# Table of Contents

- Exhibit Summary 3
- Theme & Sub-themes 4
- Goal & Objectives 4
- Species List 5
- Exhibit Map 6

## Visitor Journey
- Entrance 7
- Cheetah Exhibit 8
- Supporting Cheetah Conservation 10
- Cheetah Conversation Starters 12
- Mixed-species Hoofed Stock Exhibit 14
- African Lion Exhibit 24
- Supporting Community-based Conservation in Kenya 27
- African Lion Conversation Starters 29
- Cheetah Encounter 30
- Greater Flamingo Exhibit 30
- Africa Animal Encounter/Interactive Space 31
- Maasai Giraffe Exhibit 32
- Maasai Giraffe Conversation Starters 34
- Lale’enok Resource Centre 36
- Lale’enok Conversation Starters 40
- African Painted Dog Exhibit 41
- African Painted Dog Conversation Starters 45
- Meerkat Exhibit 46

## Resources 48
Exhibit Summary

Once completed, Africa will be the largest animal exhibit in Cincinnati Zoo history. The goals of the exhibit are to create a meaningful experience that connects visitors to the African savannah, enhances their understanding of how its people and wildlife coexist, and inspires them to support the Zoo’s role in community-based conservation in Kenya. Predators, including lions, cheetahs and painted dogs, will surround a large grassy enclosure that features hoofed stock, birds and a Maasai boma. Flamingos and a large giraffe yard are across the path from the hoofed stock. On the far side, there will be a hippo exhibit as well as an informal interpretive space for programs and activities.

The Africa exhibit is being constructed in Phases.

- Phases I & II are complete and include an expanded yard for the Maasai giraffe with feeding opportunities, a new greater flamingo exhibit, and a new and improved Cheetah Encounter where guests can witness cheetahs doing what they do best – running!
- Phase III was completed in June 2013. Coinciding with a newly renovated restaurant—Base Camp Café, this phase includes a new main entrance to Africa and new cheetah and lion exhibits.
- Phase IV was completed in June 2014. It includes the completion of the large mixed species savannah. New components include a meerkat (added in 2015) and a new painted dog exhibit as well as the Lale’enok Resource Center (interpretive space for programs and activities).
- Phase V (to come) will add a new hippo exhibit.

The look and feel of the exhibit integrates East African architecture, landscape and cultural elements. For the most part, it is modeled after the South Rift Valley region in Kenya where the Zoo supports community-based conservation efforts. The Maasai people maintain their coexistence with lions and other wildlife through a community-based conservation program called Rebuilding the Pride. A partnership between the South Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO), the African Conservation Centre (ACC), and the Zoo, Rebuilding the Pride works to restore a healthy lion population while reducing the loss of livestock to lions. Zoo guests are invited to participate in the story by purchasing a symbol of this coexistence—bead bracelets handcrafted by Maasai women. The funds raised go back to the Maasai community.

Innovative and engaging experiences will set this exhibit apart from more traditional, passive African savannah exhibits in other zoos. An emphasis is placed on creating an interactive visitor experience. Zoo staff will have live animal encounters around the clock, both in a designated interpretive area as well as roaming throughout the public space. Guests have the opportunity to feed Maasai giraffes and perhaps other animals at scheduled times. Cheetah Encounters (shows) will take place on scheduled days and times. Keepers and interpreters will also give interpretive presentations and training demonstrations at various exhibits. TRIBE Teens help tell the story of our work in Kenya and encourage participation in the Maasai Lions and Livelihoods Bracelets program.
Theme (The BIG idea)
People and wildlife live together in coexistence on the African savannah.

Sub-themes (Supporting messages)
A. The African savannah is a tropical, sun-baked grassland dotted with trees.
B. A diverse community of wildlife and people live and coexist on the African savannah.
C. Migration over large landscapes to find water is crucial to survival during the dry season.
D. To coexist on the African savannah, people and wildlife, including predators, must share the same resources that all living things need (i.e. food, shelter, water, and space).
E. The Cincinnati Zoo supports community-based conservation in Kenya, and you can contribute, too.

Goal
To create a meaningful experience that connects visitors to the African savannah, enhances their understanding of how its people and wildlife coexist, and inspires them to support the Zoo’s role in community-based conservation in Kenya.

Objectives (Measurable indicators of success)
Learning:
The majority of visitors will:
1. Use words that appropriately describe the African savannah
2. Be able to name several animals that live in the African savannah and recall at least one new thing they learned about each one
3. Describe the struggle to get enough water as a challenge to survival during the dry season
4. Understand that people and wildlife must share the same resources to coexist on the African savannah and be able to describe at least one example of how they do so (age 12 and up)
5. Acknowledge the importance of the local people in protecting their African savannah home and its wildlife (age 12 and up)
6. Know that the Zoo supports community-based conservation in Kenya and that they can contribute, too (age 12 and up)

Emotional:
The majority of visitors will:
7. Display an indication that they had fun while visiting the exhibit
8. Remember a special moment they had while visiting the exhibit
9. Respect wildlife and where they live (express a greater affection and/or concern for wildlife)
10. Want to help protect wildlife
11. Believe that the African savannah and its wildlife should be conserved (age 12 and up)
12. Be proud of the Cincinnati Zoo’s efforts to support community-based conservation (age 12 and up)

Behavioral:
The majority of visitors will:
13. Share enthusiasm about their Zoo experience with others (recommend visiting)
14. Intend to contribute to the Zoo’s support of community-based conservation in Kenya (age 12 and up)
Species List (Subject to change)

Mixed-species savannah

- Thompson’s gazelle
- Lesser kudu
- Impala
- Crested guineafowl
- Lappet-faced vulture
- Ruppell’s vulture
- Ostrich
- Pink-backed pelican
- East African crowned crane

Individual exhibits

- Maasai giraffe
- Greater flamingo
- Cheetah
- African lion
- African painted dog
- Meerkat
- Nile hippopotamus (Phase V)

Program animals

Various African species, likely to include but not limited to:

Mammals

- Bat-eared fox
- Warthog
- Tenrec
- Hedgehog

Birds

- Greater flamingo
- Scops owl
- Yellow-billed hornbill
- Pygmy falcon

Reptiles

- Spiny-tailed lizard
- Plated lizard
- White-throated monitor
- Sand boa
- Dumeril’s ground boa
- Ball python
- Leopard tortoise
- Radiated tortoise
- Pancake tortoise

Invertebrates

- Whip spider
- Emperor scorpion
- Hissing cockroach
Exhibit Map (April 2014)
**Visitor Journey**

**Entrance**
The majority of visitors will enter Africa from the main loop, just beside the renovated Base Camp Café that overlooks the savannah. The entry sets guests up for their walking safari, and includes a sign that provides wildlife watching tips. Interpretive and ID signage throughout the exhibit is written from the perspective of someone on safari and has the feel of a field journal.

*Interpretive text:*

**Wildlife Watching Tips**

**Spotting Wildlife**
- Think like an animal. Where would you hang out?
- Stake out the waterhole where animals come to drink.
- Look for movement—an ear twitch or a tail flash can give away an animal’s location.
- Use binoculars for long distance viewing.
- Take your time, look closely, and be patient.

**Peaks of Activity**
- Animals are most active in early morning and late afternoon.
- Midday is rest and relaxation time.

**Respect the Wildlife**
- Keep a safe distance from wild animals.
- Stay quiet to keep from disturbing wildlife.
- Never feed wildlife; they may get sick or become aggressive.
Cheetah Exhibit
The first animal exhibit guests come to is the cheetah on their right-hand side. A moat that begins with a small waterfall separates guests from the open-air exhibit. The exhibit contains large shade trees under which the cheetahs are expected to rest in view. Fabricated weaver bird nests hang from one of the trees. There is an artificial termite mound in the public space with a flip-up interactive. An interpretive sign at the cheetah exhibit tells the story of Armas, a herder, and his Anatolian shepherd guard dog, Mondesa. Through their story, the reader learns about the conflict between cheetahs and people and one solution that helps alleviate that problem. Zoo staff gives public presentations at scheduled times at the cheetah exhibit.

