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ser·val  (sûr vəl, sər-văl)

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n.

A long-legged African wildcat (*Leptailurus serval*), having a tawny coat with black spots and very large erect ears without tufts.

[French, from Portuguese (*lobo*) *cerval*, deerlike (wolf), lynx, from Late Latin *cervālis*, from Latin *cervus*, deer; see [ker-¹ in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.](#)]

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Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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