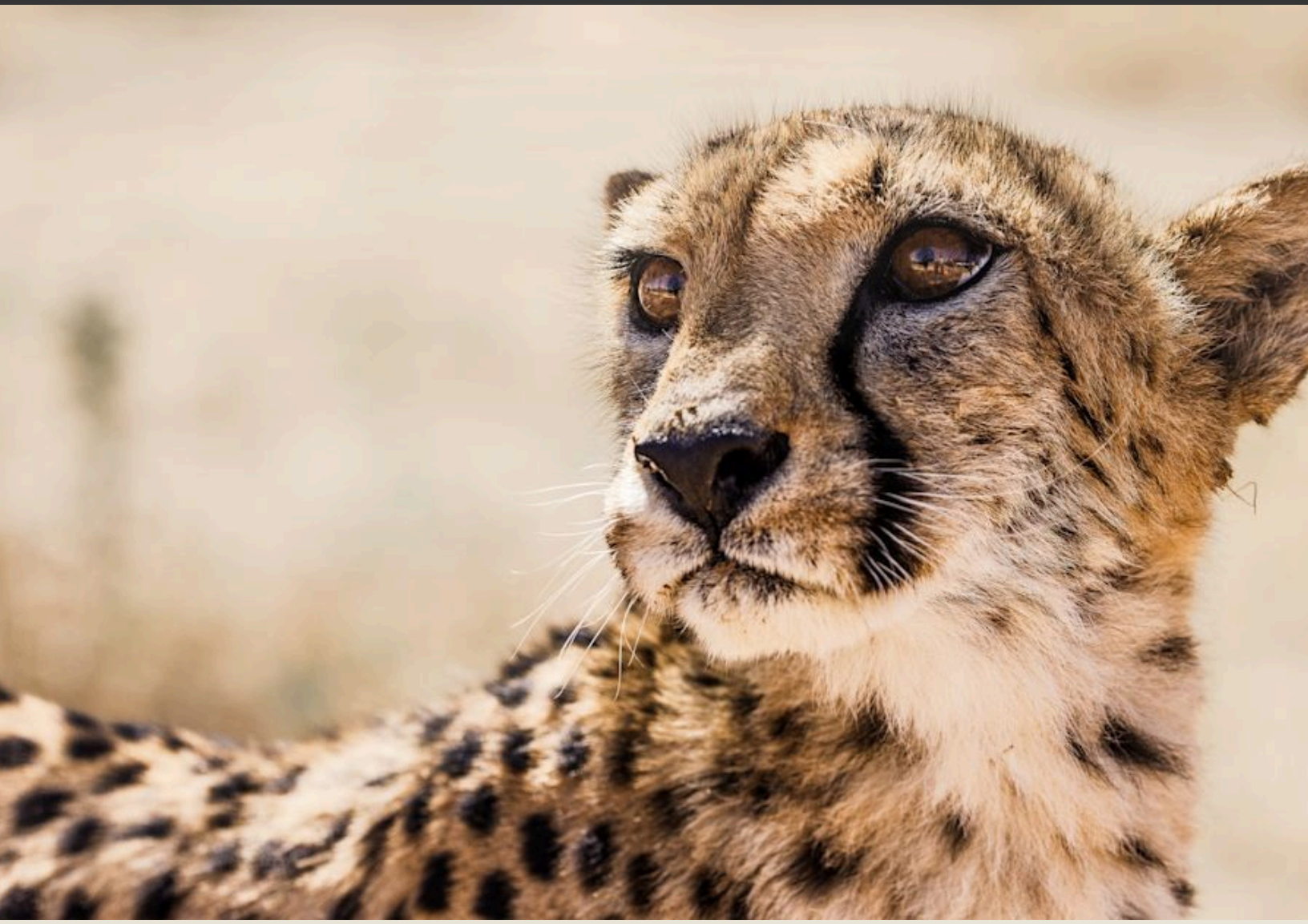
earthwatch expeditions
by Nat Hab

Explore with Purpose



Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range

Go Behind the Scenes with Cheetah Researchers & View Diverse Desert-Adapted Wildlife

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Trip Details:

Days
10 Days / May–Jun, Sep–Nov

Price
From $15658

Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range

Go Behind the Scenes with Cheetah Researchers & View Diverse Desert-Adapted Wildlife

Among Namibia's sunbaked savannas, granite mountains and dry riverbeds, unique desert-adapted wildlife roams the vast, sparsely settled landscapes—including cheetahs. With the largest free-roaming cheetah population on Earth, Namibia is home to about 1,500 of these stealthy predators. But dense thornbush is overtaking the open terrain these fleet felines need to pursue prey. At the Cheetah Conservation Fund's field research center, join top scientists dedicated to protecting the cat's future. Under their direction, count wildlife, check camera traps and compare restored and overgrown habitat to test whether thinning thornbush can give cheetahs and their prey more room to roam. Watch cheetahs sprint at close range, and gain access to specialists in genetics, veterinary care and human-wildlife coexistence. Expand your horizons to explore more of Namibia's stunning wilderness on safari, tracking desert rhinos and scouting for elephant, lion, leopard and more on private conservancies.