ID sign text:

Cheetah
The cheetah came out of nowhere fast. The gazelle zigzagged this way and that, but couldn’t shake the cheetah. The chase was over before we knew it. After a short rest, the cheetah gorged itself. No match for a lion’s strength, it has to eat fast before a lion shows up to steal away its meal.

Built for Speed
A cheetah can sprint across a distance of 92 feet in a single second.

- **Head**—Small aerodynamic head
- **Shoulders**—Long, thin streamlined body
- **Spine**—Flexible spine for maximum stretching
- **Legs**—Long, strong legs for long strides
- **Claws**—Claws for traction, like cleats on running shoes
- **Brake pads**—Hard, pointed pads for braking
- **Tail**—Long tail for balance and steering

Fact File
Scientific name: *Acinonyx jubatus*
Length: 3.5 to 4.5 ft
Weight: 85 to 140 lbs
Lifespan: Up to 12 yrs in wild
Habitat: Savanna and dry forest
Prey: Small antelope, warthog, hare and game birds
Status: Species at Risk (IUCN—Vulnerable)
Species Survival Plan
Range: Africa and western Asia (Iran)
Armas and Mondesa: A Cheetah-friendly Farmer and his Dog
Armas raises goats. He used to worry about losing livestock to cheetahs. The Cheetah Conservation Fund gave him an Anatolian shepherd guard dog named Mondesa. She quickly became a trusted worker on the farm. Armas no longer worries about cheetahs with Mondesa protecting his flock.

When Mondesa smells a cheetah getting close to the herd, she barks to scare it away. Armas has seen tracks left by cheetahs running away to prove it.

One day, Mondesa didn’t return with the herd at the end of the day. Armas noticed that one of the goats had given birth, but the kid was nowhere to be found. Armas reckoned that Mondesa had stayed behind with the newborn to protect it. Sure enough, he found Mondesa out in the bush with the baby goat.
Supporting Cheetah Conservation

Cheetahs are endangered and their population worldwide has shrunk from about 100,000 in 1900 to an estimated 9,000 to 12,000 cheetahs today. The Cincinnati Zoo has been dubbed “The Cheetah Capital of the World” because of its conservation efforts through education, public interpretation, and the captive cheetah breeding program.

The Angel Fund
In 1982, a woman named Cathryn Hilker and a cheetah called Angel launched a program at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden that was the first of its kind for zoos in the nation: the Cat Ambassador Program. Cathryn and Angel were partners for 12 years here at the Zoo, working to educate people about cheetahs—where they live, what they need, and what we need to do to save them. In her lifetime, Angel connected with over 1,000,000 people through the Zoo’s programs.

In 1992, The Angel Fund was established in Angel’s memory to continue the work which she so bravely began by letting her very presence, day in and day out, speak for every living cheetah. Angel helped give cheetahs, everywhere, a presence, a voice, a real chance. Funds raised by the Angel Fund support cheetah conservation efforts worldwide.

Cat Ambassador Program
Cathryn Hilker and the Cincinnati Zoo’s Cat Ambassador Program (CAP) continue Angel’s legacy with the assistance of other cheetah ambassadors, including Sarah, Bravo, Chance, Tommy, Nia and Savanna, who work like their predecessors to make the connection that people will save what they see.

The CAP presents a seasonal Cheetah Encounter show, displaying running demonstrations and other natural behaviors of the cheetah. During the school year, the CAP takes the cheetah to school assemblies to spread the word that cheetahs are running for their lives.

Regional Cheetah Breeding Center
The Angel Fund was also the inspiration and funding source for the Zoo’s cheetah off-site breeding facility at the Mast Farm. The Zoo’s Regional Cheetah Breeding Center is one of only a handful of similar facilities in the United States managed by the Species Survival Plan. More than 60 cheetah cubs have been born in Cincinnati so far.

In Situ Conservation
The Angel Fund and the Cincinnati Zoo are integral parts of a true international effort committed to the cheetah’s survival in Africa. From South Africa and Botswana in the south up through Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa, the Angel Fund has contributed more than $1 million in support of predator coexistence in the wild.

Just a few of the programs supported by the Angel Fund and the Zoo include:

Cheetah Conservation Botswana
Cheetah Conservation Botswana aims to preserve the nation’s cheetah population through scientific research, community outreach and education, working with rural communities to promote coexistence with Botswana's rich diversity of predator species.

Ruaha Carnivore Project
The Ruaha Carnivore Project serves to work with local communities to help develop effective conservation strategies for large carnivores in Tanzania. The project aims to 1. Gather baseline data on carnivore numbers and ecology and 2. Work with the local communities to reduce human-carnivore conflict. The mission is being achieved through targeted research and monitoring, mitigation of threats, mentorship, training and community outreach.

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, 2015
Niassa Lion Project
The main goals of the Niassa Carnivore Project serve to secure and conserve the large carnivore populations in Niassa National Reserve in Mozambique by promoting coexistence between the large carnivores and people. The mission is being achieved through targeted research and monitoring, mitigation of threats, mentorship, training and community outreach.

Cheetah Outreach
Cheetah Outreach is an education and community-based program created to raise awareness of the plight of the cheetah and to campaign for its survival. In addition to partnering with ambassador cats to inform the public about the problems the cheetah faces, Cheetah Outreach offers curriculum-linked school presentations and resources as well as workshops and fellowships for teachers, breeds Turkish Anatolian Shepherd dogs and places them on South African farms to guard livestock in an effort to reduce conflict between farmers and predators, hand-rears cubs from the Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre and raises them to be ambassadors for the species, and partners with other cheetah conservation organizations worldwide.

Action for Cheetahs in Kenya
Action for Cheetahs in Kenya evaluates the pressures of habitat change and rapid human population growth and tries to understand issues facing cheetahs as they come into greater contact with mankind. Specifically, it conducts field research to understand predator conflict issues. The project implements educational programs to increase awareness by community members of cheetah issues and in conjunction with the Kenya Wildlife Service. Action for Cheetahs evaluates the overall status of cheetahs within Kenya.

Earth Expeditions
Each year, the Zoo, in conjunction with Miami University’s Project Dragonfly, leads an Earth Expeditions course titled Namibia: Great Cat Conservation. Up to 20 educators, primarily from the United States, travel to Namibia, Africa, with Cincinnati Zoo and Miami University instructors to join the Zoo’s long-term partnership with the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)—the global center of cheetah conservation worldwide. Ongoing research projects at CCF include radio tracking, cheetah physiology, ecosystem management, and the design of school and community programs in Namibia.
## Conversation Starters: Cheetah Exhibit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Just how fast can a cheetah run?</strong></td>
<td>As the fastest land animal on Earth, cheetahs can reach speeds up to 70 mph for short distances. A cheetah can sprint across a distance of 92 feet in a single second. It can only keep up its speed for less than a minute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If it’s the fastest animal on land, why isn’t the cheetah called the king of beasts?</strong></td>
<td>Leopards, lions, and hyenas will steal a cheetah’s kill. Since the cheetah relies on speed to hunt, it cannot risk begin injured in a confrontation that would prevent it from being able to hunt. Instead of fighting to defend its current meal, the cheetah flees so that it can survive to hunt again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What makes a cheetah so fast?</strong></td>
<td>The cheetah is designed for speed with a sleek body, flexible backbone and long legs. Non-retractable claws act like cleats to grip the ground as it runs. A muscular tail assists with making quick turns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are you a runner?</strong></td>
<td>If so, you should join us for our annual Cheetah Run 5K Run and Walk on Labor Day weekend. Guests of all ages are invited to join the fun during the 3.1 mile run and walk through the beautiful Cincinnati Zoo. You can choose to walk the course, if you’re not a runner. There’s even a free Cheetah Cub Fun Run for the kids. Proceeds support the Zoo’s Cat Ambassador Program. Look up the Cheetah Run on the Zoo’s web site for info on registration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Have you ever seen a cheetah run in real life, not just on TV?**         | You’ll want to catch one of our Cheetah Encounters just up the hill from the lion exhibit to see cheetahs run after a lure.  
**Tell them when the next show will be.**                                  |
| **Did you know that Cincinnati is known as the “Cheetah Capitol of the World”?** | The Zoo is known for its commitment to cheetah conservation.  
**See page 11 for details.**                                               |
| **How does the cheetah take down its prey?**                             | Once the cheetah is within striking distance of its prey, it swipes at the prey’s hind legs with its front paw and strong dewclaw to tip and knock it to the ground. Then it closes off the prey’s windpipe to suffocate it. Exhausted after the chase, the cheetah must rest for a while to recover. |
| **Did you know that dogs are helping to save cheetahs in the wild?**      | Farmers are using Anatolian shepherds as guard dogs to protect their livestock from predators, including cheetahs. All it takes to scare off a cheetah is a loud bark. It can’t risk getting injured in a fight and being unable to hunt. When their livestock is safe, farmers are much more likely to tolerate sharing their land with carnivores. |
| **Do you know what the dark lines beneath the cheetah’s eye are called?** | The dark tear mark below a cheetah’s eye, called a malar stripe, attracts the sunlight and keeps the glare of the sun out of its eyes. For the same reason, football players wear face paint beneath their eyes. |
| **Are cheetahs endangered?**                                             | Yes. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) lists the cheetah as Vulnerable and it is also listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. There are many researchers and conservationists working to ensure their survival in the wild. |

