

All About Tigers



Tigers are a species of big cat which belong to a family of animals called felines. Tigers can be traced back approximately 2 million years after fossil remains were found in China.

Appearance

Known for their reddish-orange coats, dark stripes and white belly, all tigers have a unique pattern of stripes on their fur. They possess a very long tail that is about half the length of their body and is used for balance.

Some tigers have white fur with black stripes; however, these white tigers are extremely rare.

Description

Tigers are the largest, heaviest, and most powerful members of the cat family and they can live to around 25 years old. Adult tigers can weigh up to 360 kg with a length from head to tail measuring up to 4 metres.

Despite their cumbersome size, tigers can reach speeds of up to 65 km/h when sprinting and can leap distances up to 10 metres in one jump.

Hunting and Diet

Tigers are apex predators, meaning they are at the top of the food chain. They have an entirely carnivorous diet. They mainly feed on large mammals, such as deer, buffalo and cattle.

Tigers usually hunt at night and on their own. The tiger's stripes keep it camouflaged in tall grass and amongst the vertical patterns of light and shade. Tigers quietly stalk their unsuspecting prey before being close enough to ambush. Their razor-sharp teeth and claws help pull an animal off its feet and hold it down, preventing it from escaping.

It may take days for a tiger to finish eating, therefore it covers the remains of its kill with leaves and dirt or drags it into bushes. This hides the carcass from scavengers until the tiger comes back to feed some more.





Subspecies of Tiger

There are five subspecies of tiger: Amur tiger, Bengal tiger, Indochinese tiger, South China tiger and Sumatran tiger. Regrettably, three subspecies are thought to be extinct – Caspian, Bali and Javan.

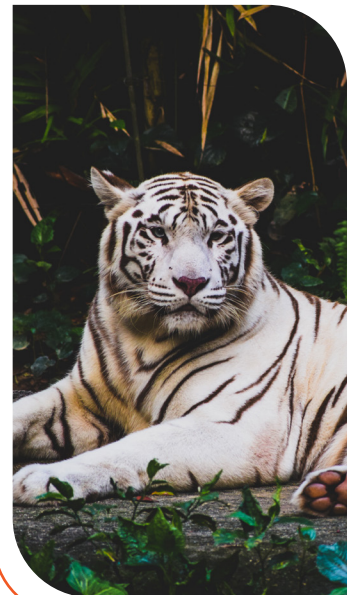
Amur tigers are the largest tigers, with Sumatran tigers being the smallest subspecies.

Behaviour

Tiger cubs are blind when they are first born. At around one or two weeks old, their eyes will begin to open. They will stay with their mother until they are about two years old, when they can hunt and kill prey for themselves.

Adult tigers are solitary creatures and protect the area they live in from other tigers. They often mark trees in their territory with their urine and special scratches to warn off other tigers.

Whilst spending most of their time on land, tigers are one of the very few cats that enjoy water. They are good swimmers and often lounge around pools or streams to cool off from daytime heat.



Threats and Conservation

Sadly, tigers are an endangered species and under serious threat of extinction. Their threats include deforestation, leading to the loss of their habitat, and being illegally hunted as trophies and for their fur.

Numerous wildlife parks, zoos and national parks are working together to try and help the population numbers of tigers recover. Tigers remain a protected species and there are laws against hunting tigers, trading furs and destroying their natural habitats.



Questions

1. What are tigers a type of? Tick one.

- ☐ dog
- ☐ reptile
- ☐ cat
- ☐ amphibian

2. Which of the following is the biggest subspecies of tiger? Tick one.

- ☐ Sumatran tiger
- ☐ Bengal tiger
- ☐ Indochinese tiger
- ☐ Amur tiger

3. Fill in the missing words.

Tigers can be traced back approximately 2 _____ years after fossil remains were found in _____.

4. How many subspecies of tiger are thought to be extinct?

5. Approximately how far can an adult tiger leap?

6. In your own words, explain why a tiger cub is particularly vulnerable in the early stages of its life.

7. In your own words, explain why it is important for tigers to hunt at night and on their own. Explain your answer.

8. **Tigers remain a protected species.**

Why is this important? Explain your answer.

