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Front Cover: **ZEBRAS**

Zebras are African equines with distinctive black-and-white striped coats. There are three living species: Grévy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*), the plains zebra (*E. quagga*), and the mountain zebra (*E. zebra*). Zebras share the genus *Equus* with horses and asses. Zebra stripes come in different patterns, unique to each individual. Several theories have been proposed for the function of these patterns, with most evidence supporting them as a deterrent for biting flies. Zebras inhabit eastern and southern Africa and can be found in a variety of habitats such as savannahs, grasslands, woodlands, shrublands, and mountainous areas. Zebras are primarily grazers and can subsist on lower-quality vegetation. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists Grévy's zebra as endangered, the mountain zebra as vulnerable and the plains zebra as near-threatened. Zebras may travel or migrate to wetter areas during the dry season. Plains zebras have been recorded travelling 500 km (310 mi) between Namibia and Botswana, the longest land migration of mammals in Africa. When migrating, they appear to rely on some memory of the locations where foraging conditions were best and may predict conditions months after their arrival. A zebra's diet is mostly grasses and sedges, but they will opportunistically consume bark, leaves, buds, fruits, and roots. Compared to ruminants, zebras have a simpler and less efficient digestive system. Nevertheless, they can subsist on lower-quality vegetation. Gestation is typically around a year. A few days to a month later, mares can return to oestrus. Usually, a single foal is born, which is capable of running within an hour of birth.