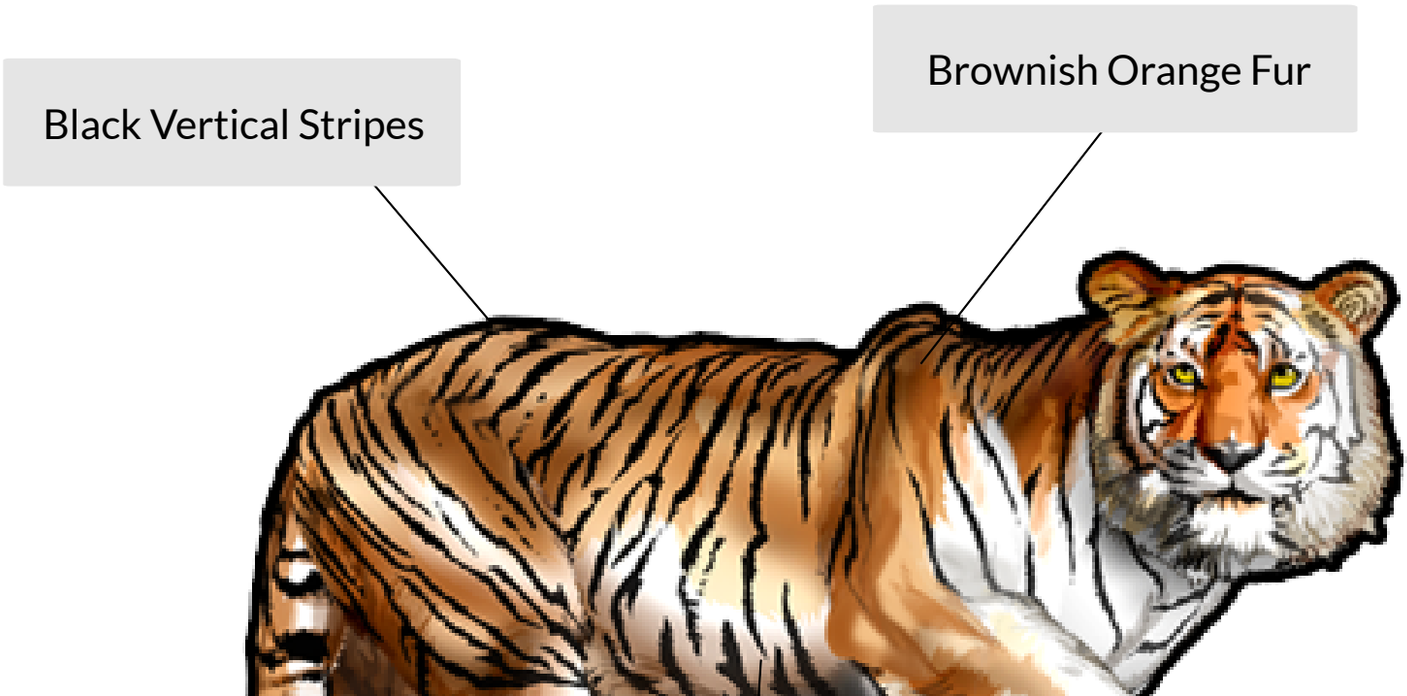
Tigers

Photo Credit: Unsplash - mana5280

Tigers are the largest cat species. With a geographic range that includes south and eastern Asia, this iconic predator reigns supreme in forest and grassland habitats. Favorite prey are wild boar and deer, but tigers are not picky eaters!

Tiger Field Guide for Kids!



Scientific Name: Panthera Tigris

Tiger Tracks

Tiger Range

Tigers natural habitat includes south Asia, southeast Asia, east Asia and eastern Russia. The Indian subcontinent has the highest population of tigers compared with other regions.

Tiger Population in south Asia, southeast Asia and east Asia

Population by Country

- India: 2,976
- Indonesia: 371
- Nepal: 198
- Thailand: 189
- Bangladesh: 121
- China: 34
- Myanmar: <20
- Vietnam: <5
- Lao PDR: 2

In Russia, tiger's range is mainly in the far east. Estimated population is between 400 and 500 wild tigers in Russia.

Tiger Food

Tigers hunt and feed on a range animals. Prey includes large and medium-sized mammals, birds, reptiles and fish. Vulnerable young animals are often preferred, especially when hunting a large mammal. Common hunted animals include:

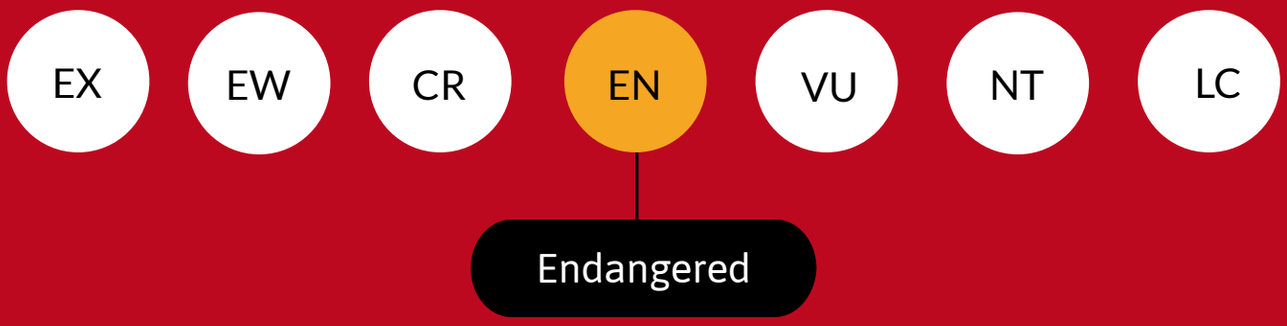
- Sambar Deer
- Manchurian Wapiti
- Barasingha Deer
- Buffalos
- Pythons
- Peafowl
- Wild Boar
- Antelopes
- Wild Oxen
- Monkeys
- Hares
- Porcupines

Tiger Reproduction

- Tigers mate year-round
- 2 to 3 cubs per litter
- Mother rears cubs alone without father
- Cubs born in spring and early summer
- After 2 months of milk, cubs begin eating meat
- Cubs leave their mother after 2-2.5 years

Tiger Conservation

Tigers are an Endangered species. Fewer than 5,000 tigers live in the wild.



Threats tigers face:

- Habitat loss
- Lack of continuous range to connect fragmented populations
- Poaching and hunting by people

Fun Facts!

- Cubs are blind at birth! Newborns must go by their mother's scent.

- Adult tigers prefer to hunt at night! Many tigers are nocturnal.
- The national animal of India, Bangladesh and South Korea is the tiger!
- Female tigers need 7.7 square miles of habitat range. Male tigers need up to 39 square miles of range.

International Tiger Day: July 29

- Began in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit
- Celebration each year to promote tiger conservation

Student Activity

Photo Credit: Unsplash - Manuel Meurisse

Background

One of the major threats tigers face is the lack of continuous habitat between populations. Continuous habitat is important so that females and males can find one another to breed. This breeding ensures genetic diversity and a healthy growing population.

The Problem

Two distinct tiger populations are separated by a major highway. Females and males within each population cannot safely reach the other population to breed.

Student Activity

Your class leads an environmental conservation organization. This organization is tasked with connecting these two separate tiger populations to allow for breeding.

Divide your class into groups. Each group is tasked with writing a conservation program on how to connect these two distinct tiger populations.

Wildlife Photography by Dan Doucette

Sources

- Tiger Population Figures are sourced from Wikipedia and the World Wildlife Fund
- Wildlife Photography Images by Dan Doucette, unless otherwise noted in Photo Credits