Answers

1. What are tigers a type of? Tick one.

- ☐ dog
- ☐ reptile
- ☒ **cat**
- ☐ amphibian

2. Which of the following is the biggest subspecies of tiger? Tick one.

- ☐ Sumatran tiger
- ☐ Bengal tiger
- ☐ Indochinese tiger
- ☒ **Amur tiger**

3. Fill in the missing words.

Tigers can be traced back approximately 2 **million** years after fossil remains were found in **China**.

4. How many subspecies of tiger are thought to be extinct?

Three

5. Approximately how far can an adult tiger leap?

up to 10 metres

6. In your own words, explain why a tiger cub is particularly vulnerable in the early stages of its life.

Pupils' own responses, such as: A tiger cub is blind for the first two weeks of its life. For the first two years of its life, a tiger relies on its mother to hunt for food.

7. In your own words, explain why it is important for tigers to hunt at night and on their own. Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think it is important for tigers to hunt at night so that they are able to use their dark stripes for camouflage and stalk their prey without being seen. Hunting on their own increases the chances of ambushing an unsuspecting animal. They also don't have to share their kill with others.

8. **Tigers remain a protected species.**

Why is this important? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: It is important that tigers are protected otherwise there is a danger that they will become extinct. We would lose a world famous and historically significant wild animal. Tigers are also a key link in their ecosystem; if they became extinct then their prey species would become overpopulated.

All About Tigers



Tigers are a species of big cat which belong to a family of animals called felines. Tiger ancestry can be traced back approximately 2 million years ago from fossil remains found in China.

Appearance

Arguably the most iconic of the big cats, tigers often invoke a feeling of awe and wonder with their black and orange striped coats and long white whiskers. Each tiger has a unique pattern of stripes on their fur and possesses a very long tail, used for balance, which is around half the length of its body.

Some tigers have white fur with black stripes; however, these white tigers are extremely rare.

Description

Tigers are the largest, heaviest and most powerful members of the cat family in the world, living to around 25 years old. Adult tigers can weigh up to 360 kg, with a length from head to tail measuring up to 4 metres.

With its muscular body and strong limbs, a tiger can reach speeds of up to 65 km/h when sprinting and can leap distances up to 10 metres in one jump.

Habitat

Tigers can be found in the far east of Russia and southern Asia. Tigers tend to live in forest areas but can also be found in diverse habitats such as grasslands, savannas and mangrove swamps.

Every habitat that a tiger dwells in will have a territory to support the livelihood of its prey, as well as shelter and a supply of fresh water. Tigers are one of the very few cats that enjoy the water and they are good swimmers.

Tigers make dens for shelter, usually using dense vegetation, caves, or hollows in trees.



Hunting and Diet

Tigers are apex predators, meaning they are at the top of the food chain. They have an entirely carnivorous diet feeding on large mammals such as deer, buffalo and cattle.

Tigers usually hunt at night and on their own. The tiger's stripes keep it camouflaged in tall grass and amongst the vertical patterns of light and shade. Tigers quietly stalk their unsuspecting prey before being close enough to pounce. Their razor-sharp teeth and claws help pull an animal off its feet and hold it down, preventing it from escaping.

It may take days for a tiger to finish eating, therefore it covers the remains of its kill with leaves and dirt or drags it into bushes. This hides the carcass from scavengers until the tiger comes back to feed some more.



Subspecies of Tiger

There are five subspecies of tiger: Amur tiger, Bengal tiger, Indochinese tiger, South China tiger and Sumatran tiger. Regrettably, three subspecies are thought to be extinct – Caspian, Bali and Javan.

Amur tigers are the largest tigers, with Sumatran tigers being the smallest subspecies. Amur tigers also have the thickest fur due to the cold, harsh temperatures of their habitat.

Behaviour

Tiger cubs are blind when they are first born. At around one or two weeks old, their eyes will begin to open. They will stay with their mother until they are about two years old, at which point they can hunt and kill prey for themselves.

Adult tigers are solitary creatures and protect the area they live in from other tigers. Often marking trees in their territory with their urine and special scratches to warn off other tigers.

