



Tanzania

Lesson 2: Animals of Tanzania

Animals of Tanzania

Lesson Information:

What wild animals live here in the United States? Your answer would probably depend on the part of the country you lived in. In the Midwest you would find deer, raccoons, fox, skunks, and maybe wolves. If you lived in the west, you might also find bear, elk, and antelope. In some parts of the country you can find alligators and armadillos. What wild animals do you see in your part of the country?

If you were to visit Tanzania, you would find animals that you could only see at a zoo here in America. What kinds of animals do you think God placed in Tanzania?

In Tanzania you would see lions, elephants, camels, zebras, rhinos, giraffe, wild beasties, the ostrich, and another interesting bird called an oxpecker. Let's take a look at some of these animals.

Lion:

- can be found in most parts of Africa
- carnivore – eats wildebeest, impala, zebra, giraffe, and smaller animals like rabbits and birds
- lives in a group called a pride
- hunting is done by females

Zebra:

- lives in southwest Africa
- herbivore – eats grass
- baby zebra can weigh 55 lbs. at birth
- lives in a group called a herd or zeal
- stripes unique to each zebra
- stripes are vertical on head, neck, and main body/horizontal on rear and legs of animal

Rhino:

- found in the African savanna
- herbivore – eats grass and leaves
- considered an endangered animal of Africa
- lives in a group called a crash

African Elephants:

- live in most parts of Africa, south of the Sahara
- herbivore – eats grass, fruit, branches, twigs
- live in family units called herds; adult males are solitary
- lifespan of about 70 years
- male (10 feet to shoulder)
- male (6 tons) – female (4 tons)
- largest and most powerful of all land animals
- eat up to 500 lbs. of vegetation a day
- drink 40 gallons of water at a time
- can walk faster than a man (5 ½ miles per hour)
- can travel 50 miles a day in a herd
- take a bath every evening (never strays far from water)
- newborn elephant weighs between 250-300 lbs.

Chimpanzee:

- live in central Africa
- live in forest and savannah regions of Africa
- live in small troops (25-80 chimps)
- eat mainly fruit, but also leaves, buds, blossoms, bark, honey, termites, ants, and occasionally other mammals
- lifespan of 40-50 years
- males (5 ½ feet) – females (4 ¼ feet)
- weigh between 100-175 lbs.

Giraffe:

- lives in Africa (south of the Sahara Desert) in wooded grasslands
- world's tallest animal
- male (15-17 feet tall) – female (12-15 feet)
- male (1765-4255 lbs.) – female (1215-2600 lbs.)

- live in loosely bound groups
- lifespan – 5 years in the wild
- eats leaves from trees, shrubs, and vines
- newborns are about 6 feet tall
- born with horns
- each giraffe has a unique coat
- main predator is the lion

Leopard:

- lives in most of Africa
- 20-24 inches to shoulder
- 40-50 inches from head to end of back
- weigh 80-175 lbs.
- live a solitary lifestyle
- eat other mammals (baboons, warthogs, antelopes) and birds
- lifespan –about 12 years in the wild
- very difficult to spot in the wild
- sharp vision (6 times better than humans)
- keen sense of hearing (twice as good as humans)
- weigh only 15-20 oz. at birth
- likes to drink daily but can go a month without water

Ostrich:

- lives in a strip across Africa down to Tanzania
- lives in the open plains
- flightless bird
- 6-8 feet tall
- male weighs up to 339 lbs. – female weighs about 249 lbs.
- eats mostly plants – some invertebrates
- lifespan about 40 years
- uses wings for heat regulation
- female lays 5-11 eggs
- group based lifestyle
- gets most of its water from plant food
- 250 lb. man can stand on an ostrich egg without breaking it
- can reach speeds of 39 mph

Oxpecker:

- eats insects (ticks) found on African animals
- can be found perched on large animals eating parasites found in the skin
- lays 2-3 eggs at a time
- lives in the African Savanna
- most African animals will tolerate their presence (not the elephant)
- have strong legs and long, sharp claws which help them cling to the sides and backs of their "host"
- consume 100's of ticks and 1000's of larvae a day

God has certainly put many exotic animals on the continent of Africa. It has been fun to learn interesting facts about these animals. Praise God for creating all these interesting creatures to study and enjoy. The next time you visit the zoo, try to remember some of these facts you've learned about these Tanzanian animals, and remember to thank God for creating them.