

## *Tiger Facts*

Facts note: I have compiled this information over the years from many sources. I may not agree with all of them, like the number of tigers estimated to still be in the wild, but I thought you might like to look them over.

---

Today only about **5,000-7,400 wild tigers** live across Asia. The past and present ranges of the remaining **five tiger subspecies** are illustrated. The northernmost living tiger, the **Siberian tiger**, lives primarily in southeastern Russia. The **South China tiger** occurs only in southern China. The range of the **Indochinese tiger** extends across most of Southeast Asia. The **Bengal tiger** is found primarily in India, while the **Sumatran tiger** is restricted to the Indonesian island of Sumatra. The Bali, Caspian, and Javan tigers have become extinct in the past 70 years.

Across all of Asia, once vast forests have fallen for timber or conversion to agriculture. What is left are small islands of forest surrounded by a growing and relatively poor human population. They collect firewood from the forests. Their livestock graze to the forest edges, and common tiger prey-wild pigs and deer-are shot, poisoned or snared for food by poachers. Worse yet, bones and other tiger body parts used in Chinese folk medicine now command premium prices on the international black market, and poachers now poison water holes or set steel wire snares to kill tigers.

Forestry and wildlife departments are too understaffed and under budgeted to be effective against this onslaught. Conservation efforts that emphasize increased protection for large felids like tigers have failed or are failing across all of Asia. Simply put, tigers are disappearing in the wild. If we continue to maintain the status quo, then we run the risk of losing all wild tigers.

The **tiger evolved slightly later than the lion** and evolved along a separate cat line at a later date.

### *Five Remaining Tiger Sub-species:*

**Bengal:** *panthera tigris tigris* (Indian)

**Siberian:** *panthera tigris altaica* (Amur, Ussuri, Northeast China, Manchurian)

**South China:** *panthera tigris amoyensis* (Amoy) (In November 2002 Ron Tilson reports the extinction of this subspecies.)

**Sumatran:** *panthera tigris sumatrae*

**Indo-Chinese:** *panthera tigris corbetti*

### ***Extinct Sub-species:***

**Bali:** Extinct in the 1940's *p.t. balica*

**Caspian:** Extinct in the 1970's *p.t. virgata*

**Javan:** Extinct in the 1980's *p.t. sondaica*

### **This information is from the Matt Tiger Gee Wiz file**

Tigers visit Australia so rarely (always been the case) in the wild and only ever seem to have occurred naturally up in the Torrens Melville Islands that adjoin Sumatra.

No one has seen a wild Tiger up there for 40 years although there are certainly remains of them in caves etc.

By the way, there used to be a Half Javan Half Sumatran tiger at The port Moresby Wildlife park in the 1960's. But no one has seen a Javan tiger since the 1972 wild photograph.

Last proven Caspian Tiger in a western or Soviet zoo was both London's and Moscow's died in 1966 and 1971.

Last proven Javan tiger was in Adelaide Zoo in Australia died in 1948? (about)

Number of Privately owned tigers in Australia (Private...1995) 131

Number of commercially owned tigers in Australia (zoo's, circuses, wildlife parks etc.) 226 (1995)

Siberian tiger Stud book lists 355 pure bred stud tigers in zoo's worldwide.

Number of years Chinese restaurant owner got for serving a tiger dish in Melbourne Australia in 1997 - 12 years without parole.

Number of Tiger part seized by Australian customs 23(1996/97)

Last photograph of a wild Caspian Tiger 1961

Last photo of wild Chinese Tiger 1998?

### **More Tiger Facts**

It is believed the Caspian Tiger became extinct in the 1950's, the Javan in 1972 and the Bali in 1937.

The night vision of tigers is six times better than that of humans.

Tiger claws, like cats, are retractable.

Tiger stripes are like human fingerprints, no two are the same.

A tiger's tail is 3 to 4 foot long, about half as long as its body.

A tiger's paw prints are called pug marks.

Adult tigers like to live alone (except for a mother with cubs).

A tiger's territory can range from 10 - 30 square miles.

Tigers mark their territories by spraying their scent and scratching marks on trees.

Wild tigers can eat as much as 40 pounds of meat at one time and often do not eat again for several days.

The word for a group of tigers is a **STREAK**.

The life span of tigers in the wild is thought to be about 10 to 15 years.

A tiger's forefeet have five toes and the hind feet have four toes.

All toes have claws. The claws are 80 to 100 mm in length.

The length of a tiger's canine teeth can be between 74.5 to 90 mm.

Depending on the subspecies, the head-body length of a tiger is about 4 1/2 to 9 feet (1.4-2.8 m).

Male tigers weigh heavier than females.

Siberian tigers are the heaviest subspecies at 500 or more pounds (225 kg).

The lightest subspecies is the Sumatran at around 250 pounds (110 kg).

The heaviest tiger recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records is a 1,025-pound male Siberian tiger.

Tiger cubs are born blind and weigh only about 2 to 3 pounds (1 kg), depending on the subspecies.

Cubs live on milk for 6-8 weeks before the female begins taking them to kills to feed.

Tigers have fully developed canines by 16 months of age, but they do not begin making their own kills until about 18 months of age.

Young tigers live with their mother until they are two to three years old, then they find their own territories.

Tigers live in thick forests or areas with tall grasses to hide in and plenty of prey to eat.

Tigers are not found in Africa because they never evolved there.

Modern day tigers are all descended from tigers that originally lived in south central China.

They never moved from China to Africa because Africa was just too far away and besides, they would have had to cross an ocean!

Unlike most cat species, tigers like water and are good swimmers.

In tropical climates, tigers frequently spend time lying in water to cool off.

Pound for pound a tiger has five times the pulling strength of a trained human athlete.

Tigers can see about six times as well in the dark as a human.

A tiger may go days between kills, so it may eat over 40 pounds of meat at a setting.

Tigers may live from 10 to 15 years in the wild, but in captivity 16 to 20 years is more common.

A tiger has two to five cubs in a litter. They come into the world blind and weighing only about two to three pounds.

## **White Tigers**

White tigers are not albino tigers!

White tigers are not a separate subspecies of tiger, and they are not albinos, they are just white-colored Bengal tigers.

White tigers are only born when two tigers that both carry the unusual gene for white coloring mate - their color is caused by a double recessive allele. A Bengal tiger with two normal alleles or one normal and one white allele is colored orange. Only a double dose of the mutant allele results in white tigers.

White tigers have blue eyes, pink noses, and creamy white fur with chocolate colored stripes.

White tigers are not from Siberia!

Although some people think that white tigers come from Siberia where their white color helps camouflage them in the snow, this is not true - they come from India!

The only wild white tigers ever reported are white-colored Bengal tigers found in India. In captivity, however there are some white tigers that are generics - a mix of different subspecies.

White Bengal tigers are sometimes mated with tigers from other subspecies, producing white generic tigers.