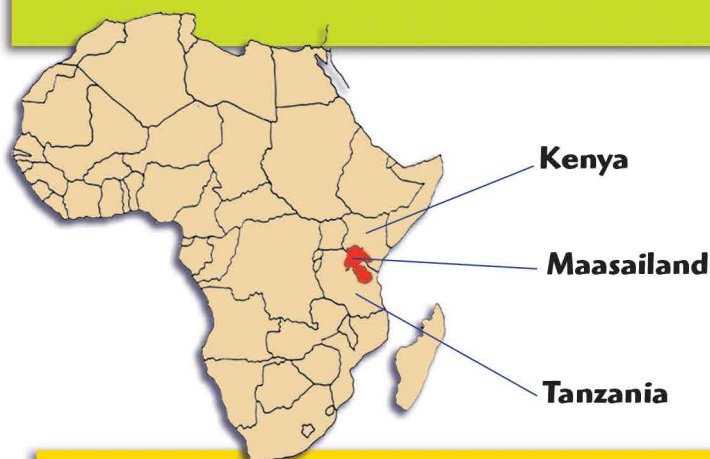


MAASAI

The Maasai live in the African savannah of Kenya and Tanzania. Many still live in the traditional way that they have lived for centuries. The Maasai lifestyle is a pastoral semi-nomadic one, herding their cattle, goats and sheep as a family unit in search of water and grass.



Over one million Maasai live in Kenya and Tanzania. They inhabit an area of approximately 160,000km² (about the size England and Wales combined) called Maasailand. There are many physical features in the area including Mount Kilimanjaro and several rivers and lakes; the area is also in the Great Rift Valley. The Maasai are split into 'sections' with boundaries like our counties in England.

The area is savannah grassland; savannah is tropical or sub-tropical grassland that contains scattered trees and shrubs. Grasslands once covered about 40% of the world land surface but today much of this is used for arable farming. They occur where there is insufficient rain to sustain a large number of trees, but where conditions are not dry enough to result in desert.

The grasslands manage to maintain a very precarious balance of life. The threat of drought is ever present in the savannah as the rainy season can often be sporadic. The people and animals rely on the rains to fill the otherwise empty rivers and natural waterholes.

Farming can have a very serious detrimental effect on the grasslands. To grow crops, land is cleared of grasses. By doing this there is nothing to hold the top soil together and the nutrients in the soil are insufficient for repeated harvest. If cattle are grazing, the grasses are eaten, leaving little or no food for the wild grazers.

London/Nairobi temperature

	London	Nairobi
January	7	26
February	8	27
March	10	27
April	14	24
May	17	23
June	20	22
July	22	22
August	21	22
September	19	24
October	15	25
November	10	23
December	8	24

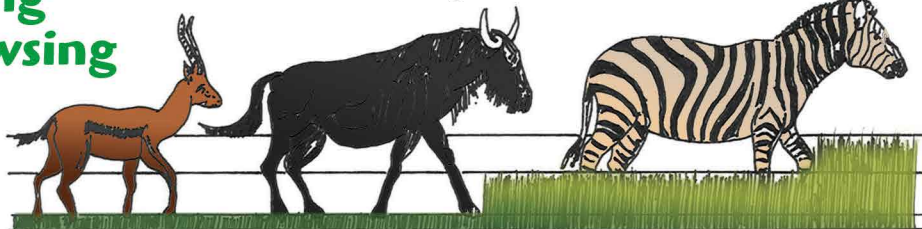
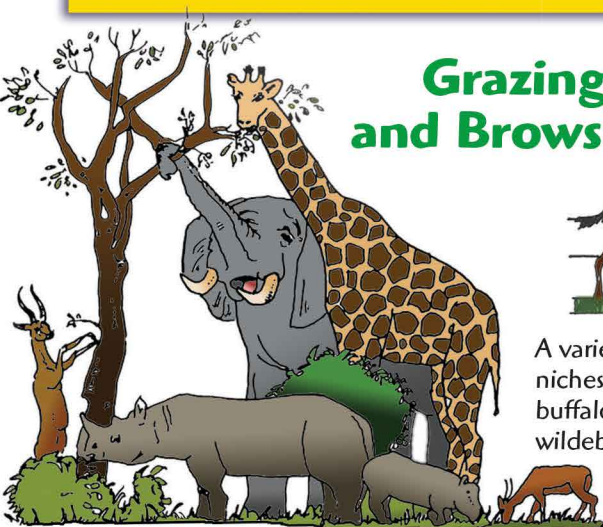
Average maximum daytime temperature in °C

London/Nairobi rainfall

	London	Nairobi
January	59	37
February	50	34
March	47	62
April	54	125
May	57	102
June	60	48
July	59	20
August	65	28
September	51	20
October	60	49
November	67	94
December	61	55

Average maximum rainfall in mm

Grazing and Browsing



A variety of grazing animals can co-exist on the savannah, as they have slightly different niches and eat slightly different vegetation. Heavy grazers such as elephants, rhinos and buffalo eat and trample the coarse grass allowing lighter grazers such as zebra and wildebeest to feed, following these are even lighter grazers like antelope and warthogs. This process is called grazing succession. The height of an animal is a useful indicator for where they feed.

