参考译文

How to Avoid Becoming a Meal for a Cheetah

The cheetah is the rarest big cat in Africa. Less than 7.000 adults remain on the planet. Think of it this way: for every cheetah on the planet, there are more than four Starbucks coffee shops.

猎豹是非洲最稀有的大型猫科动物。现有的成年猎豹不到7000只。不妨这样想:地球上每有一只猎豹，就有四家以上的星巴克咖啡店

The most important cheetah stronghold is in Central Namibia. But the cheetahs there don’t live within national parks. They live on privately owned farmland.

猎豹最重要的据点在纳米比亚中部。但是那里的猎豹并不生活在国家公园里。它们生活在私人农田。

“There were farmers having huge problems with cheetahs, losing a lot of livestock, and there were other farmers who actually didn’t have any problem at all.”

“有些农民因为猎豹而面临巨大的问题，他们失去了很多牲畜，还有一些农民根本没有任何问题。”

Ecologist Joerg Melzheimer from the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research in Berlin assumed, at first, that all farmers had cheetah trouble. It was just that some were more likely to complain about it.

柏林莱布尼茨动物园和野生动物研究所的生态学家乔格·梅尔茨海默最初认为，所有的农民都遭遇了猎豹的问题。只是有些人更有可能去抱怨问题。

But after tracking 50 collared cheetahs, he began to suspect that there really was a pattern to their killing. By the time his team had data from 106 cheetahs, collared over the course of a decade, not only was he certain that cheetahs were more likely to kill in some places than in others but that he could solve the problem.

但在追踪了50只带项圈的猎豹后，他开始怀疑猎豹的猎杀行为有规律可循。当团队在十年间收集了106只猎豹的数据后，乔格确信猎豹在某些地方猎豹更有可能进行猎杀，但是他也可以解决这个问题。

“We indeed found these communication hubs of cheetahs, which are spread evenly across the landscape with a high activity of cheetahs within the hubs.”

“我们确实发现了这些猎豹的交流中心，它们均匀地分布在整个地区，在这些中心内猎豹活动非常活跃。”

Cheetahs are an asocial species, but they still need to trade information.

猎豹是一种非群居动物，但它们仍然需要交换信息。

“They don’t meet physically—typically not. But they leave marks at prominent landmarks where they use urine or feces to communicate with each other.”

“它们通常不会面对面。但会在显著的地标处留下痕迹，在那里它们用尿液或粪便相互交流。”

Think of it as a coffee shop for cats, where animals trade gossip. Even though these communication hubs only comprise around 10 percent of the landscape, cheetahs spend most—sometimes all—of their time within them.

把它想象成猫咪的咖啡店，动物们在那里闲聊。尽管这些交流中心只占整个地貌的10%左右，但猎豹大部分时间——有时是全部时间——都待在那里。

“This is basically a long-term tradition, which is passed on from cheetah generation to cheetah generation. Some of these communication hubs are basically known—or let’s say the marking locations—the marking trees were known by the farmers for 60. 70 years. The grandfather of the current farmer already knew the marking trees in this area.”

“这基本上是一个长期的传统，代代相传。这些通讯中心中的一些基本上是已知的——或者我们说标记了位置——农民们已经知道标记的树六七十年了。这位农民的祖父已经知道这个地区的标记了。”

What the farmers never realized is that only some farms overlap with the cheetahs’ communication hubs. Melzheimer thought that if those farmers relocated their most vulnerable herds, it could be a huge help. He remembers the first farmer he tried to convince.

农民们从未意识到的是，只有一些农场与猎豹的通讯中心重叠。梅尔茨海默认为，如果这些农民重新安置最脆弱的牛群，可能会有很大的帮助。他还记得自己试图说服的第一个农民。

“I told him, ‘Look, Wilfred, I have the idea that they are actually there because of these marking trees. And you happen to have your small calves exactly in the same area. Let’s try to move your herds out of this area and keep them somewhere else. And then let’s measure the losses.’ And he was laughing at me. He said, ‘Nice idea, but I’m not sure whether this is going to work. They will probably follow the calves.’ So we tried this, and it actually worked. And he earned much more money because he lost less calves.”

“我告诉他，‘看，威尔弗雷德，我觉得猎豹之所以会在那里，是因为这些标记树。而你的小牛恰好也在同一区域。让我们把你的牛群带离这个地区，把它们留在别的地方。然后我们再来衡量损失。威尔弗雷德在嘲笑我。他说，‘好主意，但我不确定这个办法能否行得通。它们可能会继续跟着。所以我们尝试了这个方法，而且真的奏效了。威尔弗雷德赚的钱更多了，因为他损失的小牛数量减少了。”

After that, 35 more farmers agreed to try it out. In all, the number of calves lost to cheetah predation fell by a whopping 86 percent. Of course, some cattle outside of communication hubs were still lost to cheetahs, but it was at a low enough level that most farmers seemed to tolerate it.

在那之后，又有35名农民同意试用。总之，被猎豹捕食的幼崽数量下降了86%。当然，一些在通讯中心之外的牛仍然会被猎豹吃掉，但数量已经很低了，大多数农民似乎能容忍。

What this means is that cheetahs aren’t actively following the cattle; they simply take advantage of whatever food is available nearby. If it’s not cattle, then they go after wild ungulates like springbok or oryx or kudu. There are no so-called problem cheetahs, who intentionally seek out cattle.

这意味着猎豹并没有主动跟随牛;它们只是简单地利用附近的任何食物。如果不是牛，它们就会捕食跳羚、大羚羊或捻角羚等野生有蹄类动物。没有所谓的故意寻找牛的问题猎豹。

Instead there are “problem areas.” That’s a much easier problem to solve, and it’s one that doesn’t result in farmers killing cheetahs. Melzheimer is now hard at work collecting tracking data from cheetahs in other parts of Africa to see whether his findings hold up in other ecosystems.

取而代之的是“问题领域”。“这是一个更容易解决的问题，也不会导致农民杀死猎豹。梅尔茨海默现在正努力收集非洲其他地区猎豹的追踪数据，以确定自己的发现是否适用于其他生态系统。

So often it seems as if the goals of wildlife conservation are incompatible with the goals of commerce. But this story reveals that in fact biodiversity and agriculture can coexist.

野生动物保护的目标似乎常常与商业的目标不相容。但这个故事揭示了生物多样性和农业是可以共存的。

“Our case is really one of these nice examples where it can go hand in hand.”

“我们的案例就是一个很好的例子，生物多样性和农业可以携手并进。”

听力原文

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