Expedition Highlights

Join a Cheetah Research Team

Become part of the research team at one of the world's leading cheetah conservation centers, venturing into a private reserve to gather field data that scientists use to understand—and protect—the habitat wild cheetahs need to survive.

Track Endangered Desert Rhinos in the Wild

Journey into remote northwest Namibia, home to the world's last free-roaming population of desert-adapted black rhinos. Search ancient riverbeds, rocky plains and mopane groves with Rhino Rangers for these critically endangered animals as they roam an unfenced wilderness.

Meet and Help Care for Rescued Cheetahs

Assist with feeding sessions for cheetahs that can no longer live in the wild and witness them at full speed during their morning exercise—a rare chance to see the world's fastest land mammal accelerate and maneuver at close range.

Research at a Glance



The Research Focus

Study how cheetahs, their prey and other wildlife respond when dense thornbush is thinned to restore Namibia's open grassland habitat.



What You'll Do

Count wildlife, monitor waterholes, check camera traps and compare restored and overgrown plots, adding your observations to the research team's long-term dataset.



Why It Matters

Your data helps scientists determine where habitat restoration and wildlife corridors can improve prey availability, biodiversity and movement for Namibia's cheetahs.



Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range Itinerary

Go Behind the Scenes with Cheetah Researchers & View Diverse Desert-Adapted Wildlife

Itinerary at a Glance

Day 1	Windhoek
Days 2–3	Windhoek/Damaraland
Days 4–5	Damaraland / Etosha Heights Private Reserve
Day 6	Etosha Heights Private Reserve / Otjiwarongo
Days 7–9	Otjiwarongo
Day 10	Otjiwarongo / Windhoek



Day 1

Windhoek

Gather in Windhoek before your cheetah research expedition

- Meet your Field Guide and fellow travelers over a welcome dinner
- Learn about Namibia's wildlife and landscapes, with an emphasis on the cheetah conservation work ahead

Arrive in Windhoek, Namibia's capital, set amid the rolling highlands of the country's central plateau. You are met at the airport and transferred to your accommodations nearby, where your journey into one of Africa's great wild destinations begins. Namibia's vast, sparsely settled landscapes support desert-adapted rhinos, elephants, giraffes, zebras, lions, and other iconic African wildlife, as well as the world's largest remaining population of wild cheetahs. With an estimated 1,500 to 3,500 individuals, Namibia is known as the "Cheetah Capital of the World."

About 90% of Namibia's cheetahs live on unfenced farmland alongside people and livestock. The Cheetah Conservation Fund, a global leader in cheetah research and conservation we will be working with, uses satellite tracking and genetic research to study wild populations, while livestock-guarding dogs help farmers protect their herds without killing predators. The goal is coexistence between people and cheetahs.

This evening, gather with your Expedition Leader and fellow travelers for a welcome dinner and introduction to the journey ahead, as you anticipate exciting wildlife encounters in Namibia's vast deserts with rare, hands-on access to active field research focused on cheetah conservation.

Days 2–3

Windhoek/Damaraland

Track desert-adapted black rhinos in Damaraland

- Travel into northwest Namibia, home to a rare population of free-roaming black rhinos
- Search the desert with Rhino Rangers who monitor and protect these critically endangered animals
- Stay at an intimate tented camp in the heart of rhino habitat

Drive northwest from Windhoek into Damaraland, watching the highlands surrounding the capital give way to rocky plains and groves of mopane woodlands dotting this sparsely settled wilderness. Your base is Camp Doros, an intimate tented retreat overlooking a sandy riverbed in a core area for desert-adapted black rhinos. Over the next two days, search for critically endangered black rhinos that range freely across this vast, unfenced wilderness. Nearly wiped out by poaching in the late 20th century—their numbers fell roughly 96% between 1970 and 1993—black rhinos have found an important stronghold in Namibia's arid northwest. Follow experienced Rhino Rangers into rugged terrain, looking for tracks and other signs while learning how they monitor and help protect these desert-adapted animals. Guided walks and drives may also reveal giraffes, oryx, kudu, springbok and mountain zebras, with cheetahs, leopards and hyenas roaming the region.