Traditionally, the Maasai live by a system of shared community ownership of land, housing and food. The social structure is clearly defined with each individual passing through 'life stages', with their appropriate responsibilities and privileges. A celebratory ceremony, often lasting several days, marks the passing of each life stage.

Childhood

A naming ceremony occurs at three months old. The babies head is shaved. When children reach the age of four or five they have the two lower incisor teeth removed. This is considered to make the children beautiful, but also means the child can still be fed if they become sick with tetanus (lock jaw). These teeth are removed when the adult teeth grow through.

At five years old the boys begin to look after the young goats and sheep in the **enkang** (circle of thorny bushes enclosing several houses). Maasai girls help their mother and family with chores such as colour sorting the beads, milking the cattle, collecting firewood and caring for their younger siblings.

Children can attend school and will walk anything up to 20km to get there. Play activities for the boys include spear throwing and jumping over sticks (which prepares them for ceremonial dances). The girls sing or play with dolls made from clay and cow dung. Stories passed down through generations are told in the evenings.

Women

It is around the age of 15 that girls have training to understand their position and role within the community, they can then become married.

The chores girls have learnt in their younger years continue through adulthood with the added responsibilities of making the family house (**engaji**) inside the **enkang** and their warrior son's house in the **manyatta** (community of warriors). Men can have several wives, each wife and her children live in an **engaji**, several of these together make a **boma** (household). There are frequent ceremonies to organise and this is also the woman's responsibility. Older women often make the beaded jewellery that the Maasai wear.

Warriors

Teenage boys attend special classes and training to prepare them for the future, they can choose to become a warrior which brings much status, or they can choose to stay at school and go on to university and marry. If they chose to become a warrior they are not allowed to marry, smoke or drink alcohol. They also live separately to the rest of the family in a **manyatta**.

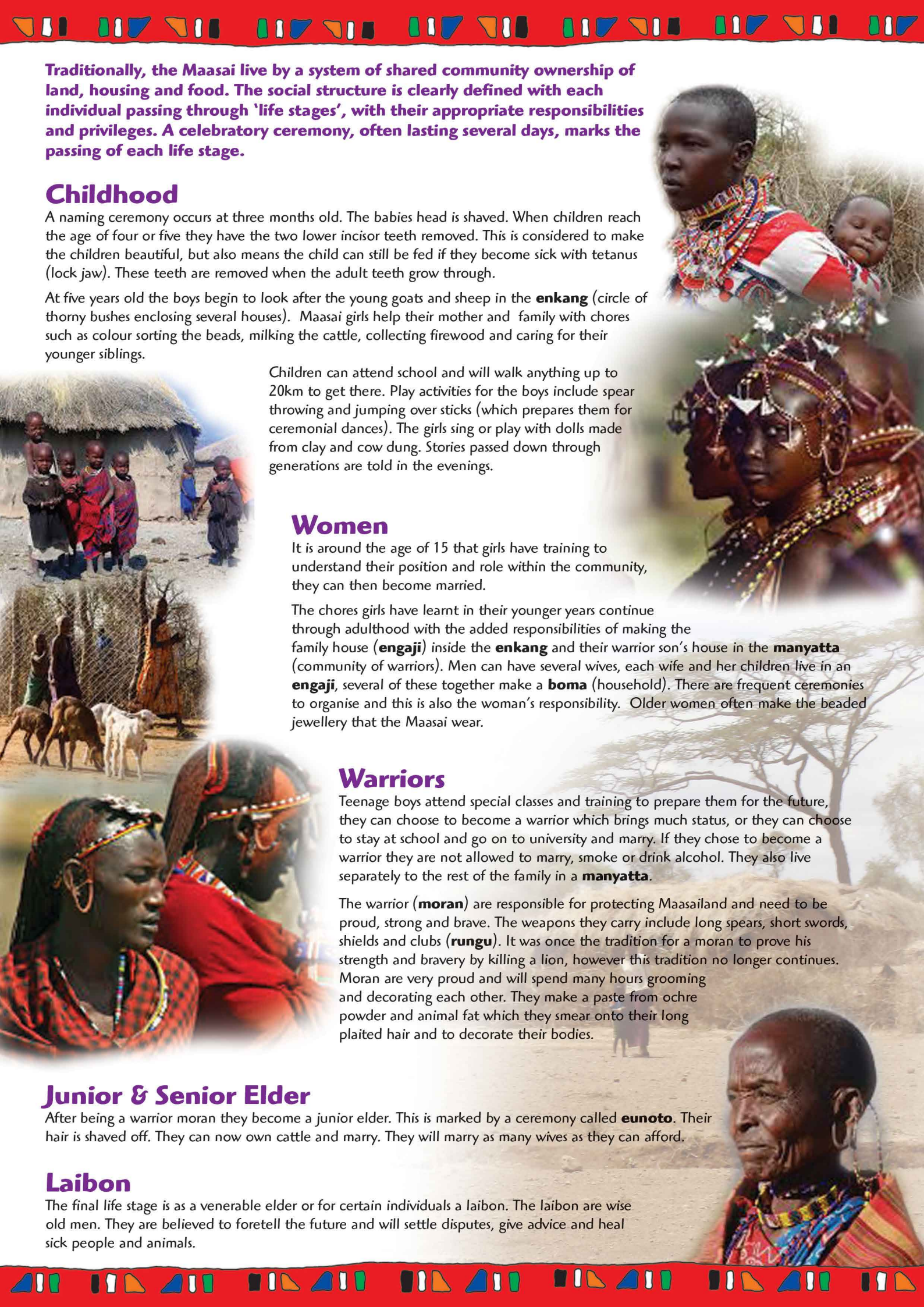
The warrior (**moran**) are responsible for protecting Maasailand and need to be proud, strong and brave. The weapons they carry include long spears, short swords, shields and clubs (**rungu**). It was once the tradition for a moran to prove his strength and bravery by killing a lion, however this tradition no longer continues. Moran are very proud and will spend many hours grooming and decorating each other. They make a paste from ochre powder and animal fat which they smear onto their long plaited hair and to decorate their bodies.

