

Tigers

Tigers belong to the largest of the cat species. They can reach the length of 3.3 meters or 11 feet and can get as heavy as 306 kilograms or 670 pounds, while also gifted with enough bounding energy to catch their prey. You can easily recognize the tiger through the dark stripes that are stamped on its orange red fur; the combination creates a sharp contrast but the overall effect still allows the tiger to lurk in silence. Though attractive, the tiger can be dangerous to its prey, with its significantly large teeth and long canines, which can reach 74.5 millimeters or 2.93 inches at their crown height. Tigers originate from the Asian continent and are not native to Africa as is often believed. There are Chinese and Bengal tigers that have been resettled into Africa. These animals are commonly released from zoos and introduced for the purpose of extending the survival and habitat of their species.

Longevity:

Tigers live long whether you find them in the wild or in the confines of a zoo. Their longevity reaches 26 years, which should have been enough time to breed well. It is not only their size that is large but also its appetite for territory. Though tigers usually prefer living and hunting alone, they are also very social animals that need large areas in which to live and hunt. Unfortunately for tigers, developments favoring us humans have destroyed their habitats. This is food for thought to us all who want to do something to help revive the tiger population.

Habitat and Population:

Tigers used to be abundant in Asian countries, including Turkey and Russia. However, the past century has seen the tigers lose almost a hundred percent of the place they used to inhabit. Today, the tiger habitats are living in grasslands, the Siberian tundra and even in the mangrove swamps of the tropics. On writing, it sounds as if there is still a generous patch of land available. There aren't a lot of tigers left in general, though. With only six subspecies left, tigers have been declared endangered by the IUCN. Tigers that remained in the forests are only a little more than 3,000 in number. The rest of the tigers, which may have not been included in the count, belong to small, isolated groups that sort of act like family units. The population has suffered a rapid decline due to the destruction of the tigers' homes as well as because of the crime of poaching. So, at this point, the area left inhabited by tigers is at only 184,911 square kilometers or 457,497 square miles. This estimate, however, was good in the 1990s. Today, the area could be a lot smaller.

Role in Mythology and Popular Culture:

Tigers are some of the most well-known and the most charismatic of animals. This is evident in their popularity in mythical tales that come from various countries, especially in Asia. Tigers have also

been featured in works of film and literature because of the many possibilities that they present in terms of interpretation. Even countries and sports teams understand the beauty and danger that a tiger can represent when they chose it to be part of their flags and emblems. In fact, the Bengal tiger has been chosen to be named as both India's and Bangladesh's national animal.

Scientific Names:

Back in 1758, Linnaeus gave the tiger "*Felis tigris*" as its scientific name in his *Systema Naturae*. However, in 1929, Reginald Innes Pocock, a British taxonomist has declared the animal part of the genus *Panthera*. At that time, the tiger has instead become tagged with the scientific name *Panthera tigris*. Note that *Panthera* as a word could be Oriental in origin and may even be traced back to various ancient words such as *pantera* (Latin), *pantere* (French) and *panther*, which is Ancient Greek. The word, in the olden days, would most likely refer to a "yellowish animal", which the tiger is.