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, 2015
Weaver nest interpretive sign text:

**Who Made These Nests?**
We must have seen 15 or 20 ball-shaped woven grass nests hanging from just a single tree.

**Weaverbirds!**
The male weaves a nest of grass to impress a female. If she doesn’t like it, he’ll tear it down and start over. Once she’s happy with a nest, she lines it with more grass and moves in to start a family.

Termite mound interpretive text:

**Who Build This Mound?**
Termites! Made of soil and spit, termites build mounds up to 30 feet tall.

The huge termite queen lays up to 10,000 eggs in a day.
Mixed Hoofed Stock Savannah Exhibit
As guests continue down the path, the stream that began at the cheetah exhibit flows down with them and empties into a waterhole in the large mixed hoofed stock exhibit. Guests cross over a couple of bridges as the wide open expanse of the savannah beckons to them. The savannah exhibit contains a variety of ungulates and birds. The animals visit the waterhole at the central viewing area to drink. Beyond the waterhole stretches out the grassy plains dotted with a few trees and artificial termite mounds. A Maasai homestead in the far corner of the exhibit portrays the theme of humans and wildlife sharing the same space. Maasai are cattle-herders and the presence of cattle in some fashion in the Africa exhibit is important. At the opposite far corner, guests can catch a glimpse of the lion exhibit, which is separated from the plains by a moat yet looks like it is continuous space. Looking over the savannah, guests may catch a glimpse of the lion exhibit in the far corner.

Interpretive sign on savannah ecosystem text:

Life on the African Savannah
Savannas cover nearly half of the African continent and are home to a unique variety of wildlife. Most of the wildlife—more than 75% in Kenya, for example—lives outside of the national parks where they coexist with people and livestock. Each living thing on the African savannah, including people and livestock, plays its part in the cycle of life.

Plants
The savannah is a sun-baked blanket of tall grasses dotted with trees.

- One of the most common savannah grasses is the African star grass.
- Acacia trees have wicked thorns for protection.

Herbivores
More than 40 species of hoofed mammals alone live on the savannah, including cattle raised by the Maasai people.

Carnivores
Predators such as cheetahs, painted dogs and lions hunt prey on the savannah.

Scavengers and Decomposers
Once the carnivores have had their fill, vultures and other scavengers move in on the leftovers. Dung beetles, bacteria and fungi eat dead plants and animals and return nutrients to the soil.
Water for All
On the African savannah, the rains come and go. Wildebeest, zebra and gazelle migrate in search of greener pastures as do the Maasai people and their cattle. All rely on the rivers and waterholes that still hold water to keep them going until the rains return.

As people divide more of the land into private farms, wildlife and herders struggle to move between good grazing areas and water.

Reusing Rainwater at the Zoo
Beneath the Africa exhibit is a huge rainwater collection tank, thanks to a partnership between the Zoo and the Metropolitan Sewer District. The tank collects up to 13 million gallons of water a year, which is then used throughout the Zoo for irrigation, filling pools, and more.
Interpretive on predator-prey text:

The Zebra that Got Away
Several lionesses surround a small herd of zebra. Crouching low to the ground, one sneaks in close and charges. Man, is she fast! But the zebra is fast, too. Just as the lioness reaches out to grab its haunches, the zebra kicks out both hind legs and throws her off. The rest of the pride never even got close.

On the African savannah, life is a well-matched game of predator and prey. Predators are designed to kill and eat other animals. Prey animals are designed to escape. For lions, only one out of six hunts is successful.

Lion
- Large ears for good hearing
- Forward-facing eyes size up prey and the distance away
- Muscular jaws for a powerful bite
- Camouflaged to hide from prey
- Large pointy teeth for grasping prey

Zebra
- Large rotating ears to pinpoint and funnel sound
- Eyes to the side for a wider field of view
- Excellent sense of smell for detecting predators
- Striping pattern might make it hard for a predator to pick out one zebra from the bunch
People and Wildlife Living Together

I'm amazed by how the Maasai live side-by-side in the same landscape with wildebeest and lions. Back home, we are so separated from nature and what we think of as "the wild". Here, the people, cattle and wild animals move freely among each other, drinking from the same river and grazing on the same grass. I wonder how I can better share my space with wildlife back home.

The Maasai are pastoralists, or herders. To them, cattle is everything – their income, their source of food and their sense of worth. Each cow has its own name and is considered part of the family, kind of how we think of our pets.

They live in small huts surrounded by thorny bush fences, called bomas, which they move between as they migrate from place to place in search of water and good grazing areas for their cattle.

It is traditionally the role of young Maasai men to protect the herds from lions and other predators. Today, the Maasai combine tradition with modern technology to maintain their coexistence with wildlife. They even use cell phones to let each other know where lions and the best grazing areas are!
**ID text for hoofed stock and birds in mixed specie savannah exhibit:**

**Lesser Kudu**
Our guide stopped to point out a couple of lesser kudu hiding in the bush. I couldn’t see them at first; they blend in so well. Once I caught the movement of a tail flick, I could pick them out.

At least I had no trouble telling the male and female apart. Only the males have those incredible spiraled horns. When they fight, the males lock horns and have a shoving match.

We even caught a glimpse of a kudu calf nursing, which they do until they are about six months old.

**Fact File**

- **Scientific name:** *Tragelaphus imberbis*
- **Length:** 5.2 to 5.7 ft
- **Weight:** 121 to 243 lbs
- **Lifespan:** 15 yrs
- **Habitat:** Shrubland, woodland and savannah
- **Diet:** Leaves, twigs, fruit and seed pods
- **Status:** Species at Risk (IUCN—Near threatened)
- **Range:** East Africa
Impala
We came upon a large herd of female impala, just standing around, grazing and ruminating. Every so often, one would stand very still, listening and scanning the area for danger.

Suddenly, with a quick head jerk and a loud snort, one impala’s signal to flee sent the whole herd leaping in different directions. I don’t know what caused the ruckus, but as the preferred prey of most large predators, I suppose you never can be too careful.

An impala can leap up to 10 feet high and more than 35 feet long in a single bound.

Fact File
Scientific name: Aepyceros melampus
Length: 4.2 to 4.7 ft
Weight: 99 to 132 lbs
Lifespan: 12 to 15 yrs
Habitat: Savannah and woodland
Diet: Grasses and leaves
Range: Southern and East Africa
Thomson’s Gazelle
Tails flicking wildly and heads butting down low, these male Thomson’s gazelles sure do put on a show. Back and forth, they dance like boxers in a ring, pushing head to head, horns to horns, until one of them backs down.

