



Teaching
Cave

Animals

Blue Whale

The blue whale is the largest animal ever. It can grow up to 33.5 metres long; this is longer than three buses parked in a row, end to end. The largest blue whales are so heavy they weigh more than a jumbo jet. WOW!

Blue whales breathe through blowholes at the top of their head. They have two blowholes but some toothed whales only have one. Most dives don't last longer than 30 minutes but they can dive for up to 90 minutes using one breath.

Blue whales are known as a baleen species. These whales capture their food by swimming towards their prey with their mouth open. They use their baleen bristles to filter large amounts of fish, krill, shrimp and octopus.

Blue whales can live up to 110 years but most live between 80 and 90 years. Blue whales can be found in Atlantic, Arctic and Pacific Oceans and look blue/grey underwater.



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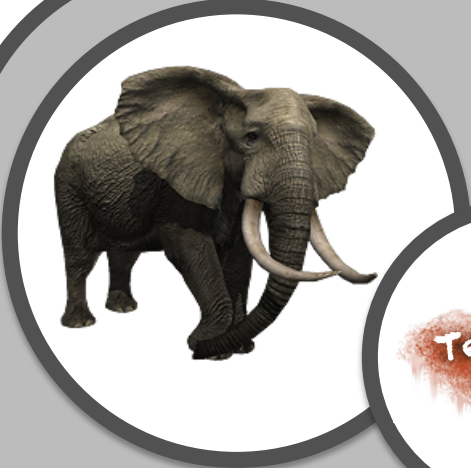
Cheetah

Cheetahs are mainly found in Africa and Iran. There are less than 10,000 cheetahs left in the wild. They have distinctive 'tear stripes' that stretch from the corner of the eye to the side of the nose.

The cheetah can run faster than any other land animal. It reaches speeds up to 60 miles per hour. The cheetah can reach its top speed in 3 seconds, which is faster than a Ferrari.

Wild cheetahs hunt for food late in the morning and early in the evening. Their spots help camouflage them to get within 10-30 metres of their prey. Cheetahs are very fast but they cannot run for a long period of time.

Female cheetahs typically have a litter of three cubs and live with them for one and a half to two years. Young cubs spend their first year learning and practising hunting techniques with playful games. Male cheetahs live alone or in small groups.



Animals

African Elephant

The African Bush Elephant is the world's largest land animal. Large males can weigh as much as 100 men and tower over humans, standing at up to 4 metres tall. A male is called a bull and a female is called a cow.

African elephants are taller than Asian elephants and have many different features. They have larger ears, more wrinkled skin and two tips at the end of their trunk to pinch things. Neither species of adult elephant can jump.

They eat leaves, soft shoots, woody plants, shrubs and fruits of high growing trees. As elephants need to drink so much water, they live close to a water source. An elephant sucks water up with its trunk and squirts it into its mouth.

A group of elephants is called a herd. The oldest female, known as the matriarch leads the herd. Young and old elephants stick together in a herd and the males tend to wander around on their own. Overall, the African Elephant population is growing.

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Peregrine Falcon

These falcons are formidable hunters that prey on other birds and bats in mid-flight. Peregrines hunt from above and, after sighting their prey, drop into a steep, swift dive that can top 200 miles an hour. They can be found on all continents except Antarctica.

These birds may travel widely outside the nesting season—their name means ‘*wanderer*’. Peregrines are even known to live on bridges and skyscrapers in major cities.

A Peregrine Falcon’s body can be up to 50cm in length with a wingspan of around 1 metre. They can live up to 17 years and have been trained to hunt by humans for many years.

The Peregrine Falcon was removed from the endangered species list in 1999, as the worldwide population has increased. If you ever visit the Grand Canyon in America, look out for nests of Peregrine falcons around the rim.



Animals

Giraffe

The giraffe is the world's tallest animal and lives in Africa. The males are usually taller than females and can grow up to 6 metres tall. This is the same height as a house.

A giraffe has a very long neck. In fact, it is the longest of any living animal. Even though the giraffe has a very long neck, it only has seven bones – the same as a human's neck.

Giraffes use their long necks and long tongue to strip leaves from tall branches. Their tongue is blue/purple and can be up to 50cm long.

Giraffes splay their front legs and kneel down to drink water. They only need to drink every few days because most of their water comes from the plants they eat.