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AMUR LEOPARD

Panthera pardus orientalis

Fewer than 30 Amur leopards remain in the wild, found only in a small pocket at the southern tip of Russia's Pacific coast. They live further north than any other leopard subspecies and need large amounts of prey and a substantial wild range. They rely mostly on small deer for food. This beautiful cat is on the brink of extinction but recent public campaigns have saved their last refuge with hopes that leopards may be reintroduced into protected habitats.



Fun Facts

- The Amur leopard gets its name from the 2,700 mile-long Amur River in Asia.
- Leopards are generally solitary, except for breeding and rearing cubs.
- Amur leopards have longer legs and longer hair which allows them to survive in cold, snowy climates.
- Amur leopards are excellent climbers, and spend most of their time sleeping and eating on rocky ledges far above the ground.
- Amur leopards, pound for pound, are considered the strongest of all cats.
- People who live among leopards refer to them as “ghosts that walk.”
- The Minnesota Zoo is a member of the Amur Leopard Conservation Initiative, providing significant support to the protection of this rare and beautiful animal.

Meet the Leopards

The Minnesota Zoo acquired two Amur leopards from the Audubon Nature Institute in New Orleans. Sisters, they were born in October 2006 and are called “Katya” and “Polina.” They are genetically valuable with direct links to wild leopards—their great grandparents (via the sire's line) were from Russia and North Korea.

The Zoo obtained a third female leopard from the Mulhouse Zoo and Botanical Gardens in France. Called “Okha,” this leopard is two years old. The Minnesota Zoo is working with European zoos on breeding Amur leopards in order to maintain genetic variability for the long-term survival of this rare species.