Back at camp, stake out a spot in the lounge, on the campfire deck or in the plunge pool to watch the light shift in the ever-changing sky above the mopane trees and sandy riverbed. With just six tents, Camp Doros immerses you in solitude, surrounded by the remote rhino country you've spent the day exploring.

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-548-7555

Days 4–5

Damaraland / Etosha Heights Private Reserve

Safari among rhinos, elephants and big cats at Etosha Heights

- Explore an immense private reserve on morning and afternoon game drives
- Watch for white rhinos, elephants and herds of antelope, along with predators like lions, leopards and cheetahs
- Stay above a waterhole with sweeping views of the surrounding plains

At Etosha Heights, a nearly 150,000-acre private reserve bordering Etosha National Park, the stark terrain of northwest Namibia gives way to mopane woodland, open savanna and broad plains. Elephants move between woodland and waterholes, giraffes and antelope range over the grasslands, and lions, cheetahs and elusive leopards hunt throughout the reserve. Morning and afternoon game drives offer uncrowded wildlife viewing away from the busier national park, with ample time to explore these varied habitats and follow the rhythms of wildlife from early light into evening.

Etosha Heights is especially notable for its populations of both black and white rhinos, protected by round-the-clock anti-poaching patrols. Search for both species on game drives, learning to distinguish not only their physical differences but the habitats they favor: browsing black rhinos tend toward thicker cover, while larger, broad-mouthed white rhinos graze on open grasslands. The reserve also protects breeding and roosting habitat for vulnerable white-backed and lappet-faced vultures.

Between game drives, Safari House offers another perspective from which to watch the reserve. This renovated Namibian farmhouse operates entirely on solar power and features a protected, double-tiered photography hide where guests can watch from close range as wildlife gathers at waterhole used by birds and other animals. Keep binoculars close at the pool, in the garden and on the veranda as plains game and occasionally predators come into view, allowing the wildlife watching to continue long after you leave the safari vehicle.

Day 6

Etosha Heights Private Reserve / Otjiwarongo

Go behind the scenes at a leading cheetah research center

- Settle in at the Cheetah Conservation Fund, your base for hands-on cheetah research
- Meet the scientists working to protect Namibia's wild cheetahs
- Learn about the reserve, research program and fieldwork you'll join

After your exciting wildlife viewing experiences on safari, the focus shifts from observing Namibia's animals to taking part in their conservation. Continue to Otjiwarongo, where we spend the next several days at the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), a working research and conservation center in the farmland and savanna where most of Namibia's wild cheetahs live. Meet the CCF team, get oriented to the reserve, and learn about your role in fieldwork. You'll also learn abour what it takes to conserve cheetahs on a landscape shared with people and livestock.

One of the most pressing threats is visible all around you: dense thornbush is overtaking open grasslands, making it harder for cheetahs to hunt and reducing grazing habitat for their prey. Researchers are comparing areas where the bush has been thinned with areas where it remains dense to understand how restoring grassland may benefit cheetahs and other wildlife. Over the coming days, join researchers in collecting data and investigating these questions firsthand. Along the way, you'll see how habitat restoration, veterinary care, genetics, field research and livestock-guarding dogs work together to protect wild cheetahs while helping people and wildlife share the same landscape.

Days 7–9

Otjiwarongo

Join the research team protecting Namibia's wild cheetahs

- Survey wildlife, monitor waterholes and check camera traps with researchers in the reserve
- Review camera-trap images and organize observations that become part of the long-term study
- See cheetahs up close and explore conservation programs ranging from scat-detection dogs to habitat restoration

Set out early with researchers to survey cheetahs and other wildlife along established routes through the reserve, recording the species, numbers and locations of animals you encounter. You'll also monitor waterholes and check remote camera traps, then return to review images and organize the data collected in the field. Your data helps scientists compare how cheetahs and their prey use areas where thornbush has been cleared versus those where dense bush remains.

You'll also get thrillingly close to cheetahs. Watch cats chase a lure during their morning exercise, revealing the speed, agility and power that make them such remarkable hunters. Help with the feeding of permanent resident cheetahs and cats who are undergoing rehabilitation to be returned to the wild. Learn how trained detection dogs locate cheetah scat, which can reveal an animal's sex, diet, origin and genetic profile without the need to capture it.

