



Picture: Stewart Allen

JOHN LEMON

The Australian fauna curator at Perth Zoo and Painted Dog Conservation Inc chairman shows Michael Washbourne his favourites

- 1 **Ducati** I've been a motorcycle enthusiast since I was four and I used to race dirt bikes back in NSW. I've really been passionate about Ducatis because they are both a marketable brand and a world-beater. I consider them to be the two-wheel Ferrari equivalents.
- 2 **African artefacts** I've had a huge love for Africa since I was a small child and I've always been keen to learn more about their culture. I've kept some of those memories of Africa in the form of artefacts. These are recycled snares, which we pulled from the wild in Zimbabwe.
- 3 **African sunset** I've lived and worked in Africa over the past 12 years and there's nothing quite like an African sunset after a hard day's work. It's a really nice reality check to life when you're out there with nature and there's no one else around.
- 4 **Frogs** I've always had a passion for frogs and sadly they are one of the first animals to go extinct when you have a sudden environmental change.
- 5 **My wife** Angela is my best friend and we share the same passion for conservation of animals. She is one person that will support me through everything because my conservation work can sometimes affect our relationship, both financially and emotionally.
- 6 **Dogs** The love from my two border collies is unconditional. No matter

what sort of day you've had they always greet you and that's something pretty special about a dog. They are both working dogs as well, and I think they make some of the best pets if you've got the opportunity to train and condition them.

- 7 **Gecko** The geckos are thick-tailed and I think the reason I love them so much is because they remind me of Aboriginal dot art paintings.
- 8 **Cats** They're burmilla (burmese chinchilla cross) breed and are basically our indoor family. Having worked with cheetahs, I have developed a love for big cats and their smaller cousins.
- 9 **People of Africa** One of the biggest things I love about Africa is the people. They have a lot less materialistic items than the western world, but they're happier with a lot less. It's a great wake-up call to what's important in life and they live that every day.
- 10 **Painted dogs** They're a critically endangered carnivore from Africa that has been around for over three million years. To me, they are the most social, caring carnivore and I think humans should take a leaf out of their books in the way they act. But they could go extinct in our lifetime. I've spent a lot of time trying to raise funds to support them. Visit www.painteddogconservation.iinet.net.au.

* Visit www.perthzoo.wa.gov.au for information about the wildlife conservation program at Perth Zoo.
* Don't miss your Perth Zoo 2011 Conservation Calendar for only \$2.50 with a token that will be in The SundayTimes next Sunday. All money raised will help threatened species.



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