



Amazing Animals Fact sheets

Red Panda

In April 2009, Australia Zoo welcomed two gorgeous Red Pandas. Red Pandas are a shy solitary animal that are generally active at dusk, dawn and during the night. They are arboreal and will sleep in nests in hollows of trees and in the tree canopies.



Red Panda

The Red Panda has a roundish head with a light coloured face and tear shaped markings. The face has white badges similar to that of a racoon but each individual can have distinctive markings. Their fur is a soft reddish-brown colour on its upper parts and black on its lower parts. They have medium, erect ears, a black nose and very dark (almost black) coloured eyes. Its long bushy tail has six alternating light and dark coloured rings which provide camouflage against the moss covered trees. The tail is not prehensile, however it does assist with balance. Their legs are black and short with thick fur on the soles of the paws that hide scent glands and serve as thermal insulation against the snow and ice surfaces. Their claws are strong, curved, sharp and semi retractable. Red Panda males can weigh anywhere from 3kg to 6kg with a body length of 50-64cm.

Habitat

The Red Panda is found throughout the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains, from western Nepal to Northern Myanmar and South western China. They prefer to reside in altitudes between 5,000 and 15,000 feet on steep mountainous slopes that are covered with a dense canopy and mixed forests of coniferous trees, deciduous hardwoods and bamboo. The average temperature ranges between 10-25 degrees Celsius.

Diet

The Red Pandas primary food source is bamboo. They prefer the fresh tip of the leaf and the new regrowth. However they will also eat some fruit, grasses, roots, insects, eggs, young birds and small rodents. Due to the lack of nutrients that exist in bamboo, it requires them to

spend a significant amount of time feeding. They also have quite a slow metabolism.

Breeding

Being a solitary animal, Red Pandas will only come together for mating. At this time the males will fight for the right to breed with the female in question. Gestation is approximately 131 days, toward the final weeks the female will construct a nest from leaves, sticks and debris in the hollow of a tree or rock column. She will give birth to one to four live cubs that weigh up to 130g. The cubs will remain in the nest for up to 12 weeks before they start to venture out. Weaning is between six and eight months of age, and sexual maturity is reached at 18 months of age. The average lifespan for a Red panda is 12 years in the wild and 14 years in captivity.

Australia Zoo Red Panda profiles



Pasang

Cheeky young Pasang is just like a typical teenager. His daily routine will start with a late sleep-in, followed by a yawn, a stretch, then he will turn over for another sleep-in. When it is finally time for breakfast, he will selectively pick over his fruit, eat all his favourites and turn his nose up at everything else. After a feed, it will be back up the tree to primp and preen himself before having another snooze! It's a good thing he has keepers at his beck and call all day to attend to his every need. Luckily, seeing his gorgeous face every day means it is never a chore to look after this cheeky boy. Pasang's name translates to "born on a Friday" in Nepalese.

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