Beyond the field study, explore what coexistence with wild cheetahs looks like on Namibia's livestock farms. Visit a working kraal and see how specially trained guarding dogs deter predators from sheep and goats, reducing livestock losses and the pressure to kill cheetahs and other carnivores. See how thornbush cleared to restore open cheetah habitat is transformed into Bushblok fuel logs, turning vegetation removed during restoration into a useful fuel product and source of economic opportunity. Tour the veterinary clinic and genetics lab, then head into the reserve after dark on a night drive, looking for nocturnal wildlife such as aardvarks, aardwolves and bat-eared foxes.

Day 10

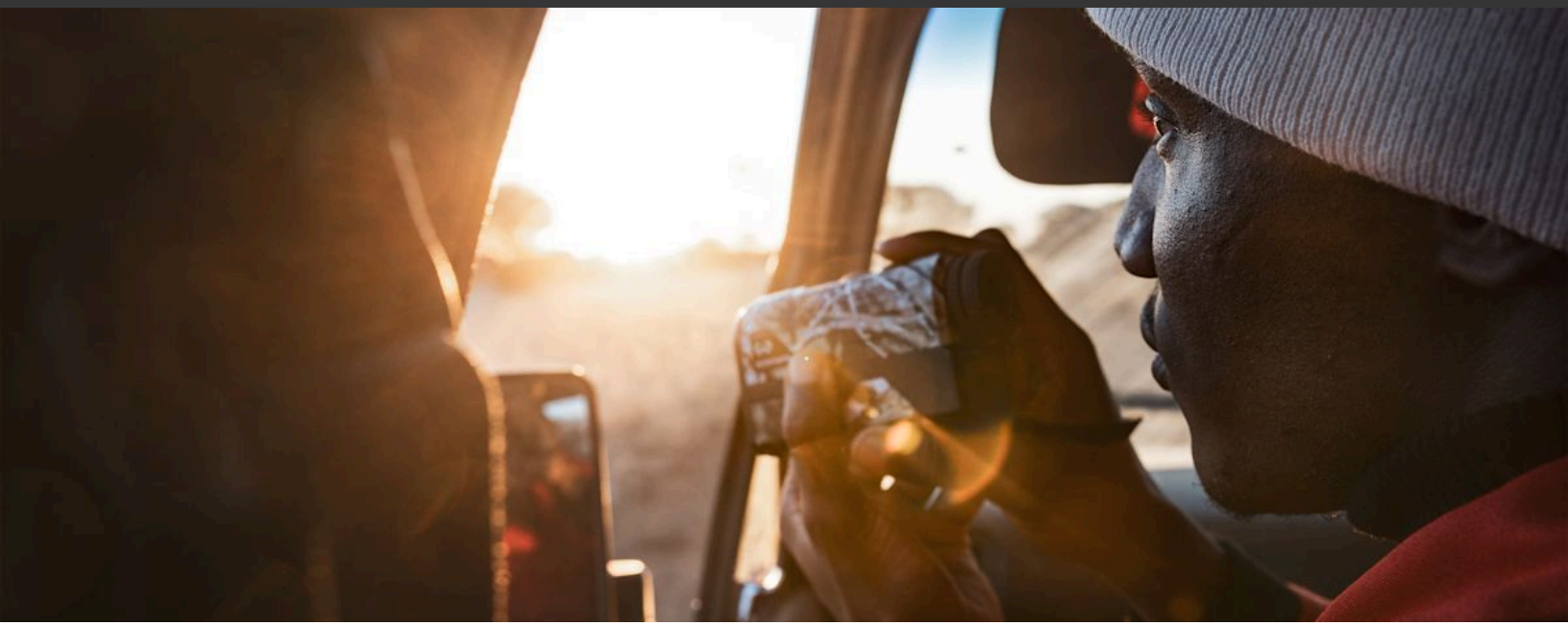
Otjiwarongo / Windhoek

Say farewell to Namibia's cheetah country

- Enjoy breakfast at the Cheetah Conservation Fund
- Return to Windhoek for afternoon or evening flights home

Begin your final day with a farewell breakfast at the Cheetah Conservation Fund. Then say goodbye to the research team and drive back to Windhoek for your flight home or onward travels. A packed lunch is provided for the drive. Please do not book any departing flights before 1:30 PM.

As you leave Namibia, you depart with a deeper understanding of wild cheetahs, the pressures they face, and the hands-on conservation work helping them survive in a changing landscape. Having worked alongside the researchers, you'll know how questions about habitat, prey and coexistence are investigated in the field, and how those findings inform conservation efforts, with positive impacts for the cheetah's future. A transfer to the airport in Windhoek is provided for departing flights.



