

Wildlife Without Borders

Tiger Conservation Program

Tigers are magnificent creatures: big, powerful, and impressive. Unfortunately, wild tigers, once abundant throughout Asia, now live only in small fragmented groups – mostly in protected forests, refuges, and national parks. The current total population is estimated at around 4,000 animals. Experts say that more than 500 tigers are killed each year.

In 1994, the United States Congress passed a law to establish the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund to help protect, conserve, and manage these amazing species. Since 1996, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has used this fund to support anti-poaching initiatives, development of nature reserves, wildlife surveys and monitoring, management of human-wildlife conflict, public awareness campaigns, and other conservation efforts related to tiger survival.

TIGER BASICS:

Size: Tigers are the largest living member of the cat family; they can be up to 12 feet in length and the largest tigers can weigh up to 650 pounds.

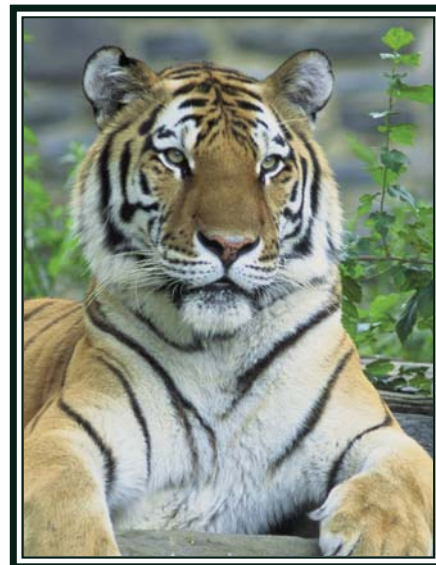
Lifespan: Estimated 10-15 years.

Diet: Water buffalo, antelope, wild pigs, and sambar deer comprise a significant portion of a tiger's diet.

Population: Only 3,000-4,500 tigers are thought to survive in the wild compared to an estimated tiger population of 100,000 in the early 1900's.

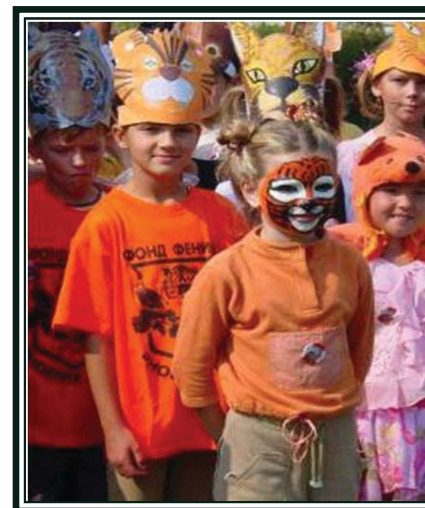
Range: Historically, tigers could be found between Turkey and the eastern shores of Russia and China. Today, tigers occupy only 7% of their original habitat (see country list on map below).

Conservation Status: All five subspecies of tiger surviving in the wild today are endangered under the Endangered Species Act and the IUCN Red List. Tigers are also protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), of which the United States is a member.



Amur tiger - also called Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*)

John and Karen Hollingsworth/USFWS



Children celebrate a local tiger festival to promote education and awareness/USFWS



FAST FACT:

Today tigers inhabit only a fraction of the area they once occupied. Global tiger populations have declined over the past 150 years. For every 100 acres of historical habitat, only 7 acres remain today.

How the *Wildlife Without Borders* Program is Helping Tigers:

Tiger Projects 2005-2009

Country	# of Grants
Bangladesh	3
Burma	1
Cambodia	5
China	8
India	30
Indonesia	16
Lao PDR	8
Malaysia	6
Nepal	4
Russia	20
Thailand	8
Vietnam	2

Multi-Country Grants

India/Bhutan/Nepal	1
Laos/Vietnam	1
Russia/China	2
Cambodia/Laos	1

Total Grants 116

Funds Awarded \$9.3M

Funds Leveraged \$13.2M

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
International Affairs
Division of International Conservation
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 100
Arlington, VA 22203
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CFDA# 15.619

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Teachers for Tigers – Asia/Russia

To help build support for tiger conservation among young people, over 200 teachers have brought interactive tiger education into the classroom by emphasizing learning dramas, games, academic debates, art contests (see image at right), mapping exercises, and mock conferences. As a result, this innovative conservation program is being adopted by schools in the vicinity of tiger habitat in India, Bangladesh, and Russia.



Art contests raise awareness among young people in Southeast Asia/USFWS



Using GPS to map tiger activity at Thap Lan NP
Dr. Meenakshi Nagendran/USFWS

Smart Patrol – Thailand

Anti-poaching patrol teams tasked with reducing illegal hunting of tigers are using a new concept in patrol management. It combines GPS and GIS to better organize information produced by patrols. Now rangers can improve planning of future patrols and react more quickly to threats. This approach is being used in Thailand's premier tiger habitats near the Burma border (Huai Kha Khaeng and Thauang Yai East and West Wildlife Sanctuaries).

Cross-Border Partnership – Russia/China

Researchers have confirmed viable Siberian tiger habitat exists on both sides of the Russia-China border. However, until recently, tigers were largely restricted to the Russian side where they were less likely to encounter poachers. *Wildlife Without Borders* has supported removal of snares in China, use of advanced patrol techniques, as well as outreach to local communities on tiger conservation. As the impact of illegal hunting decreases, and new parks are established to protect Siberian tigers, their population is expected to grow and expand (see image below).



Siberian tiger cub (*Panthera tigris altaica*)
John Goodrich/WCS

FAST FACT:

Tigers are territorial carnivores that need large areas of habitat in order to hunt sufficient prey to survive. An individual tiger's territory can range from 8 square miles in parts of Bangladesh to 385 square miles (or more than 98,000 soccer fields!) in Siberia.

A Promise for the Future

By working across borders with scientific experts, local communities, conservation agencies, non-profit organizations, park guards, teachers, and students, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service strives to protect tigers. As human populations increase, conflicts between humans and tigers will become more frequent. With a strong focus on working with people to conserve tigers, *Wildlife Without Borders* aims to halt the decline in tiger populations.

FAST FACT:

Each tiger has its own unique pattern of stripes on its face and body, much like a fingerprint. This allows scientists to identify individual tigers.