

Black Footed Cat

Black-Footed Cat
Felis nigripes

The black-footed cat is the smallest of the African cats. They live in the deserts and grasslands of Southern Africa. As you may have guessed from the name, the bottoms of the black-footed cat's feet are black. Their fur can be yellowish-brown to a tawny color to off-white with rows of black spots that run along their throat, neck and stomach. Their short and thin tail has black rings along it with an all-black tip.

Black-footed cats rarely are seen because they are active at night. During the day, they hide and rest under rocks or in bushes. They hunt birds, lizards, rodents, rabbits, insects and anything else they can catch and kill. Because of their tiny size, they are excellent prey for other animals and therefore are very skittish. Mother black-footed cats have a special meow for their kittens to let them know when to hide and another call to relocate them. A typical litter consists of one or two kittens but may yield up to four. Black-footed cats in captivity can live more than 10 years.

The IUCN currently lists the black-footed cat as vulnerable.

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