Why all this fighting? It’s all part of the mating game. Males must defend their territories, and the females that live in them, from other males during the breeding season.

Within minutes of its birth, a newborn gazelle takes its first few wobbly steps.

Fact File
Scientific name: *Eudorcas thomsoni*
Length: 2.6 to 3.9 ft
Weight: 33 to 77 lbs
Lifespan: 10 to 15 yrs
Habitat: Savannah
Diet: Grass, herbs, leaves and seeds
Status: Species at Risk (IUCN—Near threatened)
Species Survival Plan
Range: East Africa
Ostrich
We watched a group of ostriches—both males (black feathers) and females (brown feathers)—graze for awhile. Every so often, one of them would pop its head up from the ground to scan for predators.

As the world’s largest and heaviest living bird, the ostrich can’t fly to get away from predators, but it sure can run fast—up to 40 miles per hour! It can also deliver a powerful kick, if a predator gets too close.

Fact File
Scientific name: *Struthio camelus*
Height: 5.7 to 9 ft
Weight: 198 to 287 lbs
Lifespan: Up to 50 yrs
Habitat: Savannah, shrubland and desert
Diet: Seeds, leaves, fruit; some insects and carrion
Range: Central and Southern Africa

Pink-backed Pelican
I’d love to have a built-in fishing net like the pink-backed pelican does. It simply scoops up a fish along with a gallon or two of water in its stretchy throat pouch, lets the water drain out and then throws back its head to swallow the fish.

The pelican is so big, it needs a running start, all the while beating its large wings, to lift off.

Fact File
Scientific name: *Pelecanus rufescens*
Length: 4.1 to 4.3 ft
Weight: 8.6 to 15.4 lbs
Lifespan: Up to 30 yrs
Habitat: Wetlands
Diet: Fish
Range: Africa
Crested Guineafowl
A flock of crested guineafowl reminds me of the chickens on my uncle’s farm back home. Sticking close together for safety, they peck here and there as they wander along, snatching up seeds and insects as they go.

Quite often, it seems, something startles them and sets the flock off running and chittering up a storm. The moment passes and they go back to scratching at the ground.

Fact File
Scientific name: *Guttera pucherani*
Length: 1.5 to 1.8 ft
Weight: 1.6 to 3.5 lbs
Lifespan: 10 to 15 yrs
Habitat: Forest and savannah
Diet: Seeds, fruit, leaves, roots and invertebrates
Range: Africa

Lappet-faced Vulture
One vulture on a carcass soon turns into an unruly mob of vultures, all fighting to get their share. As the largest vulture in Africa, the red-headed lappet-faced vulture dominates the chaos. And I thought my family had bad manners at the dinner table!

Soon, only skin and bones are left. It’s gross, but without vultures the world would be a much smellier place.

Fact File
Scientific name: *Torgos tracheliotos*
Length: 2.6 to 3.8 ft
Weight: 9.7 to 18.7 lbs
Lifespan: Up to 50 yrs
Habitat: Savannah, semi-desert and desert
Diet: Carrion, small mammals and birds
Status: Species at Risk (IUCN—Vulnerable)
Range: Africa and Middle East
**Rüppell’s Vulture**

I wish I could soar high in the sky like a vulture. Rising drafts of warm air keep it aloft like a kite for hours while it scans the ground for carrion.

When one vulture spots a carcass and flies down, the rest follow fast on its tail. At a scavenger dinner party, it’s first come, first served.

**Fact File**

- **Scientific name:** *Gyps rueppellii*
- **Length:** Up to 3.3 ft
- **Weight:** 15 to 20 lbs
- **Lifespan:** 40 to 50 yrs
- **Habitat:** Woodland savannah
- **Diet:** Carrion
- **Status:** Species at Risk (IUCN—Endangered)
- **Range:** Africa
**Lion Exhibit**
Following the edge of the savannah yard to the left, guests come to the African lion exhibit, which they can view from across a water moat as well as up close through glass in the shelter. The lion exhibit is built with a lot of rockwork. In the wild, lions are often seen surveying their kingdom atop large rocky outcroppings called kopjes. To the left of the viewing glass is a small cave-like space through which kids can walk and get a unique look out into the lion exhibit. There are Maasai rock paintings on the cage walls.

Interpretive signs introduce guests to the Rebuilding the Pride program that the Zoo supports in Kenya’s South Rift Valley. There is much more to the story than can be conveyed on the signage. This is where interpreters, including the TRIBE Teens and Keeper Chats, play an important role in engaging guests in the story. Guests can also scan a QR code to watch a video of Maasai elder, John Kamanga, talk about the program on their smart phones.

*African lion ID text:*

**African Lion**
Lions! A whole pride just lying around. They spend up to 20 hours a day resting. The cubs, of course, were more rambunctious than the elders. One in particular kept climbing on his mom, trying to wake her up.

Later, a large male stood, stretched, and began to roar. They say a lion’s roar can be heard from miles away and I believe it. As the lions prepared to go on their nightly hunt, we headed back to camp for our own dinner.

**Fact File**
Scientific name: *Panthera leo*
Length: Male – 8.5 to 10.5 ft  
Female – 5 to 6 ft
Weight: Male – 330 to 530 lbs  
Female – 270 to 400 lbs
Lifespan: Up to 18 yrs in wild
Habitat: Savanna, woodland, and desert
Prey: Hoofed mammals, hares, small birds and reptiles
Status: Species at Risk (IUCN—Vulnerable)
Species Survival Plan

Range: Africa

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, 2015
**Interpretes on Rebuilding the Pride text:**

**Can People and Carnivores Coexist?**

Yes, and the Maasai people have lived with lions and other wildlife for thousands of years in Kenya’s South Rift Valley. However, as times change and their culture evolves, the traditional Maasai way of maintaining that coexistence must also adapt.

Sharing the same space can be tricky for lions and people. Livestock and wildlife often graze in the same areas. Lions need to eat, and sometimes happen upon livestock rather than wild animals. Losing one of their beloved cows to a lion is a hard loss for a Maasai, often creating a desire to retaliate. It is far better to prevent lion attacks in the first place.

Cultural changes bring new challenges. Traditionally, young Maasai men would look out for lions and chase them away. As more of these young men go off to school today, livestock herds are much more vulnerable to lions. How can the Maasai protect their flock in this new day and age and still share the land with predators?

“The Maasai know how to live with lions; we do not need to separate people and wildlife for we have learned how to move around one another. For conservation to succeed, it must maintain this balance between livestock and wildlife”

- Josphat Maponyei (A local Chief and Junior elder)
Rebuilding the Pride
Rebuilding the Pride is a community-based conservation program that combines tradition and modern technology to restore a healthy lion population while reducing the loss of livestock to lions in Kenya’s South Rift Valley.

New technology keeps tabs on the lions.
Local Maasai research assistants track lions with Global Positioning System (GPS) collars. Knowing where the prides are lets herders know where to avoid grazing their livestock.

Game scouts help protect livestock.
When herders must move through areas with lions, they call on community game scouts to accompany them for extra protection.

The pride—of lions and people—continues to grow.
Nasha is one of two lionesses in a pride of about a dozen lions that lives in the South Rift. Her pride is often out in the open and easy to view. As Nasha’s pride grows, so does the pride the Maasai take in sharing the land with lions.

QR Code
Scan to hear about Rebuilding the Pride from Maasai elder, John Kamanga.
Supporting Community-based Conservation in Kenya

The Zoo partners with the African Conservation Centre (ACC) in Kenya. ACC’s primary aim is to bring together the people and skills needed to build East Africa’s capacity to conserve wildlife. ACC is located in the South Rift Valley of Kenya, stretching from the Maasai Mara National Reserve through Amboseli National Park. More than 75% of Kenya’s wildlife lives outside of national parks, which makes the South Rift Valley one of the most spectacular wildlife areas on the planet.

