

## TIGERS

### Vocabulary

**camouflage**- a coverup, to hide or blend-in with the environment

**ambush**- a group of tigers

**subspecies**- a group or type

**endangered** – in danger of extinction

**extinct**- no longer in existence

Tigers are the biggest species of the cat family. Tigers are mammals and can reach a length of up to 3.3 meters (11 feet). They can weigh as much as 300 kilograms (660 pounds).

Each tiger has a unique type of stripes. Their distinctive stripes provide **camouflage** for tigers to hide while hunting. While most tigers have an orange, white, and black pattern of stripes, some are black with tan stripes and others are white with tan stripes.

Tigers are carnivores; they need to eat meat to survive. A group of tigers is known as an 'ambush' or 'streak'. Tigers have been known to bring down small rhinos and elephants. Like most cats, tigers are solitary hunters and live alone.

Tigers are territorial, and mark their property with urine, droppings, scent marks and scratch marks. Tigers are excellent swimmers and even enjoy swimming and cooling off in the water on a hot day. They live for 15 to 20 years in the wild.

There are six types or **subspecies** of tigers:

- *Bengal Tiger* - This tiger is found in India and Bangladesh. They are the most common type of tiger.
- *Indochinese Tiger* - Found in Indochina, these tigers are smaller than the Bengal Tiger and like to live in mountain forests.
- *Malayan Tiger* - This tiger is only found at the tip of the Malayan peninsula.
- *Siberian Tiger* - This is the largest of the tigers and is found in Eastern Siberia.
- *Sumatran Tiger* - Found only on the island of Sumatra, these are the smallest types of tigers.
- *South China Tiger* - This is the most endangered type of tiger. They are critically endangered and are nearing the point of extinction.



Many subspecies of the tiger are either **endangered** or in danger of extinction or already **extinct**, which means they no longer exist. Humans are the primary cause of this through hunting and the destruction of habitats. There are more tigers held privately as pets than there are in the wild.