

# AFRICA TALES

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## MADALA

Madala (mah-DAH-lah) is a chameleon from the country of Zambia. His name is the respectful way to say “old man” in the Chinyanja language. He is old and very wise. Because chameleons are frightening to many Africans, he is used to people not liking him, and therefore, he is very cranky. He owns and pilots the Land Rover that the other characters ride around in.

Chameleons are found all over the world but mostly in Africa. They are lizards with the ability to change color and blend in to their surroundings. There are over 160 different kinds of chameleons. Some are big, some are small, some have horns or crests on their heads. All these different chameleons have three things in common—they have long, sticky tongues, eyes that can turn in different directions at the same time, and no ears. They eat mostly bugs, but some of the really big ones can eat a bird! The name “chameleon” comes from two Latin words that mean “ground lion”.



Zambia (ZAM-bee-ah) is a country in Southern Africa. Many years ago, the country was a British colony called Northern Rhodesia. The capital city of Zambia is Lusaka (loo-SAH-kah). Zambia’s official language is English, but the people speak over 90 different languages there. The most common are Chinyanja and Bemba. Zambia has a president, but chiefs are still in charge of many of the smaller areas. The main religion in Zambia is Christianity, but many people still have never heard the Word of God. Many people mix Christianity with old tribal religions, so that their beliefs aren’t really Christian anymore. One of the most common foods in Zambia is called nshima (n-SHEE-mah). It is a very thick porridge made from corn that people eat with their hands—you might eat it at every meal if you lived there! The currency in Zambia is called the *kwacha*.