Threats and Conservation

Unfortunately, tigers are an endangered species with only approximately 4,500 tigers left in the wild today. An estimated 93% of historical tiger lands have disappeared due to human activity such as farming and logging. Tigers have also been illegally hunted as trophies and for their fur.

Tigers remain a protected species and there are laws against hunting tigers, which help reduce demand for tiger products. Work is continuing to secure tiger landscapes and increase capacity of tiger ranges. Scientists have set up cameras and some tigers are fitted with trackers so population sizes can be closely monitored.

Questions

1. Approximately how long ago can tiger ancestry be traced back to? Tick one.

- ☐ 64 years ago
☐ 4 million years ago
☐ 2 million years ago
☐ 25 years ago

2. Match up the subspecies of tiger to the correct fact.

Javan tiger

extinct

Amur tiger

smallest tiger

Sumatran tiger

thickest fur

3. Look at the first paragraph in the section called **Habitat**.

Find and copy one word that means 'varied'.

4. Name **two** ways that tigers mark their territory.

- _____
- _____

5. Name one reason given in the text for why tigers are an endangered species.

6. In your own words, explain how a tiger catches its prey.

7. Why is camouflage important for tigers?

8. In your own words, describe the first two years of a tiger cub's life.

9. **Tigers are a protected species.**

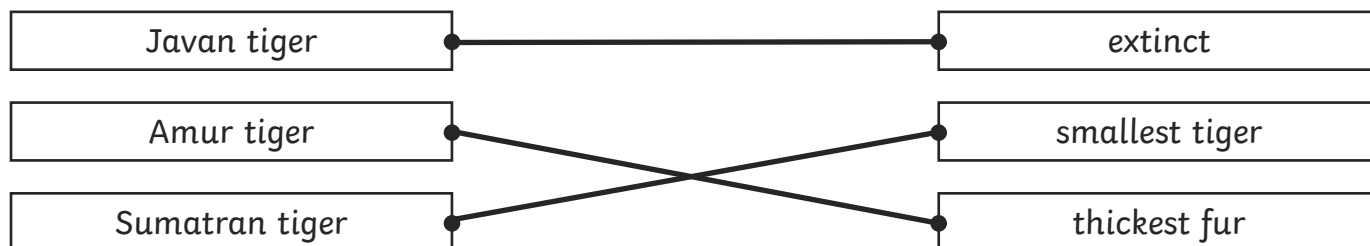
Why is this important? Explain your answer.

Answers

1. Approximately how long ago can tiger ancestry be traced back to? Tick one.

- ☐ 64 years ago
☐ 4 million years ago
☒ **2 million years ago**
☐ 25 years ago

2. Match up the subspecies of tiger to the correct fact.



3. Look at the first paragraph in the section called Habitat.
Find and copy one word that means 'varied'.

diverse

4. Name **two** ways that tigers mark their territory?

- **Urinate on trees.**
- **Mark the trees with special scratches.**

5. Name one reason why tigers are an endangered species.

Accept any one of: Tiger lands have disappeared due to human activity such as farming and logging.

Or, tigers have also been illegally hunted for their fur or as a trophy.

6. In your own words, explain how a tiger catches its prey.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Tigers hunt on their own and usually at night to avoid detection. They stealthily stalk their unsuspecting prey before being close enough to ambush. Their sharp teeth and claws help pull an animal off its feet and hold them down, preventing it from escaping.

7. Why is camouflage important for tigers?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think it is important for tigers to have camouflage so that they can stalk their prey amongst tall grass without being seen. Tigers attack large mammals so they must use an element of surprise to ensure they can eat.

8. In your own words, describe the first two years of a tiger cub's life.

Pupils' own responses, such as: A tiger cub is born blind and its eyes open only after one or two weeks. They stay with their mother until around two years old, when they are old enough to hunt on their own.

9. **Tigers are a protected species.**

Why is this important? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: It is important that tigers are protected otherwise there is a danger that they will become extinct. We would lose a world famous and historically significant wild animal. Tigers are also a key link in their ecosystem; if they became extinct then their prey species would become overpopulated.

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Appearance

Arguably the most iconic of the big cats, tigers often invoke a feeling of admiration and wonder with their black and orange striped coats and long white whiskers. Tigers have unique patterns of stripes on their fur and possess a tail around half the length of their body, used for balance.

