



PANDAS



KEY INFORMATION

Pandas live mainly in temperate forests high in the mountains of southwest China, where they live almost entirely on bamboo. The cool wet environment produces the perfect habitat for pandas.

Pandas can live up to 20 years in the wild and up to 35 years in captivity. Pandas can grow to around 90cm tall and can weigh up to 150kg. Unlike other bears, giant pandas do not hibernate during winter months because they need to continue to eat. Instead, they will climb to a lower altitude in the winter, where they will find warmer temperatures.

APPEARANCE

Pandas have a black and white coat, with black fur around their eyes, ears, muzzle, legs and shoulders. Their fur allows them to easily camouflage to their environment. Their thick, woolly coat helps to keep them warm in their cool mountain homes.

They have broad paws and long retractable claws that help them grip when climbing trees. In order to hold, crush and eat bamboo, pandas have broad, flat teeth and an enlarged wrist bone that functions as opposable thumbs. Pandas have a heightened sense of smell, and they can detect when other pandas are close by and will avoid them.

DIET

Pandas are usually herbivores, they like to eat the leaves, stems and shoots from bamboo. 99% of their diet is bamboo, however they occasionally eat fish or smaller animals.

Bamboo is low in nutrients, so pandas need to eat a lot to survive. In a single day, they can spend 12-16 hours eating and consume up to 20kg of bamboo.

FUN FACTS

Pandas can climb as high as 13000 feet and are very good swimmers. They sometimes do handstands when they wee to mark their scent higher up on trees and they can poo 40 times a day.

As they spend most their time eating, pandas only sleep for 2-4 hours. With few natural predators to be afraid of, pandas are not picky when it comes to finding somewhere to sleep. They will fall asleep on the forest floor, next to a tree or balancing on a branch.



Find Out More...

https://www.panda.org/discover/knowledge_hub/endangered_species/giant_panda/panda/size/

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/facts/giant-panda>

<https://onekindplanet.org/animal/panda-giant/>

<https://www.pandasinternational.org/education-2/panda-facts/>

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. Where are pandas usually from?
2. How long do they live in captivity?
3. True or false. Pandas hibernate in the winter.
4. What do pandas eat the most
5. How high can pandas climb?