

Endangered species: bengal tiger essay sample



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The common name for the species is Bengal Tiger and it belongs to the genus/species *Panthera tigris tigris*. The Bengal Tiger usually has a reddish brown coat with narrow black, gray, or brown strips going in a vertical direction accompanied by a cream or white underbelly. Although some have a mutation gene which causes the skin color to be white instead of the usual color. Since the tigers generally hunt at dusk and dawn, their stripes act as a camouflage in the tall grasses. They don't have the capability to chase prey for long periods of time and distances. It is the second largest of all living tiger species. It can be up to 10 ft. for the male tiger and 9 ft. for the female. The male Bengal tiger can reach a weight of up to 500 lbs. while the female tiger can reach up to 300 lbs. A tiger can consume up to 88 lbs. of meat in one feeding period. The tiger generally has a life span lasting up to 15 years in the wild, 16 to 18 in captivity. The Bengal tiger's gestation period is usually 98-110 days and 2- 4 cubs is the average litter. Male tigers don't reach sexual maturity until around 4-5 years and females reach maturity at about 3-4 years of age. Hearing is their sharpest sense, about five times better than humans, and their night vision is about six times stronger than humans.

The loud roar of this tiger can be heard up to two miles away. Despite their fearsome reputation, tigers generally avoid humans; although some can become vicious man-eaters. It can be found in a large variety of habitats some of which of the animal include tropical jungles, brush, marsh lands, and tall grasslands in areas of Bangladesh, Nepal, India, and Burma. Almost one third of the tiger's population lives in India and Bangladesh. Bengal tigers have been a national symbol of many Empires in India, today it is the

national animal of India. India has two-third of the total population of the tiger. They are carnivores and their diet usually consists of medium to large prey (such as pigs, buffalo, and deer). By the age of 2 to 3 years old, these tigers become fully grown. Most tigers are solitary animals, as Bengal tigers are, and habitually do not live in groups. Although the females can travel with a group of young, this includes about three to four tigers.

This species of tiger is considered endangered and has been since 2010 because of factors such as habitat loss and poaching. Their range of habitat decreases more and more each year because of construction for building new infrastructures to just the clearing of the lands where they roam. This causes them to move around often creating new adaptations but not positively affecting the tigers per say. Poaching is another big issue with these animals. Their skin and other body parts for traditional medicine and their fur receive high prices with poachers causing them to become hunted often for the sake of cash. Poachers kill for tiger skin which can be used in bags and jackets for markets in the economy. Poaching is by far the most significant immediate threat to the existence of wild tiger populations. Some cultures have the belief that powdered tiger bones have medicinal values, which is damaging for the tigers population. Tiger bones are used in traditional Chinese medicines as a muscle strengthener and treatment for Rheumatism.

Tigers generally need a large territory to roam and without it numbers dwindle greatly. Humans are causing this species to become so scarce to the point of almost extinction in the next ten to twenty years. There less than 2, 500 tigers left in the wild which is a big drop from approximately 100, 000 a

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century ago. Another part to the Bengal tiger's endangerment is due to the threat they pose on communities and their livestock. Many humans have the means to defend themselves and usually don't hold back on doing so, therefore harming the tiger's population even more. All of these are some of the many reasons for the tiger's endangerment but the main issue is the habitat loss. Their forest lands are constantly being invaded by humans from a boom in population and rapid urbanization taking place. The government in India started a conservation effort in 1972 with Project Tiger.

The Government in India has also established 37 tiger reserves and wildlife sanctuaries throughout 17 Indian states for the protection of the Bengal tiger. The WWF (World Wildlife Foundation) works with local partners to help strengthen antipoaching acts and lessen the threats to their natural habitats in India, Nepal, and Bhutan. WWF is also trying to stop illegal wildlife trade alongside TRAFFIC, the wildlife trading monitoring network) to help stop the trafficking of tigers by supporting intelligence networks to stop tiger parts and products from being smuggled into black markets in Asia, and also by funding antipoaching patrols. South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) is also supported by WWF so the regional governments can put their information and resources together. Such information includes early warning signs, investing in effective legislation, and improving enforcement of policies and laws. IN 2010, WWF helped support a Nepal-India resolution to conserve biodiversity including the Bengal tigers. Another big part in help the Bengal tiger's population is a project started in 2000, called Tiger Canyons, which is a re-wilding effort for the tigers that are in captivity. This

project attempts to train, captive cubs how to stalk, hunt, associate hunting with food, and regain their predatory instincts.