



SNOW LEOPARD

The snow leopard is one of the world's most mysterious cats.
Read on to discover more interesting facts about them.



Where they live

Snow leopards can be found in twelve countries across central Asia, and the Himalayas.

wwf.org.uk/wildlife/snow_leopard/



CHARACTERISTICS

- A thick tail is used for balance and can be wrapped around their body for warmth.
- Their coat is a white to smokey-grey colour, with patterned dark-grey to black rosettes and spots.
- Adults can weigh between 35-52kg.
- Short forelimbs and long hind limbs enable them to move quickly in their steep and rocky habitat.
- Extremely agile and a superb jumper. They can spring and pounce on prey up to 15m away!

DID YOU KNOW

Their beautiful coats are grey solid black or dark brown blotches, spots and streaks, shading to white on the belly. Its thick and keeps them well insulated.

FAMILY

Female snow leopards give birth to a litter size of two to three cubs, which are born with black spots. They become independent from their mother when almost two years old. As an adult they tend to live and hunt alone.



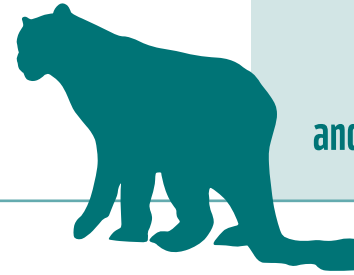
VIDEO

Watch footage:

- arkive.org/snow-leopard/panthera-uncia/video-01.html
- arkive.org/snow-leopard/panthera-uncia/video-00a.html
- arkive.org/snow-leopard/panthera-uncia/video-15.html

FEEDING

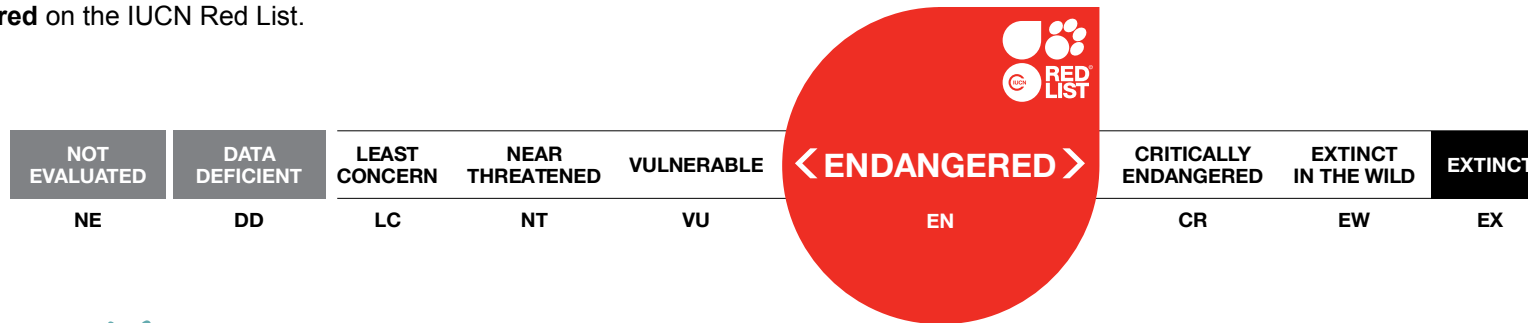
- Their prey includes mountain sheep and goats that share their habitat.
- They usually hunt at dawn and dusk.
- They are a strong predator, able to kill prey up to three times their own weight.



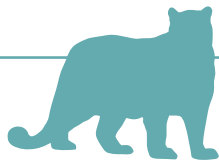
DID YOU KNOW
Unlike other big cats - like lions
and tigers - snow leopards can't roar.

CLASSIFICATION

Classified as **Endangered** on the IUCN Red List.



STATUS



Their natural prey has been hunted and pushed out of their habitat by domestic livestock. As a result, snow leopards have less prey to feed on and their population has suffered and declined. They will turn to livestock for food but this angers farmers and can result in them hunting the leopards in retaliation.

Their fur is highly prized and there is demand for their bones in traditional Asian medicine.

Over 16 years, the species is thought to have declined by at least 20%. It is estimated there are around approximately 4,000 to 6,500 individuals remaining in the wild.