SORALO and ACC
The Maasai people have coexisted with wildlife in southern Kenya for centuries. As a nomadic culture, the community makes decisions together and shares the landscape. People and wildlife migrate seasonally as necessary to meet their needs for food and water. Unfortunately, a growing population is creating pressure to subdivide the land and build fences, which puts the land, wildlife, and people in trouble.

Leaders from 14 Maasai group ranches established SORALO (South Rift Association of Land Owners) to manage the sustainable use of their natural resources by integrating tourism, livestock development and other income generating activities to improve communities’ livelihoods. SORALO established community conservation areas on two group ranches, Olkiramatian and Shompole, which provide refuge for wildlife and serve as drought refuge for Maasai livestock.

SORALO and the Olkiramatian and Shompole group ranches invited ACC to help assess their conservation projects and to provide guidance in future management strategies. ACC initiated an integrated research program to understand the dynamic interactions between people, livestock, wildlife, habitat, water resources and temperature, which are all key components of the ecosystem. If research can identify the necessary criteria for people, wildlife, and landscapes to persist, then the community will be well-equipped to tackle current and future management concerns.

Research is conducted both by local community members and resident or visiting scientists. Community Resource Assessors assist with ecological monitoring, livelihood surveys and land use assessment. Community game scouts play a crucial role in protecting wildlife by arresting poachers, rescuing wounded animals, protecting threatened animals, controlling human-wildlife conflict and collecting scientific data on biodiversity.

For a great overview, watch a documentary on the coexistence of Maasai and lions in South Rift Valley of Kenya produce by Anna Campbell at www.annacampbell.tv/films.

Earth Expeditions
Each year, the Zoo, in conjunction with Miami University’s Project Dragonfly, leads an Earth Expeditions course titled Kenya: Wildlife & People in Integrated Landscapes. Up to 20 teachers, primarily from the United States, travel to the South Rift Valley to engage in community-based conservation in this dynamic landscape. This effort builds on the decades-long research of Dr. David Western, former head of the Kenya Wildlife Service, and the centuries-long research of the Maasai pastoralists, who have long co-existed with wildlife in an open grassland ecosystem populated by elephants, lions, giraffes, zebra, wildebeests, and a remarkable diversity of other species. With the rise of nontraditional lifestyles, private ranches, and fenced lands that prevent needed wildlife migrations, communities of the South Rift have recognized the need to understand the impact of these changes and to work together for a better future.

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, 2015
Lale’noonk Resource Center
The Zoo helps fund activities at the Lale’nook Resource Centre, which was constructed in 2011. A product of SORALO in collaboration with ACC, it is a community-based women-owned natural resource and research centre, a physical place that provides a centre for information storage and dissemination. The centre provides the community with a forum to engage with partners (scientists, practitioners) on knowledge creation, dissemination and application. It is owned and run by the Olkirimatian Women’s Group.

Rebuilding the Pride
The Zoo provides funding to support Rebuilding the Pride, a community-based conservation program that combines tradition and modern technology to restore a healthy lion population while reducing the loss of livestock to lions in Kenya’s South Rift Valley.

Local Maasai research assistants track the movement of both livestock and lions in an effort to understand seasonal movements and identify conflict hotspots. Some of the lions have been fitted with Global Positioning System (GPS) collars for better tracking. The collars transmit four locations a day to a central server, giving detailed information on the exact movement of the lions. Knowing where the prides are lets herders know where to avoid grazing their livestock.

The program also deploys a Conflict Response Team to mitigate any conflicts that arise between people and lions. When herders must move through areas with lions, they call on community game scouts to accompany them for extra protection. The team also helps find and rescue lost livestock that would have otherwise fallen victim to predation.

Thanks to these efforts, lion populations are growing on the Olkirimatian and Shompole ranches. Once down to a low of about 10 known lions in the area, the population is now estimated to be nearly 70. The prides have been producing cubs and new lions are moving in from surrounding areas.

Learn more at:
African Conservation Centre, www.conservationafrica.org
South Rift: Communities, Conservation, and Research Blog, http://southriftccr.blogspot.com
South Rift Association of Land Owners, www.soralo.org

Maasai Lion Bracelets
To inspire, connect and engage guests in our conservation efforts in Kenya, the Zoo created the Maasai Lion Bracelets program. Beadwork is an integral part of the Maasai culture. The Zoo purchases beaded bracelets hand-crafted by the Olkirimatian Women’s Group. The bracelets are then sold to Zoo guests as a symbol of the coexistence between Maasai and lions and a way that guests can contribute to conservation. The proceeds are sent back to the Women’s Group to support the Resource Center and the Maasai community. Some of the funds pay for the education of Maasai girls.

TRIBE teens will wear bracelets as they tell the story of coexistence to guests at the lion exhibit and encourage them to support our efforts through the purchase of a bracelet. They may also do beading demonstrations for the public.

Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, 2015
Conversation Starters: African Lion Exhibit

Did you know that lions are the only cats that live in large social groups?
While most cats are solitary, lions live in social groups called prides. A typical pride consists of 2 or 3 adult males, up to 10 females and their offspring. The members of a pride work together to defend their territory from outsiders. Females stick to the middle of their range, while males patrol and scent-mark the borders.

Did you know that 75% of Kenya’s wildlife lives outside of the national parks?
National Parks aren’t the answer to saving Africa’s wildlife. The Maasai and their cattle have coexisted with wildlife for centuries. They all must be able to move around and migrate with the seasons to find enough food and water. If the land is divided up into individually-owned and fenced plots, people and wildlife can no longer migrate. The Maasai community in Kenya’s South Rift works to maintain large, shared landscapes.

How do lions hunt?
A pride may hunt cooperatively when bringing down large prey or when prey is scarce. They fan out and surround prey to cut off any escape routes. However, it only takes one or two lions to bring down most prey. They have to get close to prey before charging and knocking it down with a powerful swipe of the paw. Prey is suffocated with a clamping bite to the throat.

Do you know how a GPS collar works?
Maasai herders need to know where the lions are to keep their cattle out of harm’s way. Using Global Positioning System (GPS) collars is one way to keep tabs on them. Once a collar is placed on a lion, it transmits a signal via satellite four times a day to a central server with detailed information on its location.

Why do male lions have manes?
Males protect their pride from intruding males. A mane makes the male look large, strong and intimidating, perhaps enough to scare the intruder away. If they do fight, the mane’s long, thick hair provides some protection from the claws and teeth of its rival.

Can you imagine what it would be like to live with large predators here today in Ohio?
We used to share our land with cougars, wolves, and bears, and there’s some evidence that they’re starting to move back into the region. While coexistence with large predators can make us uneasy, it’s actually beneficial to us. Large predators would naturally keep deer populations from growing too large and causing havoc on our roads and in our native habitats and yards.

Why do lions sleep so much?
Lions spend up to 20 hours a day resting. Hunting is such a high energy activity, that they can’t afford to waste energy any other way. While our lions here at the Zoo don’t hunt, we try to keep them physically fit and active through enrichment and operant conditioning. Still, they are lions, so they sleep a lot.

Have you heard about our Lions and Livelihoods Bracelets?
The Zoo purchases beaded bracelets hand-crafted by Maasai women in Kenya. They are a symbol of how the Maasai coexist with lions and other wildlife. By purchasing a bracelet, you are helping us save lions in the wild. All the money raised from bracelet sales is sent back to the Women’s Group to support the community and their conservation efforts. Let guests know where they can buy a bracelet.

Have you ever heard of a kopje (COP-ee)?
Throughout the savannah you’ll find large rocky hills and boulders called kopjes. Where there’s a kopje, you’ll find wildlife, including lions that use them as a vantage point. There is more water in the ground around kopjes, which supports a variety of plants and animals. Wildlife flees to the kopje for protection from fire and they find shelter in their holes, cracks, and caves. Even people take advantage of the kopje, often leaving rock paintings behind. Point out paintings on wall.

