

# Amur Tiger



**Habitat:** Tundra, deciduous (woodland) forest, and coniferous forests

**Distribution:** Amur-Ussuri region of eastern Russia

**Diet:** Large herbivores such as wild boar, deer and elk

**Longevity:** 17 years in the wild, longer in captivity

**Status:** Endangered

The Amur Tiger, formally known as the Siberian Tiger is the largest of the five tiger species and the largest of all the big cats. Males weighing around 363 kg and measuring up to 3.4m in length (nose to tail). Females are smaller at only 226 kg.

The Amur Tiger is well adapted to life in the cold. It lives in an environment where temperatures can drop as low as  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

It has a thick fur coat and layer of fat underneath the skin to insulate it from the winter snow. The tiger's stripes act as camouflage, which helps them blend into their forest environment. This camouflage is essential for stalking animals such as Sika deer and wild boar.

The Amur Tigers is one of the most endangered species of tiger. Their population continues to decrease due to illegal poaching and habitat loss. Poaching is for their thick fur, as well as body parts. Their body parts are used in traditional medicine. Almost every part of the tiger is believed to be a medicinal cure for a range of ailments ranging from fever to skin disease. There is no scientific proof that any of these body parts has any medicinal benefit.

Another major factor which is causing the decline of tigers in Russia, is habitat loss. More and more land is being developed for farmland, human habitations or just logged for timber. This not only a problem for the tigers but also for their prey such as wild boar and deer.

Colchester Zoo's tigers are part of an international breeding programme.

