### Wild Wonders:

## Leopards

Beauty, strength, intelligence and versatility all culminate in the fourth largest big cat on Earth, the leopard!



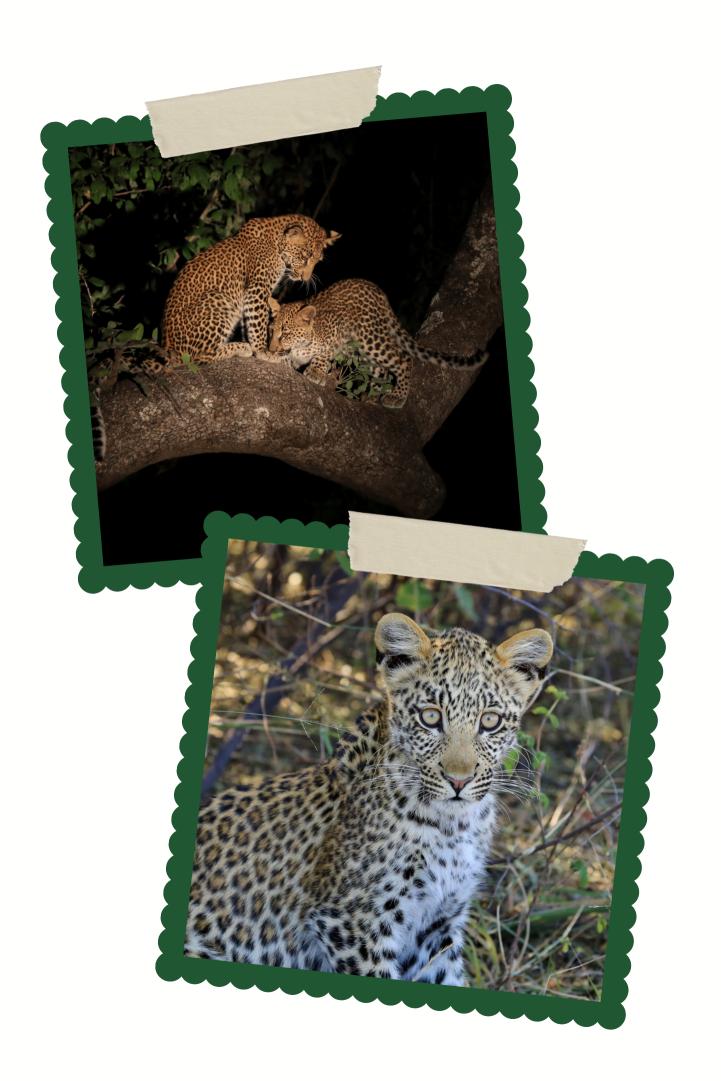


#### LEOPARD CUBS

Leopard cubs are born blind and helpless, at any time of year, though in some regions their birth is timed closely to their antelope prey's calving cycles.

The mother leopardess alone safeguards and teaches the cubs everything needed for survival, from prey selection to larger predator avoidance, and much more!

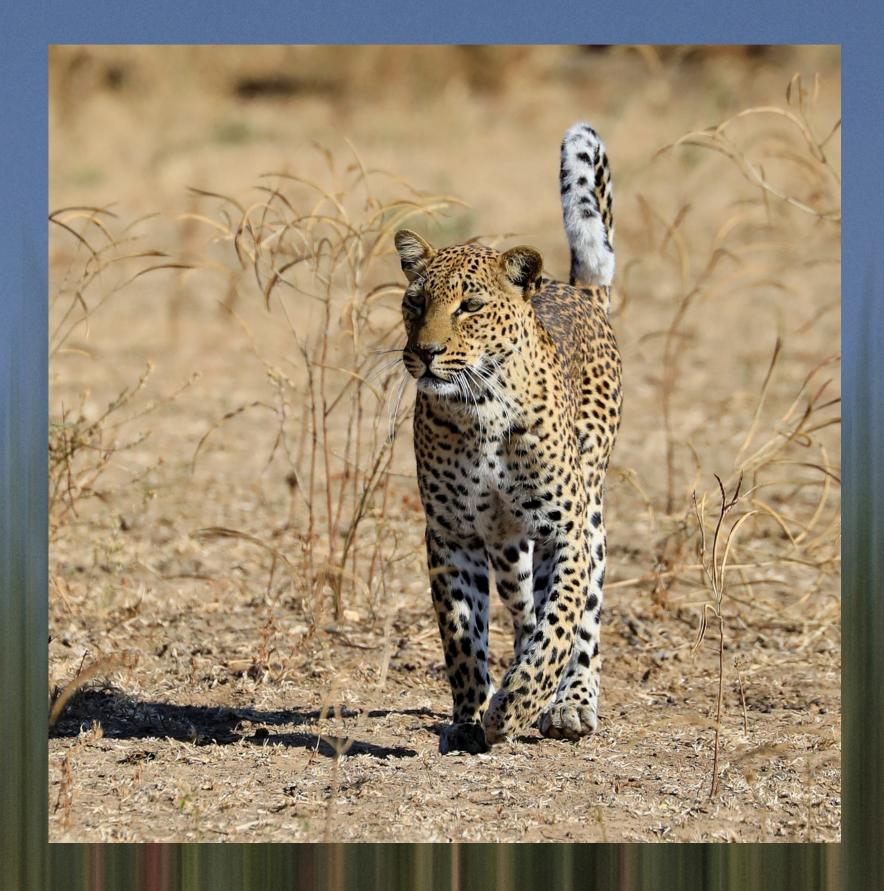
The leopardess will care for the precious cubs for up to two years, before she sees them off to return to her solitary life. Depending on resources available a cub may overlap mom's territory for a short while thereafter.



### Hunting Prowess

Leopards are predators that utilize stealth to hunt their prey, making their camouflage most effective. They prefer to stalk within 10 metres of their prey before bounding at it with skill & agility, quickly subduing it. Where lions and hyenas overlap their terrain, a leopard will haul its prey up a tree for safekeeping!

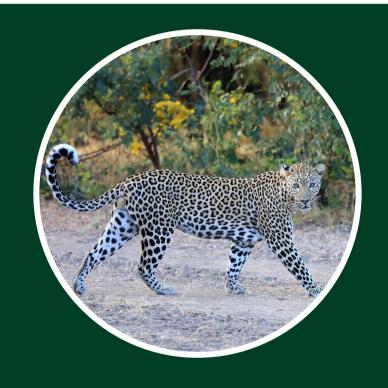






Leopard prey is diverse and ranges from birdlife, reptiles, fish, hares & rodents, to small-medium sized antelope. Some of their favoured prey are impala, duikers & steenbok.

# Watching Leopards in the Wild



Zambia is a wonderful country for spotting leopards, most especially the valley of the leopard in South Laungwa! The Lower Zambezi valley is another great destination for observing these beautiful felines.



Both the Okavango delta and Linyanti regions of Botswana have superb leopard populations and sightings. In east Africa, Tanzania's fabled Serengeti has excellent leopard watching as well.



The greater Kruger region in South Africa has a very healthy leopard population, and the national park along with associated private reserves such as Sabi Sands & Timbavati yield wonderful leopard watching!

# Leopard Conservation

Leopards are still threatened in the wild and have witnessed a precipitous drop in their population in the past several decades. Habitat loss and poaching for their beautifully patterned fur are the main reasons for their decline in the wild. As apex predators, leopards are incredibly important in any ecosystem and their protection is of the utmost value.

Consider supporting wildlife nonprofits that work tirelessly towards leopard conservation; such as PANTHERA & GREAT PLAINS CONSERVATION.