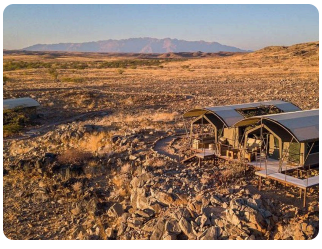
Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range Accommodations

Go Behind the Scenes with Cheetah Researchers & View Diverse Desert-Adapted Wildlife



Ti Melen Boutique Guesthouse

A six-room hillside guesthouse in Windhoek's Avis neighborhood, with mountain views, private shaded terraces, a garden and pool, and easy access to the city.



Camp Doros

This intimate six-tent camp offers access to desert-adapted black rhino habitat, with guided tracking alongside Rhino Rangers and a strong connection to ongoing conservation work.



Safari House

Bordering Etosha National Park, this solar-powered farmstead features an in-ground viewing hide with views of wildlife gathering at the waterhole, plus shaded verandas, a lawn and swimming pool.



Cheetah View Lodge

Set on the Cheetah Conservation Fund's reserve, this lodge overlooks a wildlife waterhole and the Waterberg Plateau while directly supporting cheetah research and predator-friendly farming.

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/earthwatch-expeditions/namibia-cheetah-conservation-research-trip/accommodations.

Meet the Scientists

Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range



Laurie Marker, Ph.D.

Founder and Executive Director, Cheetah Conservation Fund

Dr. Laurie Marker is Founder and Executive Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), which she established in Namibia in 1990. Her research focuses on cheetah biology, ecology, genetics and conservation, particularly the challenge of helping predators and livestock farmers coexist. She began working with cheetahs at Wildlife Safari in Oregon, where she helped develop captive breeding programs and later conducted research showing that captive-born cheetahs could learn to hunt after release. Her early fieldwork brought her to Namibia, where she discovered that livestock farmers were trapping and killing hundreds of wild cheetahs.

That experience shaped Dr. Marker's approach to conservation. She recognized that protecting cheetahs required not only studying the species but also addressing the economic realities facing people who share the landscape with them. In the 1980s, she collaborated with researchers from the Smithsonian Institution and National Cancer Institute on studies that identified the cheetah's unusually low genetic diversity and associated reproductive and health challenges. After founding CCF, she expanded this science-based approach to include long-term population monitoring, habitat research and strategies for reducing human-wildlife conflict.

Under Dr. Marker's leadership, CCF has developed livestock management, education and habitat restoration programs that help farmers protect their livelihoods without killing predators. Its work now extends from cheetah research and veterinary care in Namibia to efforts combating the illegal cheetah trade in Somaliland. Her career has helped establish a conservation model that links field science with practical solutions for communities living alongside one of Africa's most threatened big cats.

Education

Ph.D. in Zoology, University of Oxford (UK)
B.S., Eastern Oregon State University, Oregon

Research & Impact

Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range

Namibia is a global stronghold for wild cheetahs, yet most live outside protected areas on livestock farms, sharing the land with people, cattle, sheep and goats. Their future depends on finding ways for predators, humans and livestock to coexist while maintaining healthy habitat and prey populations. The Cheetah Conservation Fund tackles these interconnected challenges in different ways, including restoring grasslands, putting cleared thornbush to productive use as fuel, and protecting livestock with guardian dogs. On this immersion in the cheetah's world, you'll contribute to long-term research investigating how habitat restoration can support wild cheetahs and their prey.

Research Focus

Across Namibia's cheetah range, encroaching thornbush is replacing open grasslands with dense scrub, limiting hunting habitat and reducing grazing areas for prey. Since 2023, researchers have been studying whether thinning this bush can restore healthier, more connected habitat for wild cheetahs. Wildlife counts, waterhole surveys and camera traps document which animals use restored and bush-encroached areas, while vegetation surveys measure changes in the landscape. By comparing these habitats over time, scientists can determine whether restoration increases prey availability, biodiversity and wildlife movement. Your fieldwork adds to this long-term dataset, helping researchers identify where future bush thinning and wildlife corridors can give cheetahs more open, connected space to hunt and move.

Conservation Impact

Decades of research in Namibia are helping scientists restore cheetah habitat and reduce conflict between these wild predators and the livestock farmers who share their range.

