



# LEOPARD

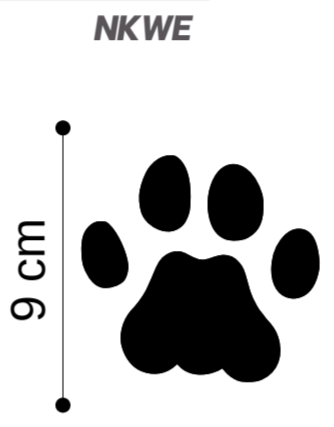
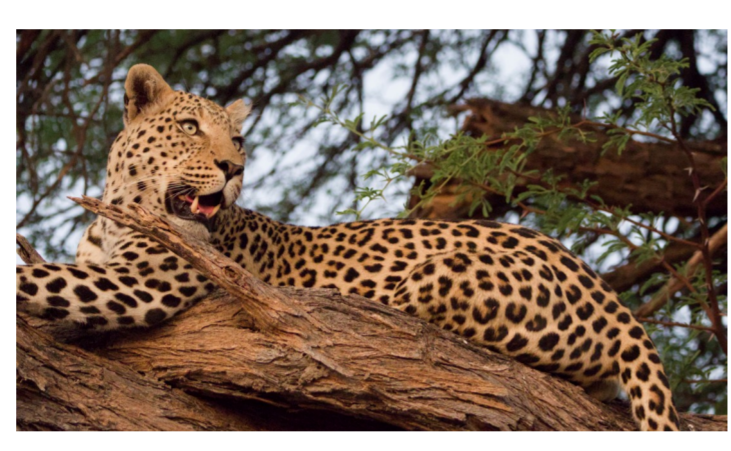
*Panthera pardus*



**DISTRIBUTION**

**AT A GLANCE**

Body Length:	1.5-2 m
Height:	60-80 cm
Weight:	30-90 kg
Lifespan:	13 years
Gestation:	100 days
Litter-size:	2-3 cubs



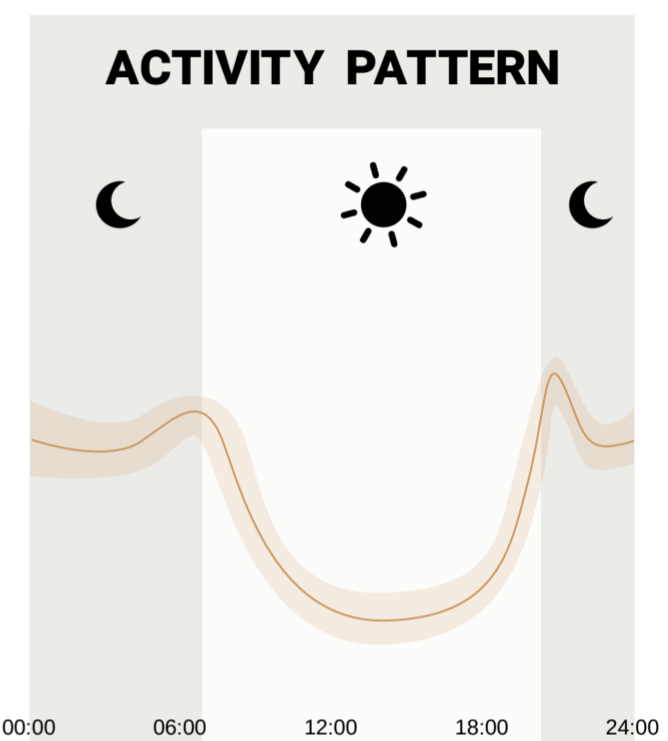
Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) are perfectly proportioned felids with a golden coat and black rosetted spots. Their tails are long and exhibit a white-tip, which may serve as a „follow-me“ sign to their cubs. Both males and females are solitary and defend exclusive territories. Direct encounters are rare, as they avoid each other using scent and scratch marks. Offspring will remain with their mothers until they reach about 18 months.

**PREY**

**COMPETITORS**

Unlike hyenas or wild dogs, leopards do not chase their prey but sneak up on it close enough to pounce. Leopards are formidable climbers and powerful enough to hoist their kills up a tree to secure it from competitors like lions and hyenas. During the heat of the day, leopards can often be found lingering or dozing in trees.

Leopards are elusive and secretive and prefer areas that provide enough cover for an ambush, yet they are highly adaptive, both in terms of habitat and preferred prey. Their diet may include anything from reptiles, birds and small mammals up to large antelopes, such as kudu and wildebeest.



Leopards are active and hunt at night (nocturnal). They have excellent night vision and are able to ambush their prey in almost complete darkness.

