



Greetings! Here's some more details from the Tail of Sylvester, October 2018. 

**MORE ON OUTREACH AND CONSERVATION EDUCATION.** Among the nearly 4,000 new friends that Sylvester has met this year, 450+ were school children and 29 were teachers from 22 different rural schools from around Victoria Falls. Hundreds of guests from all over the world that stay at [Elephant Camp](#) have met Sylvester, spending a morning or afternoon with him in the bush. A small donation for this transformative experience helps cover upkeep and veterinary costs for this charismatic cat. Many of our visitors become loyal supporters to Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust, funding our greater vision and mission. The generosity of tourists is deeply appreciated and very much needed to fund our important conservation programmes. ***Because of you, we're saving the lives of cheetahs, rhinos, elephants and many others.***

**MORE ON CARING FOR SYLVESTER.** Sylvester's friends at Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust give a great deal of attention to his diet to ensure the very best nutrition. In addition to well-balanced diet, cheetahs require frequent drinks of water. Typically, this is stimulated from chasing prey at top speed every day or running away lions and leopards. Obviously, Sylvester doesn't have to worry about either of those things so sometimes he doesn't drink as much as he should.

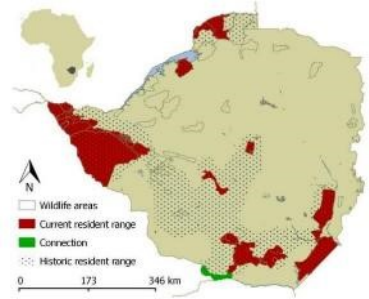
The Trust feeds Sylvester a cool, diluted soup of boiled chicken in 3 litres of water throughout the day to make sure he drinks enough water. He also eats beef or game meat on the bone in the morning, along with a daily dose of a multivitamin powder to make sure he receives the micronutrients to stay healthy.

***It costs the Trust around \$30,000 a year to ensure Sylvester thrives.*** That includes feed, handlers and keepers, exercising, vet, dental, etc.

**MORE ON THE PLIGHT OF CHEETAHS IN AFRICA.** According to a recent [2016 Report by Cheetah Zimbabwe](#), cheetah populations in Zimbabwe have plummeted by 85% in the last 15 years, with as few as 150-170 adult cheetah left in the country. Of this, only 40-42 cheetah are estimated to live in the northwest corner of Zimbabwe, within the protected areas of Hwange National Park, Matetsi Reserve and the National Parks surrounding Victoria Falls.

An exploding human population is also a threat to cheetahs throughout Africa, sitting currently at 1.29 billion. By 2050, it is predicted that this population will have doubled! This increasing pressure on natural resources, and further reduction in wildlife areas means

that cheetahs, and other wildlife including their prey, will be even more fragmented and vulnerable than they are today. If they're going to survive, it's essential that areas where they exist are protected and re-connected, and that rural people can coexist with them. This map shows current (as of 2015) and historical cheetah population range across Zimbabwe. *Image from: van der Meer, E. (2016): "The cheetahs of Zimbabwe, distribution and population status 2015." Cheetah Conservation Project Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.*



Another threat that cheetah face is the illegal trafficking of wild cheetah cubs for the exotic pet trade and cheetah body parts marketed to tourists as souvenirs. Although the trade in live cheetahs and body parts is banned by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, owning a pet cheetah is a symbol and status of wealth; consumer demand is high, which feeds black markets. According to [an article by African Wildlife Foundation](#), cheetah protection groups who monitor the trade in Somalia have estimated that up to 300 cheetahs are smuggled out of the war-torn country every year.

**SUPPORTING SYLVESTER AS AN AMBASSADOR CHEETAH.** Sylvester plays a vital role in educating and creating awareness about the plight of his spotted family across Southern Africa. ***The 4,000+ people he interacts with each year, along with thousands more on social media, can make a difference.***

***Studies have shown that ambassador animals are a powerful catalyst for developing empathy for wildlife.*** The longer that people are engaged with the animals, the more time is available for learning and overall impact. Personal engagement allows the presenter to tailor the interaction to the specific interest of the visitor and allows them to make specific inquiries to topics that interest them. It also enhances the delivery of cognitive and empathetic messages that are critical to changing attitudes and cultures.

By supporting his ambassadorship, you're helping elevate awareness that will generate change through strict protections and best management practices for the cheetah populations that remain. ***With your support, we can begin to tackle the problems that cheetah face in Africa today.***

[Please consider chipping in with a gift of \\$50, \\$100, or more.](#) If each one of Sylvester's friends - far and wide - can donate anything at all, his costs for the year would be covered. ***Thank you for ensuring that he has the best, happiest and longest life possible!***



*Please Give Wildly*

PO Box 159, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe | +263 782 799 006  
PO Box 23183, San Diego, CA 92193 | 619-602-1725  
390 London Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 6YX,  
United Kingdom | +44 (0)74 76 227 684