- Bush thinning has helped restore open grassland habitat while improving grazing for wild prey and livestock and increasing connectivity between habitats
- Research has refined how thornbush is selectively thinned, retaining trees and shrubs that provide food, shade and shelter for wildlife
- Livestock-guarding dogs have reduced livestock losses for 91% of participating farmers, protecting herds while reducing pressure to kill cheetahs and other predators
- Camera traps and wildlife counts show how animals respond to bush thinning, providing evidence to guide future habitat restoration
- Harvested thornbush becomes Bushblok fuel logs, linking habitat restoration with jobs and economic opportunity

Together, these approaches support the future of Namibia's cheetahs across the working lands and wild spaces they depend on.

Your Role in the Research

Join researchers on fixed survey routes, recording wildlife sightings and helping monitor how cheetahs, their prey and other species use the landscape. You'll also check camera traps, review images and organize field data collected during your stay. Your observations become part of a long-term dataset comparing wildlife activity in restored and bush-encroached habitat, helping

scientists determine whether thinning thornbush creates more open hunting habitat for cheetahs, improves grazing for their prey, reduces conflict between cheetahs and farmers and allows wildlife to move more freely. The findings can help guide habitat management in a country where conserving cheetahs depends on maintaining healthy landscapes shared by wildlife, people and livestock.

Life in the Field

Research days start early, with cooler mornings spent conducting wildlife counts along established survey routes. Between morning and late-afternoon field sessions, you'll check camera traps, review images and spend time with scientists and specialists learning about other areas of cheetah conservation—from genetics and veterinary care to livestock guarding dogs and habitat restoration. Meals and breaks take place on site, and one evening includes a night drive through the reserve after dark in search of nocturnal wildlife.

Field Conditions

Most research is vehicle-based, with travel in high-clearance 4x4s over gravel roads and uneven farm tracks. Expect early starts, warm and dry conditions, strong sun and dust, plus rough or bumpy drives lasting up to two or three hours. Walking is generally limited to short distances around camera-trap sites and research facilities over sand, gravel, grass and uneven ground. You may need to stand, bend or reach while checking equipment, but no strenuous hiking or heavy lifting is required.

Discovery in the Field

Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range

1 **Stay on a Working Cheetah Research Center**

Live on site at the top center devoted to cheetah research, surrounded by cheetahs and the scientists focused on their future. Join wildlife surveys across the reserve, visit the veterinary clinic and genetics lab, and witness how field research, animal care and habitat management work together to protect wild cheetahs.

2 **Safari Where Wildlife Has Made a Comeback**

Explore a portion of nearly 150,000 acres of restored wilderness at Etosha Heights, a private reserve bordering Etosha National Park, where growing populations of rhino, elephant, giraffe, lion and other wildlife offer excellent game viewing.

3 **Uncover the Science Hidden in Scat**

Watch trained detection dogs demonstrate how they locate cheetah scat, then learn how these samples can reveal a cat's sex, diet, origin and genetic profile without capturing the animal.

4 **Discover Wildlife Hidden from View**

Check camera traps in the field, then help sort and review the images they capture to identify species moving through the reserve.

5 **Learn How Farmers and Predators Can Coexist**

Visit a working *kraal*—a traditional livestock enclosure—and see how specially trained guarding dogs deter predators from herds, reducing livestock losses and helping farmers coexist with cheetahs and other carnivores.

6 **Connect With the People Behind the Research**

Spend focused time with scientists and conservation staff in a small-group setting, sharing observations from the field and gaining a deeper understanding of what they're learning.

7 **Discover How Thornbush Becomes Part of the Solution**

See how dense thornbush cleared from cheetah habitat is processed and compressed into clean-burning Bushblok fuel logs, turning a barrier to wildlife into a useful resource while supporting grassland restoration.

8 **Stay Deep in Prime Namibia Wildlife Country**

While on safari, sleep in intimate camps surrounded by wilderness, from a private tented retreat overlooking a dry riverbed in desert-rhino habitat to a secluded lodge perched above a waterhole where animals frequently congregate.

9 **Experience Conservation from Every Angle**

Explore the challenges facing wild cheetahs, from shrinking open habitat and reduced prey availability to conflict with livestock farmers, and contribute to the research helping conservationists protect cheetahs across Namibia.



Dates & Pricing Summary:

Price
From $15658

Group Size
Limited to 7 Travelers

Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range Dates, Pricing & Info

Go Behind the Scenes with Cheetah Researchers & View Diverse Desert-Adapted Wildlife

2027 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Sep 16 - Sep 25, 2027	**$15658**	Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available
Oct 3 - Oct 12, 2027	**$15658**	
Oct 21 - Oct 30, 2027	**$15658**	
Oct 31 - Nov 9, 2027	**$15658**	
Nov 10 - Nov 19, 2027	**$15658**	

2028 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
May 19 - May 28, 2028	**From $16486**	
Jun 9 - Jun 18, 2028	**From $16486**	
Jun 19 - Jun 28, 2028	**From $16486**	
Sep 1 - Sep 10, 2028	**From $16486**	

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Sep 13 - Sep 22, 2028	**From $16486**	
Sep 29 - Oct 8, 2028	**From $16486**	

See https://www.nathab.com/earthwatch-expeditions/namibia-cheetah-conservation-research-trip/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

Included

Trip price includes: Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s), local guides and camp staff, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through lunch on final day, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least $250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.

