



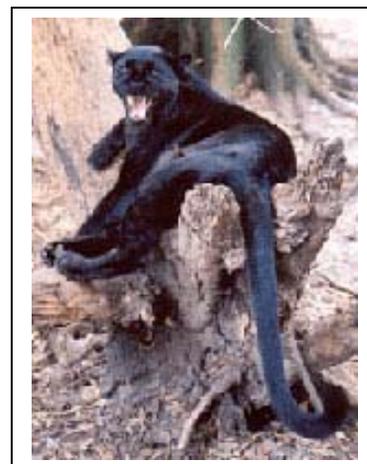
Leopard

Common Name: Leopard
Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata (Vertebrata)
Class: Mammalia
Order: Carnivora
Family: Felidae
Genus: Pantherinae Panthera
Species: pardus (asian)
Sub-species: (Not all listed, these are the most common)

Javan leopard - P.p. melas
 Amur leopard - P.p. orientalis
 Indian leopard - P.p. fusca
 North Chinese leopard - P.p. japonensis
 Somali leopard - P.p. nanopardus
 Zanzibar leopard - P.p. adersi
 Sinai leopard - P.p. jarvisi
 Sri Lankan leopard - P.p. kotiya
 Barbary leopard - P.p. panthera
 Persian leopard - P.p. saxicolor
 Arabian leopard - P.p. nimr
 Anatolian leopard - P.p. tulliana
 Caucasus leopard - P.p. ciscaucasica
 Indochinese leopard - P.p. delacouri
 African leopard - P.p. leopardus

(pictured, spotted above)

Misc.: This cat, in its melanistic color phase, is often mistakenly referred to as a black panther. This species has been (and is still) illegally hunted throughout its range for sport, and for its fur.



The leopard is capable of running just under 40 miles per hour for brief periods. It can leap more than 20 feet horizontally, and 10 feet vertically. It is also a very adept swimmer.

Size and Appearance: The leopard is the smallest member of the 4 "great cats" and most closely resembles its cousin the Jaguar. Leopards vary in length from 3 - 6.25 ft with a tail length of 22.5 - 43 inches, and stand 17.5 - 30.5 inches high at the shoulder. Males weigh between 80 - 150 pounds and females between 62.5 - 100 pounds. This spotted cat has short powerful limbs, heavy torso, thick neck, and long tail. Its short sleek coat varies greatly from pale straw and gray buff to bright, deep ochre and chestnut, and sometimes black (found mostly in wetter, dense forests). Large black spots grouped into rosettes on the shoulders, upper arms, back, flanks and haunches, and smaller scattered spots on the lower limbs, head, throat and chest, and the belly has large black blotches. .



Habitat: The leopard can adapt to almost any type of habitat that provides it with sufficient food and cover, which excludes

only the interior of large deserts. In its range, it is the only large predator in the rain forests.

Distribution: Throughout Africa, from the Arabian Peninsula through Asia to Manchuria and Korea.

Reproduction and Offspring: Leopards are capable of breeding between 2 and 3 years, and produce 1 - 3 cubs after a 90-100 day gestation. The cubs become independent between 13 - 18 months, and siblings may remain together for several months before separating. Females in captivity have produced offspring as old as 19 years, but the average age of last reproduction is 8.5 years.

In captivity, leopards have lived over 23 years, as compared to 10 - 11 in the wild.

Social System and Communication: Leopards are solitary cats, and use the same methods as the other cats for defining their territory: scent marking, feces, and scratch marks. It has a variety of vocalizations including grunting, growling, hissing, purring and meowing. One of their most recognized sounds is their distance call which sounds something like someone sawing wood.

Hunting and Diet: Leopards are very opportunistic animals and have an extremely flexible diet. They will consume protein in almost any form, from beetles up to antelopes twice its own weight. It readily eats carrion, and caches sizeable kills in trees, returning nightly to feed on them. Their main diet consists of over 30 different species including: medium sized antelopes (reedbuck, impala, Tommy's gazelles) and the young of larger species (topi, hartebeest, wildebeest, zebra) as the primary food sources, with hares, birds and small carnivores rounding out the list. They have even been known to include the occasional baboon in their diet.

Status: CITES: Appendix I

Felid TAG recommendation: Leopard (*Panthera pardus*). International studbooks for five rare leopard subspecies (Amur, Persian, Chinese, Sri Lankan, and Arabian) have been maintained for as long as 25 years. On the basis of conservation need, space availability, and the potential for obtaining new founders, the Felid TAG has determined that there is only space for one race. The Amur leopard, *P. p. orientalis* of the Russian Far East, adjacent Manchuria and North Korea has been identified as the leopard for zoos and other North American institutions. Hybrids, other races and color morpho-types will be managed to extinction. The Amur leopard is managed via a PMP and includes AZA zoos, non-member zoos, and private owners as part of the program. The target population of 120 individuals probably will be increased to 150 to meet genetic and demographic objectives. The EEP and the PMP will merge soon to manage this species globally. The Russian Ministry of the Environment has initiated discussion about a potential release program in the Russian Far East.

How rare is this cat ? The International Species Information Service lists 459 worldwide, with 195 being in the U.S. There are 12 of these big cats living at Big Cat Rescue.