

SNOW LEOPARD

Panthera uncia



PHYSICAL FEATURES

They are the smallest of the big cats with tails that can be nearly as long as their bodies. They have thick, smoky-gray fur patterned with dark gray open rosettes and spots. In the mountains they blend perfectly with the rocky slopes, making them practically invisible.

WEIGHT
33-46
kg

BODY LENGTH
100-121
cm

Snow leopards cannot roar because their larynx lacks the folds needed to produce that type of sound.

POPULATION

3,500-7,000

estimated number of
**snow leopards left
in the wild**

Snow leopards are elusive and live in harsh and remote habitats. They are rarely seen which makes them extremely difficult to count.

Status: VULNERABLE to extinction

estimated number of
**snow leopards
in zoos around
the world**

455



ADAPTATIONS



FOR LIFE ON THE MOUNTAIN



- well-muscled, stocky build for leaping and hunting
- enlarged nasal cavity
- long thick fur with wooly undergrowth for warmth
- Very long flexible tail for balance
- low center of gravity
- large paws for good grip on slopes and snowy fields

BEHAVIOR

Snow leopards are mostly **solitary**, except when mating or when females are raising cubs. Mating occurs between Jan. and March. 1-3 cubs are generally born 90-105 days later. Cubs stay with their mother until they reach independence at about 20-22 months.

Snow leopards are crepuscular, meaning most active at dawn and dusk. They have large home ranges averaging 230 km² for males and 130 km² for females.

Snow leopard range covers about two million km², approximately the size of Greenland or Mexico, but is spread across twelve countries. While their population is improving in some sites, snow leopards have already disappeared from other areas where they formerly lived.



A close-up photograph of a tiger's face, focusing on its eyes and the stripes on its fur. The tiger has light blue eyes and is looking directly at the camera. The fur is a mix of orange, black, and white stripes.

EXTINCTION IS FOREVER BUT YOU CAN HELP

THREATS

Rising temperatures impact the entire ecosystem threatening to make up to a third of the snow leopard's habitat unlivable and amplifying existing threats.

Illegal hunting and unsustainable overgrazing by livestock have caused a decline in wild prey populations.

Mining and poorly planned infrastructure development are fragmenting habitats and increasing illegal hunting.

Some snow leopards kill livestock and are often killed in retribution.

Snow leopard skin and body parts are illegally traded for use as status symbols, in fashion and traditional Asian medicine.



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