Getting There & Getting Home

Must arrive by 5pm on day 1 in Windhoek international airport for welcome dinner that night.

Departure, guests can book flights out of Windhoek 1:30 pm or later on final day.

Know Before You Go

Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range

Whether you're preparing for your upcoming expedition or simply want to learn more about **Namibia's wildlife and conservation efforts**, these resources offer a closer look at the species, landscapes and research that define this experience. Learn about wild cheetahs and the challenges they face, discover the wildlife that shares their savanna habitat and explore how scientists are restoring grasslands and helping predators, people and livestock coexist.

Why Is Namibia One of the Best Places in the World to Study Cheetahs?

Across Namibia's sunbaked savannas, cheetahs range over vast landscapes shared with antelope, livestock and people. Most of the country's wild cheetahs live outside protected areas on working farmland, making Namibia an important place to understand not only how these predators survive, but how people and wildlife can share the same landscape.

One of the most visible threats is dense thornbush overtaking open savanna, reducing grazing habitat for prey and making it more difficult for cheetahs to hunt. At the Cheetah Conservation Fund, researchers are comparing restored grasslands with bush-encroached areas to understand how selective thinning affects prey availability, biodiversity and wildlife movement.

By joining this long-term research, participants help scientists investigate how habitat restoration and improved connectivity can give cheetahs and their prey more room to roam while supporting conservation across Namibia's working lands.

Quick Facts: Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range

Location: Otjiwarongo, Namibia
Research partner: Cheetah Conservation Fund
Primary species: Cheetahs and their prey
Key activity: Wildlife surveys, camera-trap monitoring and habitat assessments
Conservation focus: Cheetah habitat restoration, wildlife connectivity and human-wildlife coexistence

What Wildlife Will I See on a Cheetah Conservation Expedition in Namibia?

Cheetahs are at the heart of this expedition, but the journey crosses some of Namibia's richest wildlife landscapes, from the arid northwest to the savannas around Etosha and the Cheetah Conservation Fund. Wildlife sightings vary by location and conditions, with opportunities to encounter predators, rhinos, elephants, antelope and an exceptional diversity of birds.

Participants may encounter:

- **Cheetahs** across Namibia's open savannas and at the Cheetah Conservation Fund
- **Desert-adapted black rhinos** ranging through the remote wilderness of Damaraland
- **White rhinos** on the plains and around waterholes at Etosha Heights
- **Lions and leopards** hunting across savanna and woodland habitats

- **Caracals and servals**
- **Brown hyenas** and other carnivores
- **Savanna elephants**
- **Southern giraffes**
- **Gemsbok, greater kudu, common eland, hartebeest, impala, springbok and steenbok**
- **Mountain zebras** in the rocky landscapes of Damaraland
- **Ostriches and more than 200 other bird species**
- **White-backed and lappet-faced vultures** at Etosha Heights
- Nocturnal wildlife such as **aardvarks, aardwolves and bat-eared foxes** during night drives

Together, these species reveal the diversity of the landscapes cheetahs inhabit and the importance of maintaining healthy, connected ecosystems for predators and prey alike.

What Is the Climate Like During This Expedition?

Namibia has a semi-desert climate characterized by abundant sunshine, low humidity and significant differences between daytime and nighttime temperatures. Conditions vary by departure date, with cool, dry weather in May and June and much hotter conditions from September through November.

Period	What to Expect
May	Around **80–81°F during the day / 47–53°F at night**. Sunny, dry and increasingly cool after sunset, with about **0.1 inches of rain** for the month.
June	Around **77°F during the day / 42–47°F at night.** Clear, dry winter conditions with cold mornings and evenings and **virtually no rainfall**.
September	Around **88°F during the day / 53–58°F at night**. Sunny, warm and very dry, with about **0.1 inches of rain**.
October	Around **90°F during the day / 57–63°F at night**. Hot and sunny, with occasional showers possible as the rainy season approaches. Monthly rainfall averages about **0.4 inches**.
November	Around **90°F during the day / 59–64°F at night**. Hot and mostly sunny, with a greater chance of showers. Monthly rainfall averages about **0.9–1.0 inches**.
Overall Conditions	Strong sun and generally low humidity. May and June are cool and extremely dry, while temperatures and the chance of rain increase later in the year.

