**Basic Information: Serval (*Leptailurus serval*)**

**Names: Serval**

**Identification pointers:** Medium sized cat; slightly built with very long legs; straw-yellow fur with numerous black spots; spots merge to form stripes along the back and head; relatively small head with huge ears; tail short and striped; black and white stripes on the back of ears; sexes similar.

**Can be confused with:** Cheetah, leopard

**Activity period:** Mainly nocturnal but occasionally active at damn and dusk.

**Length:** 90-120cm **Height:** 50-65m **Weight:** 8-13kg

**Gestation period:** ±2.5 months

**Lifespan:** ±10 years in the wild, 20 years in captivity

**Diet:** Primarily feed on rodents but will take prey as large as hares or young antelope. They will also take birds, reptiles and insects.

**Predators:** Lions, leopards, cheetahs, hyaenas, pythons, large eagles, crocodiles.

**Preferred habitat:** Often found in marshes, reed beds or tall grasslands.

**Red List status:** Least Concern

**Population:** Stable

**Threats:** degradation and destruction of their wetland and grassland habitats is the main threat to this species. Their skins are used for ceremonial outfits, particularly in west Africa.