Junior & Senior Elder

After being a warrior moran they become a junior elder. This is marked by a ceremony called **eunoto**. Their hair is shaved off. They can now own cattle and marry. They will marry as many wives as they can afford.

Laibon

The final life stage is as a venerable elder or for certain individuals a laibon. The laibon are wise old men. They are believed to foretell the future and will settle disputes, give advice and heal sick people and animals.



The MAASAI and DRUSILLAS

The Maasai home (engaji)

The women build the houses using branches, tree roots, cow dung and mud. The frame is made from acacia roots and branches, they then put a mixture of cow dung and mud over the top and allow it to dry in the heat of the sun. Small holes allow only a little light inside. This helps the home keep cool and discourages insects.



Drusillas in Africa

Since 1996, Drusillas has supported conservation and education programmes in Kenya. Thanks to the generosity of our visitors, over £70,000 has been raised and this has helped to establish community education and wildlife sanctuary initiatives.

Drusillas is now helping to fund Kenyan students that are carrying out important research work into endangered species such as Grevy's zebras. Grevy's are the rarest species of zebra, with approximately 3,000 left in the wild. Their numbers have halved in the last 20 years due to habitat loss, hunting and competition with livestock for grass and water.

Recent research has included studying the effects of livestock on pasture, studying patterns of zebra movement and how changes in vegetation affects the wildlife.

The areas where the zebras live are home to people from seven ethnic groups including the Laikipia Maasai. It is only by working alongside local people that the wildlife can be protected. The future of the wildlife in Kenya is very closely linked to the communities they live amongst.

AFRICAN animals at Drusillas

Cape porcupine (*Hystrix africaeaustralis*)

Found in a variety of habitats in central and southern Africa. Porcupines are rodents and are largely nocturnal. They can have up to four babies at a time, two or three times a year. Porcupines can have up to 30,000 quills when fully grown; they are thicker, longer, sharper versions of normal mammal hair. Quills are soft at birth but harden after a few hours. They use their quills as a defence by charging backwards into their enemy, they easily detach and become embedded; which can lead to infections.

Black-and-white colobus monkey

(*Colobus guereza*)

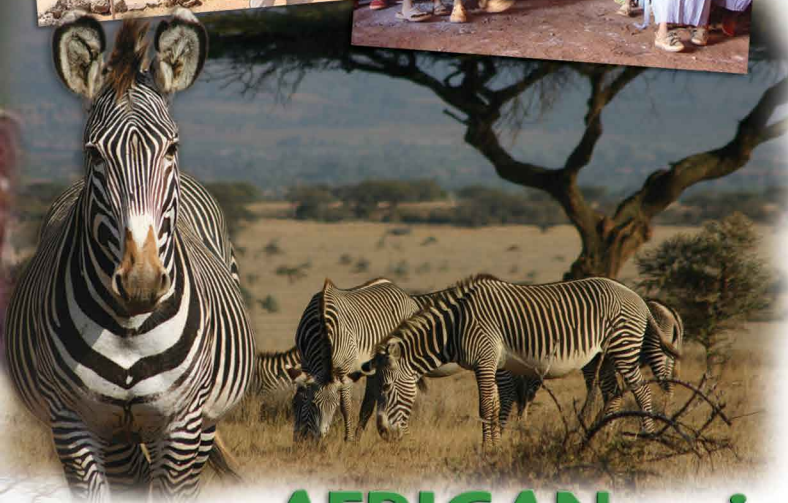
Found in forests across central Africa, these monkeys live in family groups of up to 20 animals; consisting of one male, several females and their young. They usually have one baby at a time; which is covered in white fur when born. A colobus monkey's stomach works like that of a cow. It has three or four different chambers and lots of bacteria to help break down leaves. Digesting leaves often makes them burp!

