

Leopard facts



Most leopards are light coloured and have dark spots on their fur. These spots are called 'rosettes' because their shape is similar to that of a rose. There are also black leopards. Their spots are hard to see because their fur is so dark.

Leopards can be found all over the world - they live in Africa, Asia, India and China.

Leopards are very fast cats and can run at up to 58km/h. What a fast runner they are! They're super springy and can leap 6m forward through the air - that's the length of three adults lying head to toe!

Leopards spend most of their time alone. They each have their own territory, and leave scratches on trees, urine scent marks and poop to warn other leopards to stay away.

These big cats enjoy lots of different kinds of food. They eat bugs, fish, antelope, monkeys, rodents, deer. In fact, pretty much any prey that is available!

Leopards are good at climbing and like to rest in the branches of trees during the day. They are strong beasts and can carry their heavy prey up into the trees so that pesky scavengers, such as hyenas, don't steal their meal.

Leopards are nocturnal which means they are active at night. They spend their days mostly resting, camouflaged in the trees or hiding in caves.

When it comes to hunting for food, these big cats know they're stuff. When a leopard spots a meal, it approaches with legs bent and head low, so as not to be seen. It then stalks its prey carefully and quietly, until its five to ten metres within range. Then....pounce! The leopard dashes forward and takes down its victim with a bite to the throat or neck. Smaller prey, such as small birds or mice, will receive a fatal blow from the felines paw. Ouch!

Female usually give birth to two or three cubs. Mothers stay with their cubs until they are about 2 years old (when they are old enough to hunt and take care of themselves).

Leopards communicate with each other through distinctive calls. For instance, when one male wants make another aware of his presence, he'll make a hoarse, raspy cough. They also growl when angry and, like domestic cats, purr when happy and relaxed. Cute, eh?

