African civet (*Civettictis civetta*)

**Conservation Status:** Least Concern

The African civet has a raccoonlike appearance with a black streak across its face and white on the forehead surrounding its muzzle. Its coarse coat is dirty white in color, heavily spotted, and barred with black. They have a prominent erectile crest of black-tipped hair that runs from the head to the tail, and a wide head with a pointy muzzle, small eyes, and small, rounded ears. The African civet is the largest African member of the Viverridae family, which includes genets, civets, and linsangs.

**Fun Facts:**

1. The African civet is best known for the musk it secretes to mark its territory (called civetone), which has been used in the manufacturing of perfumes for centuries.
2. The African civet is able to feed on poisonous fruits, such as *Strychnos*, and distasteful insects, such as stink locusts (*Zonoceras*), millipedes, and dangerous snakes.
3. The African civet can fast for up to 2 weeks when food is scarce.

**Habitat**

The African civet is found in a variety of habitats on the African continent, including secondary forest, woodland, and bush habitats, as well as aquatic environments. It’s generally absent from arid regions.

**Diet**

Omnivore, eats animal and plant matter

**Predators**

Lions, Leopards, Snakes

**Behavior**

The African civet is a nocturnal species that is mainly active just before sunset until midnight, and around sunrise. During the day, females and cubs are known to sleep in a nest, while males will sleep in thick vegetation. Both sexes have large glands near their genitalia used to scent-mark landmarks within their territories. African civets are solitary animals; the only time they seem to be seen together is when they are mating. They are generally silent, but do growl deeply and cough when threatened.

**Breeding**

The African civet gives birth to one to four young after a gestation period of 60 to 72 days. The breeding season in southern Africa is from August to January, whereas on the east coast in Kenya and Tanzania the African civet breeds from March to October. Newborn African civets feed on their mother’s milk for around 6 weeks.

**Size**

Length: 68-89 cm

Height:35-40 cm

**Weight**

7-20 kg

**Life Span:** 15-20 years

**Gestation Period:** 60-72 days

**Average number of offspring:** 1-4