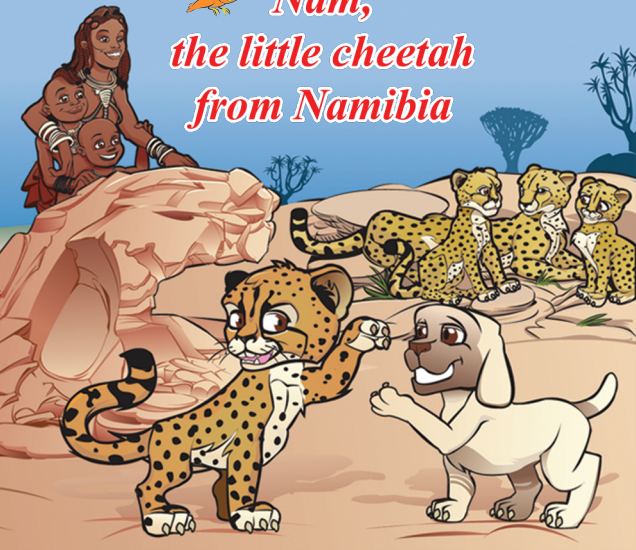


Eco-Sys Action
presents



***Nam,
the little cheetah
from Namibia***



"Little Heroes of the World" collection

<https://littlemuseumoftheworld.com/boopy-e/>

What an unusual and incredible place! Boopy, our little sparrow, was flying right across the coast of Namibia where the desert meets the Atlantic Ocean. This quite big Southern African country of only 2 million people is inhabited by a diverse group of people and wildlife.

One ethnic group called the Himba tribe has caught Boopy's eye. Keeping their distance from the developed world of modern Namibia, the Himba people live in great harmony with their environment.

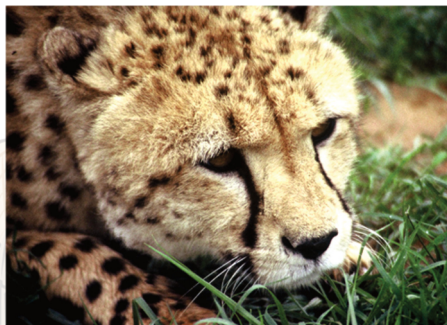


Photo: Chripimages

They wear lovely distinctive traditional dress and jewelry. Boopy even knows some Otjihimba phrases: “Hello” is “moro”, “how are you?” is “kora?” and “yes/no” is “eee/kako”.

Namibia is also known as the cheetah center of the world. Graceful and wonderfully built for speed, cheetahs are now in a race for survival. They need a large expanse of land to survive, but most of their habitat has been lost to farmlands.

Who could best understand the cheetah’s problems? Boopy has the answer...



Photo: Chripimages



Nam is a cheetah cub living in the magnificent country of Namibia in Southern Africa. But he's not like the other cubs. He's very small for his age and his colour is a vivid orange while his mother and his sisters look like normal cheetahs. They live a hard life because their habitat is getting smaller and their food is getting scarce. Worst of all, farmers and ranchers hunt them down because cheetahs sometimes kill livestock for their food and are considered vermin.



Mabia, the mother, has a hard time raising her cubs. Cheetahs are the fastest land animals on earth, being able to run up to 110 km/h (70 mph). But many baby cheetahs very often get killed by other predators. Cheetahs can't compete with lions and hyenas for food, so most of Mabilia's time is spent teaching her three babies how to hunt. Little Nam doesn't care much about hunting, though. He prefers playing with his good friend Boopy or fighting with his two sisters.



Not far from the cheetahs' home lies a Himba village. Himbas are a semi-nomadic tribe which has kept most of its traditions alive. To avoid conflict with big cats like cheetahs, they set up their camp in closed circles with their cattle placed in the middle to protect them. They also use shepherd dogs to keep the livestock from wandering too far away.



Misma is a young girl who lives in a hut with her little brother Ka and her elder sister Miasha. Most of the Himba food is based on dairy products they get from cow and goat milk, so these children have a lot of milk in their home. Ashi, the Anatolian guarding puppy, loves drinking milk, just like Boopy, the little sparrow.

