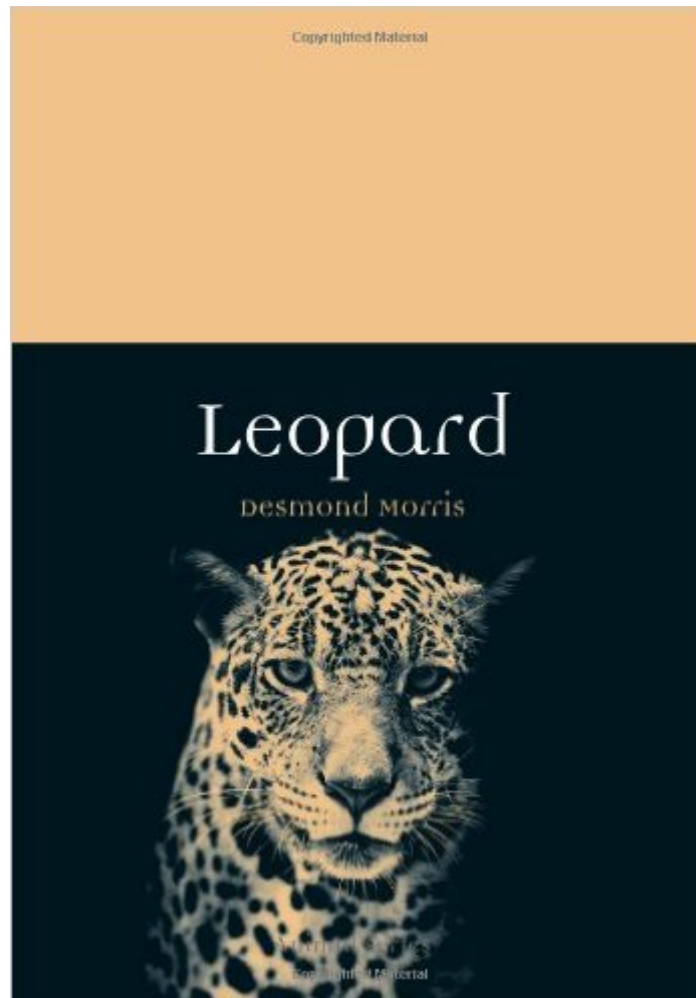


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# Leopard (Reaktion Books - Animal)



## Synopsis

The sleek, spotted leopard may be the smallest of the big cats, but its ferocity and solitary style makes lions and tigers seem puny in comparison. Lacking the social mentality of other animals, the leopard is stealthy and selfish, ambushing its prey and carrying it high into a tree where it can dine alone. Humans call leopards the "perfect predator." In *Leopard*, renowned zoologist Desmond Morris seeks to show all sides of the cat, delving into the fascinating history of these incredible animals. Morris examines the leopard's athletic elegance, predatory skill, wary shyness, and cunning intelligence while also exploring the animal's parental devotion, preference for solitude, and capacity for revenge. In addition to tracing the evolution of leopards, he considers how humans have related to the animal throughout history. Leopards, he shows, have long featured in the art, mythology, and folklore of ancient Greece, Persia, Rome, and even England, where they have not lived for several millennia. But humans and leopards do not always coexist peacefully; as Morris explains, leopards have been known to attack humans when their food is scarce or they are injured. He reveals how humans have exploited the cats, attempting to train them for circus roles, and how today some people are now making strides toward the leopard's conservation. He also describes their rich symbolism, appearances in literature and film, and the use of the leopard print in both haute couture and down-market fashion. Packed with compelling images of this amazing animal in action, *Leopard* sheds new light on these gorgeous cats.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Desmond Morris has written several books in the Reaktion Books "Animal Series." This the best of the several he has written for them. Someone should write a book about Morris, he's in his mid-80s and still produces books like this one, lively and informative. My guess is that most readers will find the book interesting because they are, like me, interested in leopards. I was hoping for some information about my favorite snow leopards, but there isn't much about them. Be aware this is as much about leopards and people as it is about leopards. There is a good deal of natural history, but just as much culture. The book starts with aspects of natural history, almost a kind of praise song for leopards' elegance, hunting ability, extreme wariness, cunning and adaptability. Morris likes leopards, obviously, but he also knows a lot about them and has some personal experiences with some of the animals. Just listing the chapter titles is as good a way as any to describe this book. Chapter 1, "Ancient Leopards." Chapter 2, "Tribal Leopards." Chapter 3, "Leopard Cults." Chapter 4, "Leopard Hunting." Chapter 5, "Leopard Attacks." Chapter 6, "Symbolic Leopards." Chapter 7, "Decorative Leopards." Chapter 8, "Leopards in Art." Chapter 9, "Circus Leopards." Chapter 10, "Tame Leopards." Chapter 11, "Wild Leopards." Chapter 12, "Leopard Conservation." There are three appendixes, one of which is on filmography. The upshot is that humans have long been fascinated by the animal's independence and formidable predatory skills.

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