



# Visit The Wildside!

## Red Pandas

The Red Panda is an endangered animal found in Nepal, India and Central China. It is a little larger than a domestic cat (a cat you have at home), with a tail measuring 18 to 20 inches long! The tail has rings of red and a white color that suggests the red panda is related to a raccoon! Other markings on the red panda include a dark underside, a reddish-brown coat, triangle shaped ears, and a light face with white tear markings. Their eyes are almost pitch-black and that matches their nose.

Red pandas eat bamboo, much like their relatives, the giant pandas. Unlike them, however, they eat a much different variety of food. Red pandas' diet consists of 2/3 bamboo, but they also eat mushrooms, roots, grasses, acorns, and sometimes fish and insects!

They live for around 8 years in the wild and most of that time is spent sleeping in the tops of trees. In the summer months, they sleep resting on a branch with its legs and arms dangling off. In the winter months, the panda curls up and wraps its fluffy tail



around itself to keep warm. They don't sleep at night like we do. Red pandas sleep during the day so they can explore their forest habitat at night which makes them nocturnal.

Red pandas keep to themselves generally and find their food and shelter alone. When they communicate with each other, they use whistling and twittering sounds.

Other names for the red panda include; The Bear-cat, Bright-panda, Fire Fox, Cat-bear, Petit panda, and Lesser panda.

### Did You Know?

- Red pandas use their tongues to detect scents.
- They do not like getting wet.
- Their tail is almost as long as their body.
- Even though called the "Lesser panda", red pandas were found by Westerners 50 years before the giant panda!
- Red pandas have retractable claws like a house cats.
- A red panda's russet and black fur serves as good camouflage: The red matches the color of the moss found on trees, and the black fur helps it blend in when viewed from below.