Are African lions endangered?
Lion populations have plummeted from 100,000 to an estimated 32,000 in the past 50 years. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) lists them as Vulnerable and so we considered it a species at risk. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering listing the African lion under the Endangered Species Act.
**Cheetah Encounter**

Continuing down the path from the lion exhibit, guests can head up to the Cheetah Encounter show yard, which seats 800 people. Two to three times a day, the Cat Ambassador Program presents a 20-minute wildlife show. The Cheetah Encounter Show allows visitors to experience cheetahs running at top speeds. In addition to two cheetah runs, the Encounter also features other small cat species, including an African serval, ocelot, fishing cat and domestic house cat. Other animal species, including a red river hog, an African crested porcupine and an Anatolian shepherd dog, also make guest appearances. The show script varies yearly but themes highlight the adaptations each species has for survival in its environment as well as conservation efforts underway to help protect species populations. When shows are not scheduled, guests should still be able to view a cheetah and/or Anatolian shepherd hanging out in the yard.

**Flamingo Exhibit**

Returning down the path in reverse, guests pass the lion exhibit on the right and the giraffe exhibit on the left. Then they come to the greater flamingo exhibit, which houses a dozen or so of these colorful, noisy birds.

**ID text:**

**Greater Flamingo**

Hundreds of thousands of flamingos—what a spectacle! They never stop moving—heads constantly turning left and right and bobbing up and down. And the noise! There was a whole lot of honking going on.

What are all these flamingos doing here? Apparently, they come for the buffet. Heads upside down, flamingos pump water through the strainer-like edges of their beaks, trapping algae, shrimp and other little critters.

**Fact File**

Scientific name: *Phoenicopterus roseus*

Length: 4 to 6 ft  
Weight: 6 to 7 lbs  
Lifespan: More than 20 yrs in wild  
Habitat: Shallow saltwater lakes and lagoons  
Diet: Small invertebrates, seeds and algae  
Range: Africa, Southwest Europe and Asia
African Animal Encounter/Interactive Space
Across from the flamingo exhibit is a family-friendly interactive space that includes a corral designated for animal encounters on a very intimate scale. Interpretive staff will present African animals from the interpretive collection there at all times from mid-March through October. Guests do not enter the corral, but may be able to reach in over the short rock wall barrier for hands on interaction.

Nearby there is a bronze sculpture (artist: Tom Tischler) of a lioness and four cubs on which kids can play and climb. The sculpture is surrounded by mulch and makes for a great photo opportunity.
Giraffe Exhibit
Passing by the flamingo exhibit and interactive space, guests head up a ramp that takes them to the giraffe viewing deck. Here guests can feed crackers to the giraffes for a nominal fee at scheduled times. There will also be regularly scheduled keeper chats. There may or may not be crowned cranes on exhibit with the giraffes.

Guests can exit off giraffe deck to return to the main Zoo loop, acting as a release valve on especially busy days. This will serve as an exit only.

ID Text:

Maasai Giraffe
In the trees, giraffes blend in, but on the open savannah, they are easy to spot. They tower above the grasses. Just imagine how far they can see from that height. It would be hard to sneak up on a giraffe. Lucky for us, they didn’t seem bothered at all by our presence.

All giraffes have spots, but their shapes differ between subspecies.
Masai giraffes - jagged spots
Reticulated giraffes - neatly outlined shapes

Fact File
Scientific name: *Giraffa camelopardalis tippelskirchi*
Height: 13 to 17 ft
Weight: 1,210 to 4,250 lbs
Lifespan: 25 yrs in wild
Habitat: Savannah and woodland
Diet: Leaves, shoots, and fruits
Range: Southern Kenya and Tanzania
Giraffe adaptations interpretive text:

Well-suited to the Savannah
The giraffe is an odd-looking creature, to be sure. It’s thanks to these unusual features that giraffes are so well-adapted to survive on the savannah.

- An 18-inch-long tongue strips leaves off branches
- Infrasonic hearing for long-distance communication
- Up to 17 feet tall to reach high leaves
- Four stomachs to digest leaves
- Keen long-distance color vision
- Coat camouflages in woodland savannah
- Long tufted tail to swat flies
- Long eyelashes protect eyes from thorns
- 25 pound heart to pump blood to head
- 6-foot tall legs with huge hooves to kick off lions
# Conversation Starters: Maasai Giraffe Exhibit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why are giraffes so tall?</strong></td>
<td>Being so tall allows the giraffe to feed on plants that are out of reach for rhinos, antelope, and other browsers. It also allows the giraffe to spot predators such as lions from more than half a mile away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How can you tell one giraffe from another?</strong></td>
<td>Each giraffe has a unique spotting pattern, just like we have unique fingerprints. <em>Point out the distinct differences between each of our giraffes.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How many neck bones do you think a giraffe has?</strong></td>
<td>The giraffe’s six foot long neck contains just seven bones, the same number as other mammals, including you. Its neck bones are just bigger and longer than ours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A human heart weighs about a pound. How much do you think a giraffe heart weighs?</strong></td>
<td>Weighing up to 25 pounds, a large heart is necessary to pump enough blood to the brain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guess how much a giraffe eats in one day.</strong></td>
<td>Giraffes spend much of the day feeding and can eat up to 75 pounds a day. Its favorite food is acacia leaves. Leaves are hard to digest so the giraffe, like other herbivores, has to eat a lot of them to get enough nutrition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The giraffe has a foot-and-a-half long tongue. Why do you think the giraffe has such a long tongue?</strong></td>
<td>A foot-and-a-half long tongue can nimbly strip leaves and fruits from a branch. Thick saliva protects the giraffe’s tongue from the thorns of its favorite food source, the acacia tree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How does a giraffe get away from a lion?</strong></td>
<td>The giraffe’s tall neck and excellent vision enable it to spot predators, such as lions, from far away. If a predator comes closer, the giraffe flees at speeds up to 30 miles per hour. If a predator gets too close, the giraffe will defend itself with a hefty kick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why do giraffes bump necks?</strong></td>
<td>The males spar, or neck, by hitting each other with their heads and necks to establish breeding rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How tall is a giraffe calf at birth?</strong></td>
<td>At birth, a giraffe calf is already six feet tall and up to 150 pounds. The calf can stand up within 20 minutes and walk within an hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Are giraffes endangered?</strong></td>
<td>While giraffe populations have decreased over the past century, they are not considered endangered. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) lists them as Lower Risk, and fairly stable populations exist. Giraffes are hunted for their hair, hides, and meat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
East African Crowned Crane
We came across a courting pair of crowned cranes. They are beautiful birds, and talented, too. I had to chuckle at their comical dance—hopping about in circles around each other, bobbing their heads and spreading their wings. What fun!

An impressive 6 to 7 foot wingspan

Fact File
Scientific name: *Balearica regulorum*
Height: 3.3 to 3.5 ft
Weight: 6.5 to 8.7 lbs
Lifespan: Up to 25 yrs in captivity
Habitat: Wetland and savannah
Diet: Grasses, seeds, insects, and other small animals
Status: Species@Risk (IUCN—Endangered)
Range: Eastern and southern Africa
Lale’enok Resource Centre

Located off the path along the mixed species savannah exhibit is a flexible interpretive space modeled after the Lale’enok Resource Centre in Kenya. The thatch-roofed, open-air shelter contains signage that interprets human-wildlife coexistence and highlights our field partnership in Kenya. It can be reserved for education programs or group sales, but is open to the public otherwise. During the summer, TRIBE Teens will facilitate the interpretation and conduct beading demonstrations.

Interpretive signage in Lale’enok Resource Centre text:

Welcome to the Lale’enok Resource Centre

What is Lale’enok?

In Maasai, Lale’enok means “place where information is brought and shared” and that is the purpose of this community-based resource and research centre. Owned by the Olkirimatian Women’s Group in the South Rift Valley of Kenya, Lale’enok provides the local Maasai community with a forum to engage with partner scientists and conservationists to support both wildlife conservation and thriving livelihoods.

