



ANIMALS

TIGER

 490236

PROFILE

LAP KITTY: Bengal tigers—native to India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Nepal—visit water holes to cool off and quench their thirst.

Photograph by [Aditya Singh, Getty Images](#)



Unlike most members of the cat family, tigers seem to enjoy water and swim well.

Photograph by [Dairon655, Dreamstime](#)



Tigers hunt alone and are able to bring down prey such as deer and antelope.

OVERVIEW

Easily recognized by its coat of reddish-orange with dark stripes, the [tiger](#) is the largest wild cat in the world. The big cat's tail is three feet long. On average the big cat weighs 450 pounds, about the same as eight ten-year-old kids. It stands three feet tall with teeth four inches long and claws as long as house keys.

A female tiger gives birth to a litter of three or four cubs, who she will care for until they are a year-and-a-half old. These cubs quadruple in size during their first month!

The powerful predator generally hunts alone, able to bring down prey such as deer and antelope. Tigers wait until dark to hunt. The tiger sprints to an unsuspecting animal, usually pulling it off its feet with its teeth and claws. If the prey animal is large, the [tiger](#) bites its throat to kill it; smaller prey is usually killed when the tiger breaks its neck. Tigers have been known to eat up to 60 pounds of meat in one night, but more often they consume about 12 pounds during a meal. It may take days for a [tiger](#) to finish eating its kill. The cat eats until it's full, and then covers the carcass with leaves

and dirt. The tiger comes back to feed some more.

Tigers live far apart from each other. A tiger knows if it is in another tiger's territory based on the trees around him. Each tiger marks the trees in its area with urine and special scratches.

Unlike most members of the cat family, tigers seem to enjoy water and [swim well](#).

Some tigers live where it gets very cold—in [India](#) and parts of southeast Asia. The whole species is endangered throughout its range.

Tigers have been overhunted for their fur as well as for other body parts that many people use in traditional medicines. Tigers' habitat has also dwindled seriously as humans have developed land for uses such as farming and logging. However, in the Siberian region of [Russia](#), there's hope that these big cats are [making a comeback](#).

Because of their size, strength, and predatory skills, tigers are considered one of the "[big cats](#)." [Lions](#), [cheetahs](#), [jaguars](#), and [cougars](#) are also part of this grouping.

Tiger stripes are special to each individual, and their tails help them to keep their balance. The big cats share all but 4.4% of their DNA with [domestic cats](#).

Take the [big cat quiz](#) to see how much you know about these fierce felines. Then, just for fun, see which wild cat you're most like with our [personality quiz](#).

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Panthera tigris

FAMILY NAME

Felidae

HABITAT

Grassland, Forest

RANGE



ENDANGERED STATUS

 **ENDANGERED**

CLASSIFICATION

Mammal

LIFE SPAN

20 years

DIET

Carnivore

 **WEIGHT**

HEAVIER THAN A PIANO



720 lbs



500 lbs

 **SPEED**

SLOWER THAN A CAR



40 mph



60 mph

 **LENGTH**

SHORTER THAN A SCHOOL BUS



6 feet



37 feet

DIVE DEEPER



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ANIMAL PUZZLES!

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CHEETAH
FASTEST LAND MAMMAL

2767379

VOTE

WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE A TIGER?

- On safari
- In a zoo
- In NG Kids magazine
- In my dreams!

VOTE

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BIG CATS

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A HERO FOR GORILL...

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