## STATUS & CONSERVATION

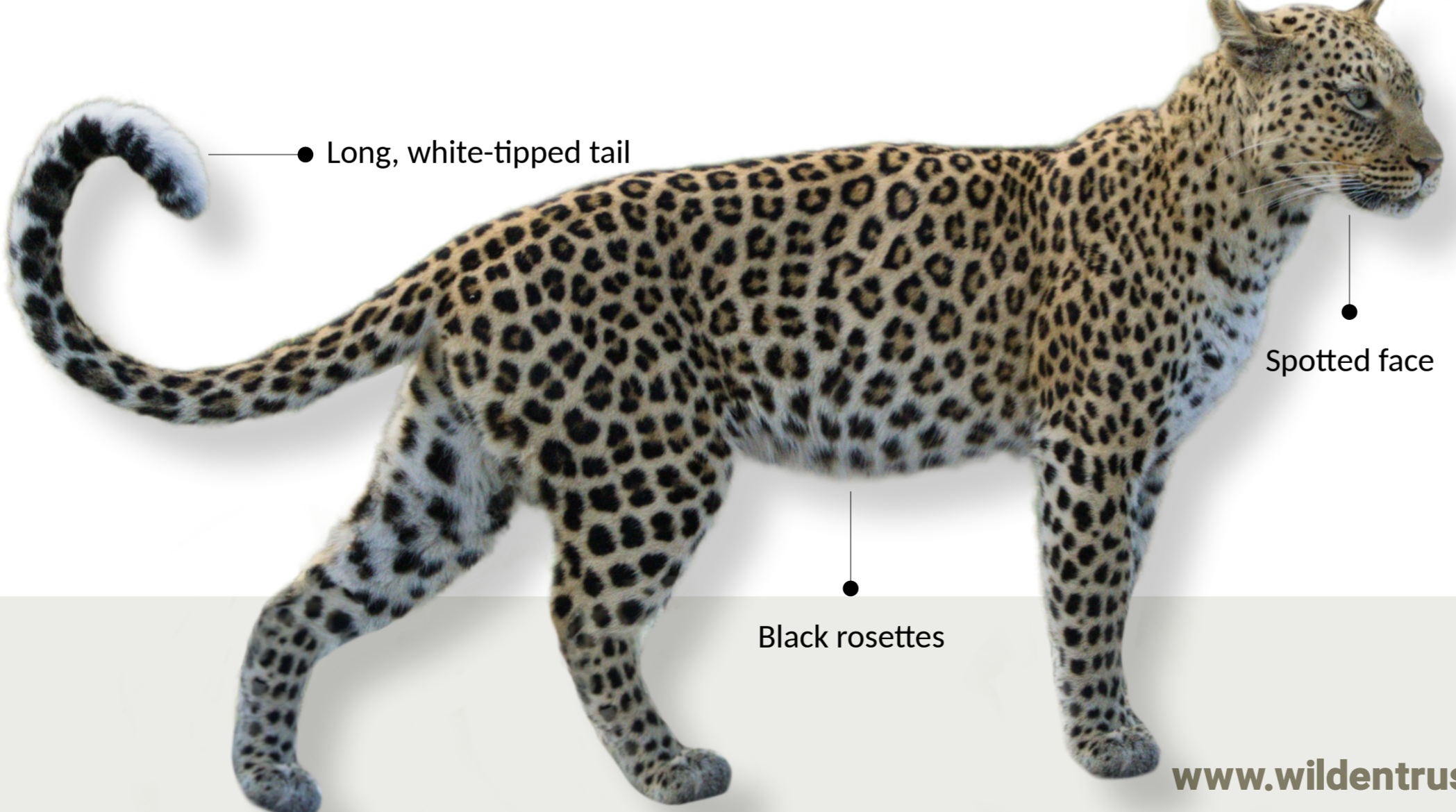
Although leopards are able to survive in virtually any habitat, the global population is in such decline that the IUCN red list categorizes the species as **vulnerable**. The species is subdivided into several subspecies, some of which are categorized as critically endangered and are likely to disappear in the near future. For instance, the Amur Leopard in China and Korea remains with fewer than 60 mature

individuals in the wild. Unfortunately, **reliable data is lacking** for most subspecies, impeding reliable assessments. Leopard numbers in Africa appear to have plummeted over the past decades, mainly due to a depletion of their prey base due to illegal bushmeat activities. Although an estimate of 700'000 individuals is often reported, this number is based on a heavily flawed report from 1988.

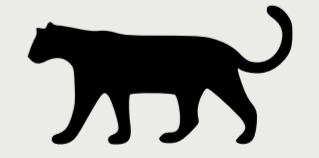


## OUR RESEARCH PROGRAM

Over the past decades, BPC has deployed GPS collars and activity sensors on several Leopards. Besides general insights into the movement patterns of Leopards, we also study competition of leopards with other large carnivores both spatially and temporally. Furthermore, we are interested in better understanding Leopard's scent-marking behavior and its consequences for territoriality.



## SOCIAL ORGANIZATION



Both male and female Leopards live solitarily and will only associate for a short mating period of about two to five days. Females may be accompanied by their offspring for about 18 months.