Community Education

Lale’enok hosts inspiring, educational visits for local school children and teachers. They go on game drives to see wildlife and track lions, and game scouts teach them how to interpret animal spoor, or tracks left behind in the dirt. The Maasai also hold community meetings at Lale’enok to share information and discuss best resource management practices.
Research and Conservation

As part of Rebuilding the Pride, a program supported by the Cincinnati Zoo to restore a healthy lion population while reducing the loss of livestock to lions, lions are fitted with Global Positioning System (GPS) collars.

Resource Assessors collect scientific data on biodiversity, which includes radiotracking lions. Knowing where the prides are lets herders know where to avoid grazing their livestock.

Research has shown that more than 75% of Kenya’s wildlife lives outside of national parks in areas such as the South Rift Valley, which is one of the most spectacular wildlife areas in the world.

Community Game Scouts protect wildlife from poachers and deal with human-wildlife conflict.

Community Resource Assessors and scientists from our partner organization, African Conservation Centre, conduct research to understand the interactions between people, livestock, wildlife, habitat, water resources and temperature, which are all key components of the ecosystem.

The number of lions in the South Rift Valley is growing steadily. There are nearly as many here—sharing space with people and livestock—as in the national parks.
Earth Expeditions

Members of the South Rift Association of Landowners (SORALO) discuss how they maintain a coexistence with wildlife with U.S. educators during an Earth Expeditions graduate course led by the Cincinnati Zoo in conjunction with Miami University’s Project Dragonfly.

Earth Expeditions participants learn from Dr. David Western, Founder and Chairman of the African Conservation Centre and former head of the Kenya Wildlife Service, about his decades-long research on the interactions between people, livestock and wildlife.

Maasai women and Earth Expeditions participants share stories and gain a global perspective on what life is like on the other side of the world.
Lions and Livelihoods Bracelets
Maasai women from the Olkiramatian Women’s Group bead bracelets to be sold as part of the Lions and Livelihoods Bracelets program at the Cincinnati Zoo. Funds from bracelet sales provide tuition for local school girls and contribute to the operation of the Lale’enok Resource Center. A symbol of the coexistence between people and lions, each bracelet contains four colors. Blue stands for peace and white stands for clarity. Red represents the lions and black represents the Maasai people. Strung together, the bracelet’s message is that Maasai and lions living together bring peace and clarity. Teens from the Cincinnati Zoo’s TRIBE program learn how to bead bracelets from Maasai women in Kenya. Back at the Zoo, the teens share the Maasai’s story of human and wildlife coexistence with guests.

Looking out from Lale’enok over the savannah exhibit, there are several questions posted to prompt closer observation and inquiry:

- Which animals do you see at the waterhole?
- Do the animals spend more time alone or close together?
- Do the kudus spend more time near the trees and bushes or out in the open?
- How do the animals interact with each other?
- How can you tell if an animal is relaxed or on alert?
- Where do the animals like to hang out?
**Conversation Starters: Lale’enok Resource Centre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcome to the Lale’enok Resource Centre. Do you know what “lale’enok” means?</th>
<th>Have you heard about our Lions and Livelihoods Bracelets?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lale’enok means “place where information is brought and shared” in Maasai. In Kenya, this is where the community comes together to meet about important issues such as managing natural resources and dealing with wildlife conflict. Here at the Zoo, our Lale’enok is a hub of communication and education as well.</td>
<td>The Zoo purchases beaded bracelets hand-crafted by Maasai women in Kenya. They are a symbol of how the Maasai coexist with lions and other wildlife. By purchasing a bracelet, you are helping us save lions in the wild. All the money raised from bracelet sales is sent back to the Women’s Group to support the community and their conservation efforts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Isn’t it amazing how the Maasai people in Kenya live side-by-side with lions, giraffes and other wildlife?</th>
<th>Can you imagine what it would be like to live with large predators here today in Ohio?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Here we are so separated from nature and what we think of as “the wild”. There the people, cattle and wild animals move freely among each other, drinking from the same river and grazing on the same grass. They live in small huts surrounded by thorny bush fences, called bomas, which they move between as they migrate from place to place in search of water and good grazing areas for their cattle.</td>
<td>We used to share our land with cougars, wolves, and bears, and there’s some evidence that they’re starting to move back into the region. While coexistence with large predators can make us uneasy, it’s actually beneficial to us. Large predators would naturally keep deer populations from growing too large and causing havoc on our roads and in our native habitats and yards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do the Maasai protect their livestock from lions?</th>
<th>What are some human-wildlife conflicts we deal with where we live?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is traditionally the role of young Maasai men to protect the herds from lions and other predators. Today, the Maasai combine tradition with modern technology to maintain their coexistence with wildlife. Local Maasai research assistants track lions with Global Positioning System (GPS) collars. Knowing where the prides are lets herders know where to avoid grazing their livestock. When herders must move through areas with lions, they call on community game scouts to accompany them for extra protection. They even use cell phones to let each other know where lions and the best grazing areas are!</td>
<td>Just a few examples are raccoons getting into garbage cans, deer eating plants in our gardens and causing roadway accidents, geese damaging lawns and crops, coyotes attacking our pets and skunks stinking up the place. Even so, native wildlife is important to keeping our ecosystems healthy and we must look for ways to reduce conflict without harming wildlife populations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you like some tips on watching wildlife?</th>
<th>How can we better share our space with wildlife?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Lale’enok Resource Center is a great place from which to observe the hoofed stock and birds in the savannah exhibit. Offer binoculars and tips on how to focus them on faraway animals. Point out where the different animals like to hang out in the exhibit. Encourage visitors to consider the question prompts posted in Lale’enok. See page 7 for more tips.</td>
<td>Create wildlife-friendly habitat in your own backyard. Secure your trash and do not feed scraps to animals to prevent conflict. Support local habitat protection and restoration efforts. Reduce the use of pesticides, herbicides and other harmful chemicals. Do not take in native wildlife as pets. These are just a few ways to be more wildlife-friendly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
African Painted Dog Exhibit
Continuing along the edge of the mixed species savannah exhibit to the northern perimeter, guests then come up on the African painted dog exhibit. There are two glass viewing areas into the exhibit on either end. In addition to an ID sign at the first viewing area, there is also a sign highlighting the Ruaha Carnivore Project in Tanzania. At the second painted dog viewing area, there is an interpretive sign on painted dog society and pack life. Here there are also large replicas of painted dog ears mounted on posts to allow guests to place their heads between the ears and pretend they have large dog ears.

ID text:

African Painted Dog
Right there walking along the road in front of us – a pack of at least eight painted dogs. What a rare sight!

Now that the heat of the day has passed, I imagine they were just setting out to hunt. Working together, the pack will chase an impala or wildebeest until it tires and slows down enough for the lead dog to grab and pull it to the ground.

African painted dogs are also called wild dogs.

In pursuit of prey, painted dogs can run up to 37 miles per hour.

Fact File
Scientific name: Lycaon pictus
Length: 2.5 to 4 ft
Weight: 44 to 71 lbs
Lifespan: 10 yrs
Habitat: Savannah, woodland and semi-desert
Prey: Primarily antelope; some warthogs, hares and small animals
Status: Species at Risk (IUCN—Endangered)
Species Survival Plan
Range: Central and Southern Africa
Predators and People in Tanzania
In southern Tanzania, the Ruaha Carnivore Project (RCP) works with local communities to ensure the survival of carnivores and people in and around Ruaha National Park. The Ruaha region is home to 10% of Africa’s lions. The third largest African painted dog population lives in the Ruaha region.

Studying Carnivores
RCP documents the presence and location of wildlife species through community-reported sightings and photos taken by motion-triggered cameras, or camera traps.

Improving the Lives of People and Predators
Reducing carnivore attacks on livestock and retaliatory attacks by people is a main focus of the project. Reinforcing fencing around corrals to keep livestock safe from predators at night, for example, goes a long way toward building positive relationships between people and predators.

RCP helps communities realize tangible benefits from having carnivores around by providing employment for local people, school supplies, scholarships and a stocked medical clinic.

Regular education and outreach activities such as movie nights and community meetings are held. The project even takes villagers and school children who have never been to Ruaha National Park on educational visits to the park, with support from the Zoo’s Angel Fund.

