

# The amur

Business



Imagine this: you're watching a pale orange and black striped tiger crouch in wait for its prey. The cat is sneaking ever so slightly toward an unaware deer that is soon to be dinner.

In one quick pounce, the tiger grabs the deer by the nape of the neck and wrestles it over to force a bloodcurdling sight of a bite to the neck. Blood spurts, the deer cries pitifully, and an eerie gleam of predatory arrogance shines from the tiger's eyes. As the deer dies, the tiger drags it to a nearby river and feasts. You have now met the Amur. Although the Taiga is home to many wondrous and beautiful creatures, one of its most majestic could arguably be the Amur, which is better known as the Siberian Tiger. This subspecies of tiger, the largest in fact, lives in the eastern Russian boreal forests and is thought to be at a considerably low number of four to five hundred in population.

The Amur, standing at a height of approximately three and a half feet, is a mostly nocturnal cat that pursues a diet of deer and the occasional boar or an unlucky elk. Both the female and male Amurs mark their territory by the spraying of urine; however, the male has a more territorial instinct that causes him to be an aggressive protector, but mainly toward other males. Some male Amurs even protect the territories of females, and ward off any tiger that gets too close to her marked area. Despite the fact that many big cats are accused of being vicious man eating beasts, the Siberian Tiger is a somewhat reclusive feline. Males are rarely found socializing with other tigers; however, females are sometimes seen in a small pack, typically made up of her own cubs, other females, and their offspring. The Amur has quite

an acceptable argument for being a loner though – this species is on the verge of disappearing and is in dire need of a population boost.

While the population of the Amur has remained stable recently, it has not always been that way. In the 20th century, the population of the Siberian Tiger was so low that extinction would have been the most commonly expected result. Many factors have affected the size of the population of the Amur in its history, including habitat loss and merciless poaching. Logging has been a major industry in the Taiga, and as a result, the Amur has been deprived of the natural amount of a home it once had. The poaching of the tiger for its beautiful striped fur has forever been a danger to the breathtaking tiger, and alongside these disastrous occurrences, the Chinese discovered many centuries ago that certain parts of the Siberian Tigers' bones can be of use to medicinal practices.

Fortunately, many efforts have been put forth to conserve the existence of this creature. By passing a law prohibiting the use of the tigers' bones in medicine, a rapid growth in population of this species has occurred. With the help of organizations such as Siberian Tiger Project and Siberian Tiger Conservation Association, the Amur has high hopes for survival. These beneficial organizations have played a huge part in conserving and reviving the Siberian Tiger from the edge of near extinction by helping pass laws against the poaching and unreasonable death of the animal. It can be hard to recognize positive things while being surrounded by negativity, but there is an honest and clear hope for the Siberian Tiger despite the many setbacks the cat has fought in the past.

With the help of humankind, and a withdrawal of the damage we force upon the ironically helpless predator, we can revive the population so that the tiger can be a free and wild creature in its own natural habitat. It's an extremely sad realization that we are the one species that the Siberian Tiger must fear and depend on simultaneously. Gazing in awe as the tiger finishes his meal and buries the remaining carcass of the deer, you notice the cat sniff the air, almost as if he has picked up on something you have not. The tiger crouches in the grass, in a cautioned position. He's scared.

You can feel the tension and fear grasping a hold on the atmosphere. It's odd - the tiger is such a massive and intimidating creature, but the fear in his eyes mimics that of a child. The cat raises his head, takes a look at his surroundings, and very warily takes a step that turns into a gallop that turns into a run. A shot rings, and the tiger's body falls. His life has been taken mercilessly by a poacher. What was once a majestic feline roaming the forests, doing no harm upon the human race, is now gone.

He is now just another statistic. You must remember though, the lion may be the king of the jungle, but the Siberian Tiger is the king of the forest.