Weather patterns vary from year to year, and rain may arrive earlier or later than expected. Participants should bring layers for warm days and cooler mornings and evenings, with **warmer clothing especially important for May and June departures**.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need research experience?

No prior research experience is required. Scientists and field staff provide training and guidance in wildlife surveys, camera-trap monitoring, habitat assessment and other field research techniques used during the expedition.

What type of research will I assist with?

Participants assist researchers investigating how cheetahs, their prey and other wildlife respond when dense thornbush is selectively thinned to restore open savanna habitat. Activities may include vehicle-based wildlife counts, waterhole monitoring, camera-trap checks, image review and vegetation surveys comparing restored and bush-encroached areas.

What is the conservation impact of this research?

Data collected by participants contributes to a long-term study of how habitat restoration affects prey availability, biodiversity and wildlife movement. The findings can help researchers determine where future bush thinning and wildlife corridors may improve habitat for cheetahs while supporting healthier landscapes shared by wildlife, people and livestock.

How physically demanding is the expedition?

Most research is vehicle-based, with travel in high-clearance 4x4s over gravel roads and uneven farm tracks. Walking is generally limited to short distances around camera-trap sites and research facilities over sand, gravel, grass and uneven ground. Participants should be comfortable with warm, dry conditions, strong sun and rough or bumpy vehicle travel. Some overland transfers between accommodations may total 4–5.5 hours, typically broken into 2–3-hour driving segments with stops or breaks in between.

Can weather affect research activities?

Yes. Heat, rain and changing field conditions can affect wildlife activity and research schedules. Researchers adjust daily plans as needed based on weather, wildlife movements and research priorities.

What happens in case of an emergency?

Participant safety is a priority on all expeditions. Field staff follow established safety procedures and maintain communication during field activities. If medical care is required, staff coordinate transportation to the nearest appropriate medical facility.

Do I need travel insurance?

Travel insurance is strongly recommended and should include coverage for trip cancellation, interruption, medical expenses and emergency evacuation. Earthwatch provides travel medical insurance for participants.

What immunizations & travel vaccinations do I need?

Participants should consult a healthcare provider before travel and ensure routine vaccinations are up to date before visiting Namibia. Participants should also take precautions against insect bites and prepare for extended outdoor activity in warm, dry conditions.

What Should I Pack for Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range?

Participants should pack for warm, dry conditions, strong sun and changing temperatures between daytime and early morning or evening activities. Fieldwork is primarily vehicle-based, but clothing and footwear should also be suitable for short walks over uneven terrain.

Recommended items include:

- Lightweight, breathable shirts and pants
- Long-sleeved shirts for sun protection
- Comfortable closed-toe walking shoes
- Lightweight layers for cooler mornings and evenings
- Warm jacket or fleece
- Lightweight rain jacket
- Wide-brimmed hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Refillable water bottle
- Small daypack
- Binoculars
- Camera

Temperatures can vary considerably throughout the expedition, so layers are important even during Namibia's warmer months.

What Will I Experience on Namibia's Cheetahs at Close Range?

This expedition combines close encounters with Namibia's wildlife with rare access to the science behind cheetah conservation. Track desert-adapted black rhinos in Damaraland, search for elephants, rhinos and big cats at Etosha Heights, then join researchers at the Cheetah Conservation Fund to investigate how restoring open savanna may benefit wild cheetahs and their prey.

At the research center, you may check camera traps, monitor wildlife and see resident cheetahs exercise at close range while learning how habitat restoration, genetics, veterinary care, detection dogs and livestock-guarding dogs contribute to cheetah conservation. Together, these experiences reveal how protecting cheetahs requires conserving not only a single species, but the landscapes and communities with which they share their range.

What Does Daily Fieldwork Look Like?

Research days begin early, when cooler mornings are spent conducting wildlife counts along established survey routes. Participants record species, numbers and locations, monitor waterholes and check remote camera traps to help researchers compare wildlife activity in restored grasslands with areas still covered by dense thornbush.

Explore with Purpose

Between morning and late-afternoon field sessions, participants may review camera-trap images, organize observations and learn about other aspects of cheetah conservation from specialists at the Cheetah Conservation Fund. Research schedules vary with wildlife activity and project needs, providing a firsthand look at how scientists gather the long-term data used to guide habitat restoration and cheetah conservation.

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-548-7555



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