

## **Present Day Fact File**

### **Tarsier (Asian)**

This tiny little primate can turn its head round through 180 degrees just like an owl, and scampers through the trees at night looking for insects to munch.

### **Life in the trees**

The tarsier spends nearly all of its life living in trees; it is very rare to see one actually touch ground unless in an emergency. Their tiny bodies – about six inches long – have thick grey fur and long back legs to help them jump from tree to tree. A long naked tail with a tuft of hair on the end helps to balance them as they jump. In fact, over 60% of their movement in the trees consists of jumping from branch to branch, so this tail is hugely important to them as they hunt for insects and small lizards to eat. The delicate fingers have suction cups on their tips to maintain a good grip on branches as it moves and leaps around.

The tarsier is nocturnal, which helps it to avoid many predators that would see it as a tasty snack. It has large ears that constantly sweep the area for noises, and large eyes to help it see. Actually, the tarsier has the largest eyes in relation to its size of any mammal; they are so large that they cannot move in their sockets any more, and the tarsier instead moves its head like an owl to see around it.