Serval (*Leptailurus serval*)

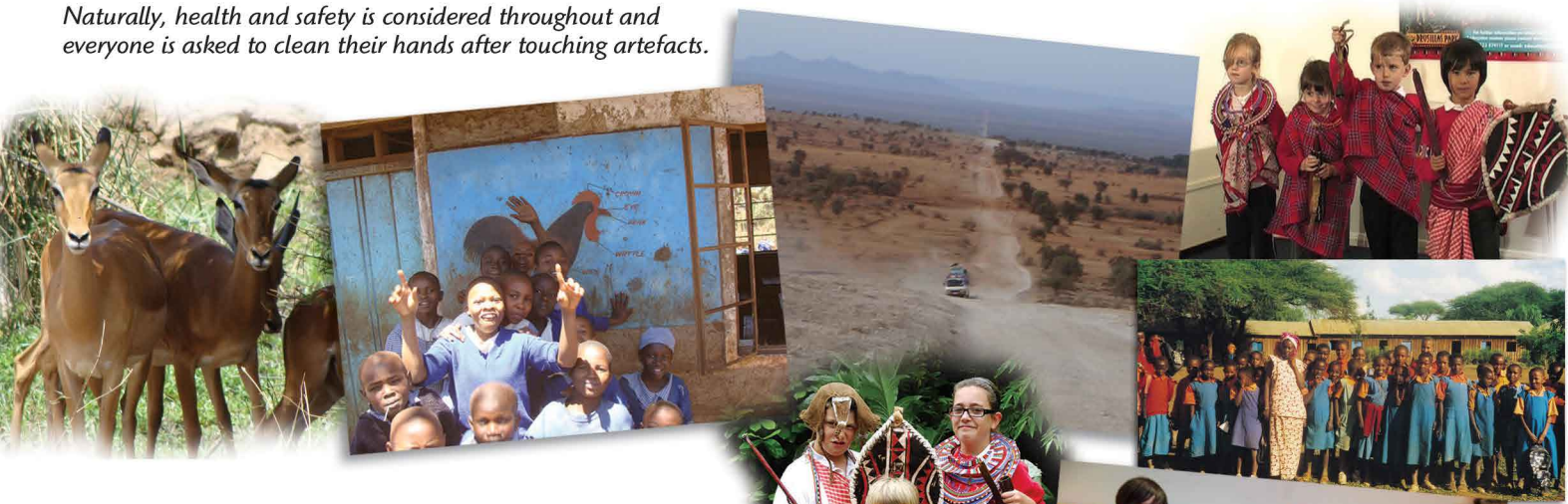
Servals are found in grasslands and around wetlands across central Africa and are classed as 'small cats'. Their long legs and long neck allows them to see above long grass and they can jump up to three metres to catch low flying birds. They are useful to farmers as they often eat rats and other rodents. Servals are usually solitary, only coming together to breed. They usually have a litter of two kittens. Servals can growl, hiss and purr but can not roar, just like other small cats.

Meerkat (*Suricata suricatta*)

Meerkats live in dry open areas of south-west Africa and are a species of mongoose. They are social animals that live in groups of up to 30 individuals that work together as a team. Only one pair of meerkats breeds within the group, having two to five young at a time. The others all help to babysit and look after the youngsters. There is always at least one meerkat on sentry duty; if they spot any danger such as a bird of prey, they give an alarm call.



Naturally, health and safety is considered throughout and everyone is asked to clean their hands after touching artefacts.



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- The left photograph shows two men standing in front of a blue corrugated metal building. The man on the left is wearing a blue polo shirt with a logo and khaki pants. The man on the right is wearing a blue denim jacket over a light-colored shirt, a white cap, and dark pants. They are holding a white sign that reads: **DRUSSILAS JUNIOR ACADEMY**, **ENKABOBOK P.O. BOX 385 00209**, **LOITOKITOK.**
- The right photograph is a portrait of a man with a mustache, wearing a vibrant red shawl draped over his shoulders. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape.

Useful websites:

www.maasai-association.org



Tel: 01323 874117 e-mail: education@drusillas.co.uk
www.drusillas.co.uk