"Stop, Ashi!", Misma yells, "you should be guarding the cattle, not finishing up our milk!"



Misma is already learning a lot from Miasha's skills at making cheese and other delicacies made from milk. But little Ashi also knows exactly when to sneak in a sip of milk. "Get out of here, Ashi!" orders Misma when the puppy tries to drink straight from the plate.



Ashi hurries out of the hut and runs into Nam, who sometimes tries to get milk when the girls aren't around. The two animals crash into each other but there's no harm done--the two are really good friends! They usually play around the camp and tell each other stories.



But Ashi's father doesn't know the two are friends. He's a trained shepherd dog so every time he sees a cheetah, he runs after it to keep it away from the camp. This is exactly what he does when he sees Nam, and he wouldn't stop although Ashi tries to get him to stop barking and threatening little Nam. The kids could only watch while Ashi's father chases the little cheetah cub.



Suddenly, Nam falls into a hole in the ground. Ashi's father spots the hole at the last minute and jumps to avoid falling into it, with Ashi still clinging to his tail and Boopy trying not to get knocked out of the air!



Ashi lands on poor Nam while Mabia, who was alerted by all the commotion going on, runs into the place and collides with Ashi's father. What a mess!



All the animals are completely knocked off their feet, so the three kids run over to help their dogs and Boopy.

"Stay away from our village!" screams Miasha to the cheetahs. "You only make trouble for us! We have enough problems keeping our culture intact and not letting the modern world wipe it out."



"But we're not going to hurt you!" replies Mabilia. "We're only trying to survive. There were 100,000 cheetahs in the world in 1900, and now there's only 12,500 of us left. We can live together if everybody will just respect us. Please help us spread the word that we're close to dying out and that we're an important part of the ecosystem. Please help us."

The kids are so touched by Mabilia's plea and say, "Don't worry. We're going to tell farmers and other people about you and your problems!"



When they get home, the kids start telling their mother about their wonderful encounter with cheetahs and how they want to help them. Ashi is enjoying a big bowl of milk for a snack while Nam is looking at the shining moon and dreaming of his own bowl of milk. While shooting stars cross the African sky, we can wish that cheetahs will remain in the wild where they should live freely.

Himbas totally understand how important cheetahs are in the eco-system. Fortunately, they're not the only ones. The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), active in both Namibia and Kenya, has played a very important role in teaching farmers and the communities how to avoid conflict with cheetahs.

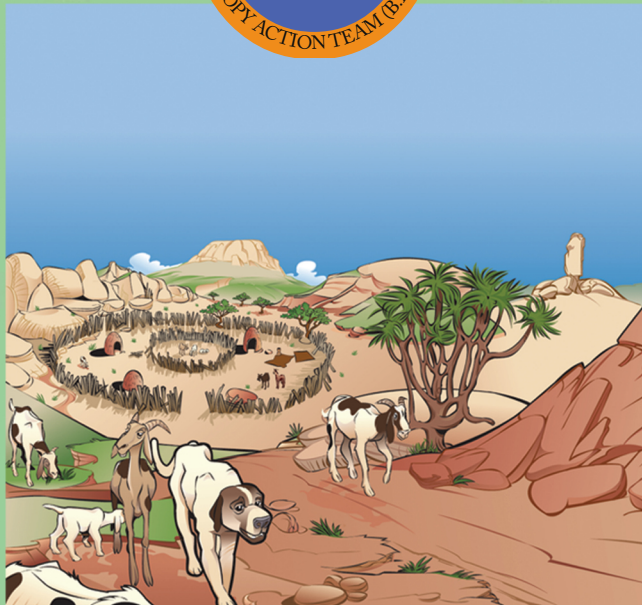
CCF carries out important scientific research, maintains a rehabilitation project, and has set up a great educational center where kids can learn all about cheetahs.

To find out more on how to save cheetahs like Nam, you can visit CCF at www.ecosysfun.com



A school in Otjirawongo, Namibia





Boopy Edition

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