Some tigers have white fur with black stripes; however, these white tigers are extremely rare.

The backs of the tiger's ears have white spots surrounded by black fur. It is suggested this adaptation acts as false eyes to discourage attacks from behind, or maybe that it helps tiger cubs follow their mothers through tall grass.

Description

Tigers are the largest, heaviest and most powerful members of the cat family in the world and can live to around 25 years old. Adult tigers can weigh up to 360 kg with a length from head to tail measuring up to 4 metres.

With its muscular body and strong limbs, a tiger can reach speeds of up to 65 km/h when sprinting and can leap distances up to 10 metres in one jump.

Habitat

Tigers can be found in the far east of Russia and southern Asia. Tigers tend to live in forest areas but can also be found in diverse habitats such as grasslands, savannas and mangrove swamps.

Every habitat that a tiger dwells in will have a territory to support the livelihood of its prey, as well as shelter and a supply of fresh water.

Tigers are one of the very few cats that enjoy the water and they are excellent swimmers.

Hunting and Diet

Tigers are apex predators, meaning they are at the top of the food chain. They have an entirely carnivorous diet feeding on large mammals such as deer, buffalo and cattle.

Tigers usually hunt at night and on their own. To animals with poor eyesight, a tiger's stripes make it camouflaged amongst long grass and the vertical patterns of light and shade. Tigers quietly stalk their unsuspecting prey before being close enough to pounce. Their razor-sharp teeth and claws help pull an animal off its feet and hold it down, preventing it from escaping.

The tiger eats until it is full and may take days to finish eating an entire carcass, therefore the tiger covers the remains of its kill with leaves and dirt or drags it into bushes. This hides it from scavengers until the tiger comes back to feed some more.

Subspecies of Tiger

There are five subspecies of tiger: Amur tiger, Bengal tiger, Indochinese tiger, South China tiger and Sumatran tiger. Regrettably, three subspecies are thought to be extinct – Caspian, Bali and Javan.

Amur tigers are the largest tigers with Sumatran tigers being the smallest subspecies. Amur tigers also have the thickest fur due to the cold, harsh temperatures of their habitat.



Behaviour

Adult tigers are solitary creatures, apart from mothers and their cubs. Tigers roam large territories determined by the availability of food. Although they don't patrol their area, they often mark trees in their domain with their urine and special scratches to warn other tigers that the space is occupied.

A female tiger gives birth to two to four cubs at a time and the cub will stay with its mother until around 18 months old when it is big enough to hunt and kill on its own.

Sadly, survival for cubs is tricky as they are born blind and for the first two weeks rely on following the scent of their mother. Despite a cub growing to quadruple its size in the first month, almost half of all cubs do not live more than two years.

Threats and Conservation

Tigers are an endangered species with only around 4500 tigers left in the wild today. An estimated 93% of historical tiger lands have disappeared due to human activity such as farming and logging. Tigers have also been poached (illegally hunted) for their fur and as trophies.

Tigers remain a protected species and there are laws against hunting them to deter poachers and reduce demand for tiger products. Work is continuing to secure tiger landscapes and increase capacity in tiger ranges. Scientists have set up staggered cameras to take photos of wild tigers while others are fitted with a tracker. These are critical steps in monitoring the progress of tiger conservation and population sizes. Happily, there are signs that tiger numbers are increasing in Siberia.



Questions

1. In which country were tiger fossils found which helped trace back tiger ancestry to 2 million years ago? Tick one.

- ☐ Russia
☐ Africa
☐ China
☐ Siberia

2. Draw **three** lines to match each tiger fact to the correct measurement.

Tiger tails are around

4 metres

Tigers can leap distances up to

10 metres

Tigers can measure up to from head to tail.

half the length of its body.

3. Look at the section called **Appearance**

Find and copy one word that means 'widely recognised'.

4. Name **two** reasons why half of all tiger cubs do not live more than two years.

- _____
- _____

5. What is unique to all tigers?

6. What subspecies of tiger is the smallest?

7. In your own words, explain why tigers are endangered.

8. Summarise what you have learnt about tigers using 25 words or fewer.

9. **Tigers are a protected species.**

Why is this important? Explain your answer.

10. Tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

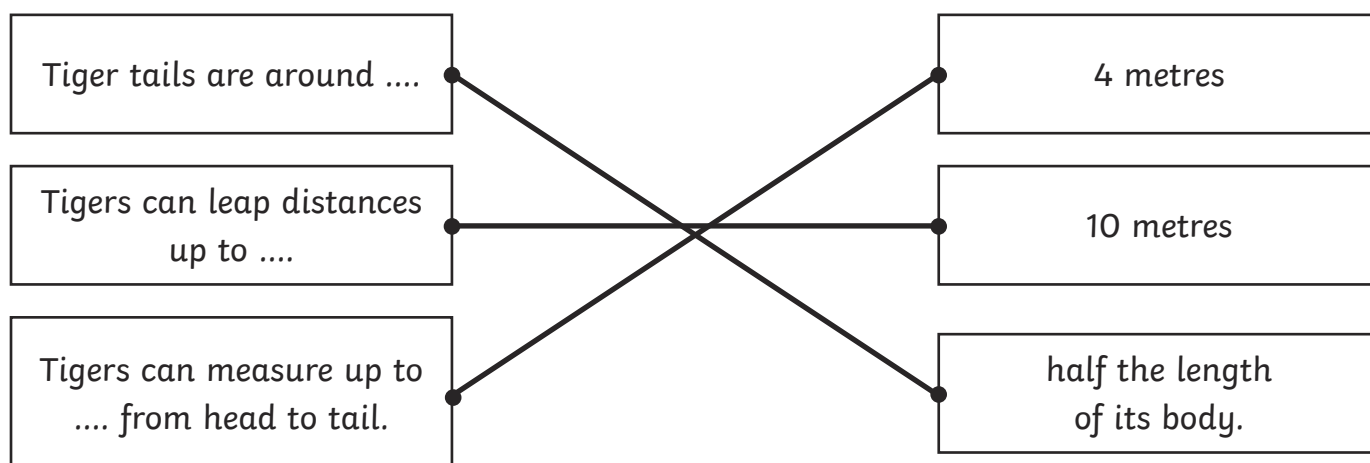
	True	False
Tigers have white circles surrounded by black fur at the back of their ears.		
The Indochinese tiger is the largest tiger.		
It is understood that a tiger's stripes help with camouflage.		
Tigers generally live and hunt in large groups.		
A tiger cub is born blind.		

Answers

1. In which country were tiger fossils found which helped trace back tiger ancestry to 2 million years ago? Tick one.

- ☐ Russia
☐ Africa
☒ **China**
☐ Siberia

2. Draw **three** lines to match each tiger fact to the correct measurement



3. Look at the section called **Appearance**

Find and copy one word that means 'widely recognised'.

iconic

4. Name **two** reasons why half of all tiger cubs do not live more than two years.

- **Tiger cubs are born blind which means they have to rely on following the scent of their mother.**
- **Tiger cubs are unable to hunt for themselves until around 18 months of age.**

5. What is unique to all tigers?

All tigers have a unique stripe pattern on their fur.

6. What subspecies of tiger is the smallest?

The smallest subspecies of tiger is the Sumatran tiger.

7. In your own words, explain why tigers are endangered.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Human impact on the environment such as deforestation and farming has reduced the size of tiger habitats and made it harder for tigers to hunt. In addition, tigers have been poached for their fur and as trophies.

8. Summarise what you have learnt about tigers using 25 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: Tigers are the largest and heaviest of the cat family. A ferocious hunter relying on speed and surprise. Sadly, tigers are an endangered species.

9. **Tigers are a protected species.**

Why is this important? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: It is important that tigers are protected otherwise there is a danger that they will become extinct. We would lose a world famous and historically significant wild animal. Tigers are also a key link in their ecosystem; if they became extinct then their prey species would become overpopulated.

10. Tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
Tigers have white circles surrounded by black fur at the back of their ears.	✓	
The Indochinese tiger is the largest tiger.		✓
It is understood that a tiger's stripes help with camouflage.	✓	
Tigers generally live and hunt in large groups.		✓
A tiger cub is born blind.	✓	

Award 2 marks for all **five** correct.

Award 1 mark for **four** correct.