Through the Ruaha Explorer’s Club, you can sponsor a camera trap and RCP will post images taken on a dedicated Facebook page. Scan to check out the Cincinnati Zoo Cam’s page.

**Interpretive on Ruaha Carnivore Project text:**

PREDATORS AND PEOPLE IN TANZANIA

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Interpretive on life in a painted dog pack text:

All for One, One for All in the Painted Dog Pack
For African painted dogs, also known as painted dogs, cooperation is the name of the game and survival is the aim. Painted dogs live in large, extended families, in which all group members work together for the good of the pack.

The leaders of the pack, an alpha male and female, are the only ones that breed. Instead of leaving the pack, their offspring stick around as adults and help raise their younger siblings.

Painted dogs give birth to an average of 10 pups in a single litter!

Elaborate greeting ceremonies complete with leaping, face-licking, tail-wagging, and squealing are the social glue that bonds the pack together.

Hunting cooperatively, painted dogs can take down prey as large as a wildebeest. The whole pack shares in the feast, even the pups and pack members that stayed behind as dogs returning from the hunt regurgitate bits of meat for them.

One dog begs the other to regurgitate part of a meal by whining and licking its muzzle.
**Painted dog ears interactive text:**

**Oh My, What Big Ears You Have!**
All the better to keep track of the pack by listening for long distance calls. Huge ears also help painted dogs cool down by giving off extra heat. What if your ears were as big as a painted dog’s ears?
### Conversation Starters: African Painted Dogs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How are African painted dogs different from the domestic dogs we keep as pets?</th>
<th>Do painted dogs bark and howl?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For one, they are a wild canid species like a wolf or coyote is. Another difference is that they have only four toes, whereas dogs and wolves have five. Painted dogs are smart and sociable like domestic dogs.</td>
<td>They do bark in alarm, but most of their vocalizations are very different from other canids. To keep in touch over long distances, painted dogs hoot or coo. When excited, they twitter like birds. They also whine when distressed, begging for food or calling for pups.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Did you know that painted dogs live in large, cooperative families, or packs?</th>
<th>Why are African painted dogs endangered?</th>
</tr>
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<td>Cooperation is the name of the game and survival is the aim. Painted dogs live in large, extended families, in which all group members work together for the good of the pack. The leaders of the pack, an alpha male and female, are the only ones that breed. Instead of leaving the pack, their offspring stick around as adults and help raise their younger siblings.</td>
<td>The African painted dog may be the most endangered carnivore in Africa, with less than 6,000 remaining in the wild. Like other predators, it has been persecuted for hunting livestock and its habitat is shrinking as the human population grows. It is also susceptible to diseases spread by domestic dogs like rabies and distemper.</td>
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<tr>
<th>How does a painted dog pack hunt?</th>
<th>How does the Zoo support painted dog conservation in the wild?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunting cooperatively, painted dogs can take down prey as large as a wildebeest though they usually go for medium-sized antelope. Working together, the pack will chase prey until it tires and slows down enough for the lead dog to grab and pull it to the ground. They have great endurance and are able to chase prey for several miles without tiring.</td>
<td>The Zoo supports the Ruaha Carnivore Project (RCP) in Tanzania, which works with local communities to ensure the survival of carnivores, including painted dogs, and people in and around Ruaha National Park. They conduct research, educational activities and help reduce conflict with predators by reinforcing corrals to keep them away from livestock, for example.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Guess how many pups a painted dog can have in one litter.</th>
<th>Are you on Facebook?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Painted dogs can have up to 20 pups in a single litter! The average litter size is 10 pups. Only the dominant pair, the alpha male and female, reproduces and the pair mates for life. The pups stay in an underground den for a few months before joining the rest of the pack. All the other dogs help take care of and raise the pups.</td>
<td>If so, check out Cincinnati Zoo Cam on Facebook. RCP posts 1-2 photos a week taken by the camera trap sponsored by the Zoo. It’s fun to see what kind of wildlife show up in the photos. RCP uses the data collected from the photos to learn more about the wildlife in the area.</td>
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<th>How do painted dogs keep the peace within the pack?</th>
<th>Do African painted dogs attack people?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggression and fighting is very rare in painted dog packs. Instead, they maintain harmony through a ritualized greeting ceremony involving submissive and appeasement behaviors such as crouching low, sharing food, begging, licking each other’s lips, and whining.</td>
<td>Painted dogs are not dangerous to people in the wild. <em>If visitors bring up the tragic incident where a toddler was killed by painted dogs at the Pittsburgh Zoo after falling into their exhibit, explain that it was an isolated incident. Experts believe the dogs were curiously investigating the boy as if it were a new toy rather than viciously attacking and trying to kill him.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meerkat Exhibit
In between the two painted dog viewing windows on the other side of the path is the first chance for guests to encounter meerkats. It is an open-air exhibit that guests can walk all the way around. There are three glass viewing windows as well as an indoor viewing into their holding area. Each viewing area has an ID sign with different information (but same fact files). Around the back side of the exhibit, there is a crawl-in tunnel that allows guests a pop-up view in the exhibit. There are also five life-sized meerkat bronze sculptures placed near a bench by the exhibit.

ID text:
Meerkat #1
It’s fascinating to watch the meerkats work together. While the rest of the mob scurries about rustling up grub, they take turns standing tall on a rock, termite mound or tree, looking out for danger. An eagle flies overhead and a whistle from the guard sends the mob dashing, tails up, for their burrow.

Fact File
Scientific name: *Suricata suricatta*
Length: Up to 1 ft
Weight: 1.5 to 2 lbs
Lifespan: Up to 15 yrs
Habitat: Savannah
Prey: Insects, lizards, scorpions, and other small animals
Range: Southern Africa

Meerkat #2
I could sit and watch the meerkats for hours. They are so entertaining! I especially love watching the youngsters tussle and play. Living in groups of 30 or more, everyone pitches in to care for the pups, taking turns as babysitters and teachers while the others are out looking for food.
Meerkat #3
Dig up a grub here, a millipede there...chomp, chomp, chomp. Ooh, now here’s a challenge – a venomous scorpion! Quickly snatching up the scorpion, the meerkat bites off the stinger before it has a chance to defend itself. Dragging the body across the ground, it rubs off any remaining venom before eating it.

Meerkat #4
Like other mongooses, meerkats spend the night in a burrow. In the early morning, we watch them emerge. Standing tall on their hind legs, they expose their bellies to the sun to warm up before the day’s foraging activities can begin. A nearly bald patch of darker skin acts like a solar panel to soak up the sun’s rays.

Dung Beetle Bronze Sculpture
In the vicinity of the meerkat exhibit, there is also a dung beetle bronze sculpture with a small interpretive sign:

Dung for Dinner
Yes, really. Dung beetles feed on the undigested bits of food left over in other animals’ feces. It’s fascinating to watch a beetle shape the dung into a ball and roll it away. It practically does a handstand on its front legs, pushing the ball backwards with its back legs.
Resources

Check these out for more information:

Books
Biology and Conservation of Wild Felids. 2010. David W. Macdonald and Andrew J. Loveridge

Articles

Web Sites
African Conservation Centre, www.conservationafrica.org
Anna Campbell Films, www.annacampbell.tv/films
  • Shall We Dance is a documentary on the coexistence of Maasai and lions in South Rift Valley of Kenya.
Cheetah Conservation Botswana, www.cheetahbotswana.com
Cheetah Conservation Fund, www.cheetah.org
Cheetah Outreach, www.cheetah.co.za
Felid TAG, www.felidtag.org
Lion SSP Conservation Campaign, www.houstonzoo.org/lionssp
Maasai Association, www.maasai-association.org
National Geographic Big Cats Initiative, http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/big-cats
Niassa Lion Project, www.niassalion.org
Panthera, www.panthera.org
Ruaha Carnivore Project, www.ruahacarnivoreproject.com
South Rift: Communities, Conservation, and Research Blog, http://southriftccr.blogspot.com
South Rift Association of Land Owners, www.soralo.org