

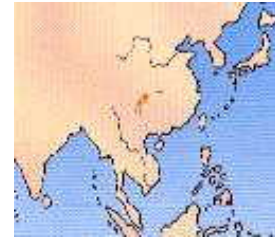
Giant Panda

Order: Carnivora

Family: Ursidae

Genus: *Ailuropoda*

Species: *melanoleuca*



Geographic Range: Mountain ranges of western China, in the provinces of Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu

Habitat: Temperate montane temperate with a bamboo/rhododendron understory, between 3,000 and 12,000 feet in altitude.

Niche: Terrestrial, omnivorous, diurnal

Wild Diet: Bamboo, extremely occasional forms of meat (insects, small mammals). Bamboo has such a low nutrient content that the bears must be continually eating (up to 14 hours per day) to gain enough nutrition.

Life Span: 25 to 30 years in captivity (unknown in the wild)

Appearance: Panda bears can weigh up to 275 pounds and stand between 63 and 75 inches. Small, stocky bear with a white body, black limbs and shoulders, black ears, and large black eye patches.

Adaptations: Panda bears do not hibernate, however they may move to lower elevations during the winter.

Reproduction: Sexual maturity happens between 4 and 7 years of age. Female pandas are in estrus for only one to seven days of the year, generally between March and May. Litters range from one to three cubs, usually with one survivor. A cub remains with its' mother for approximately 18 months.

Miscellaneous: Pandas tend to be solitary, although they may occasionally interact with neighboring bears.

Status and Conservation: Pandas are extremely endangered and listed in Appendix I of CITES along with being listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List. It is thought that there are only around 1,000 bears left in the wild. Their populations are fragmented and many are in habitats isolated from other bears. There are over 100 pandas in captivity, but unfortunately they do not breed well in this environment.

Threats to Survival: Habitat loss and to a lesser degree poaching. Currently it is thought the bamboo forests of China can only support approximately 1,000 bears.

Bears at the Zoo: None in San Francisco. In the United States, only the Atlanta Zoo, the National Zoo in Washington DC, the Memphis Zoo, and the San Diego Zoo have resident panda bears.