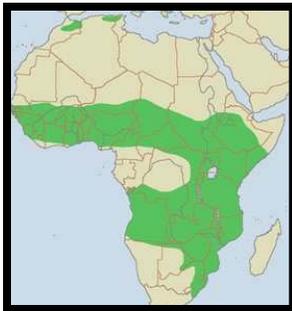




Serval

Leptailurus serval

Description: One of seven small species of African wildcats. The serval generally weighs between 30-40 pounds and reaches 22 inches in height. Their spotted coat resembles the larger cheetah and aids in camouflage. It has a slender build with long legs. The servals long legs and neck aid it in seeking prey in tall grasslands. Males are slightly larger than females.



Geographic Range/Habitat: Servals inhabit the scrub brush, tall grass and dry reed beds on the East African savannas. They are usually found in areas near water.

Behavior: Servals are elusive, shy and solitary in nature and tend to be nocturnal using their keen senses of hearing and eyesight to seek prey and avoid enemies that include the hyena, African wild dogs and leopards. Once it hears its prey underground, the serval will quietly approach and then leaping, will pounce on it. Often, they will play with their meal before consuming it. The Swahili word for serval is Makann.

Diet: Rodents, birds, reptiles, frogs and insects.

Status: Considered a threatened species due to loss of habitat and over hunting. Servals have shown up in the pet trade. They do not make good pets and become destructive, difficult to handle and aggressive as adults.

