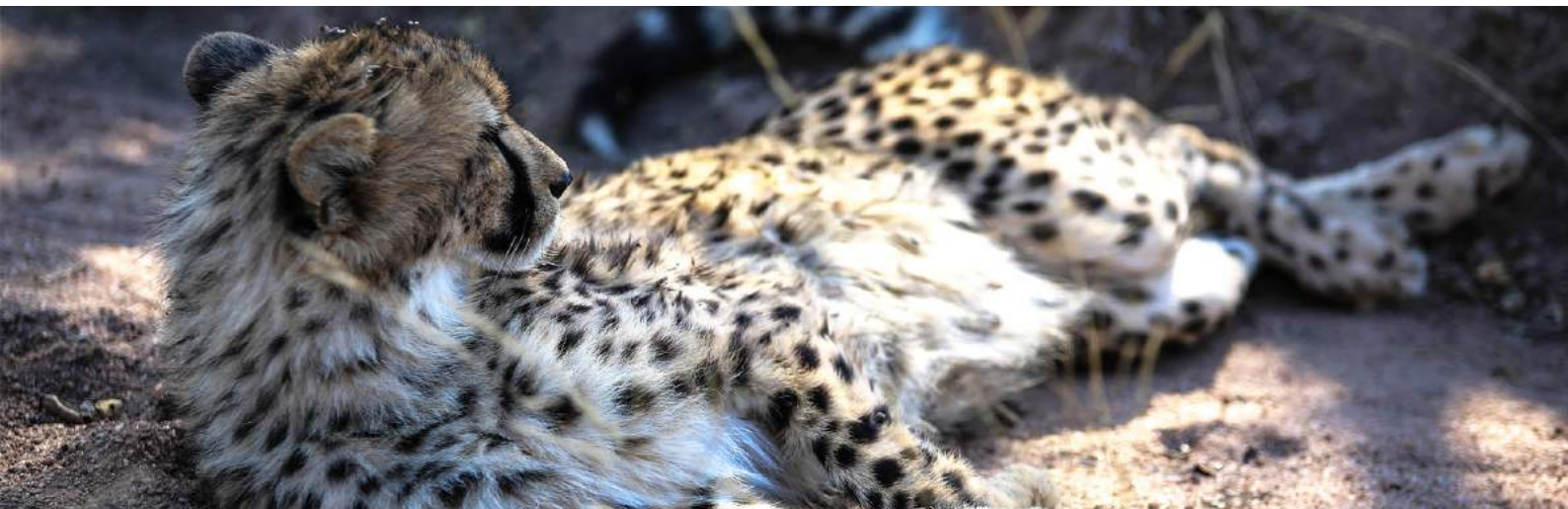
Please be sure to include the e-mail address of the person who should receive these cheetah updates if other than yourself. This option is ideal for companies and schools.

COSTS CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS

- Food and supplements for the cheetah
- Vaccinations and inoculations
- Any medical attention the cheetah may require
- Maintenance of the cheetahs enclosure
- A percentage goes towards HESC's research on nutritional management of cheetah in captivity
- A percentage also goes back to the community, to help educate the less privileged about conservation

Note: *You must understand that HESC exchange animals with other organisations for breeding and other purposes, and that occasionally we are able to release them into the wild. So while your 'sponsorship' is nominally earmarked for an individual animal, we must reserve the right to redirect your donation to another animal or group of animals if the need arises.*

If you are interested in adopting a cheetah or any of the animals at the centre and require more information, please ask at the office or reception.



Contact us on 015 793 1633 or send an email to funding@cheetahcentre.co.za