



**RED PANDA
NETWORK**
Conservation in Action



Red Panda

Ailurus fulgens



Description: Slightly larger than a domestic cat, it has reddish-brown fur, a long, shaggy tail and a waddling gait due to its shorter front legs. The red panda has given scientists taxonomic fits. **It has been classified as a relative of the giant panda, and also of the raccoon,** with which it shares a ringed tail. Currently, red pandas are considered members of their own unique family - the Ailuridae.

Diet: Eats mainly bamboo, but is omnivorous and may also eat eggs, birds, insects, fruit, acorns, roots, and small mammals. The red panda's diet is very unusual for a mammal and consists mostly of bamboo.

Conservation: Red pandas are **endangered because of habitat loss.** There are **fewer than 2,500** adult red pandas. Distantly related to the larger, better-known black-and-white giant panda, the red panda is a **solitary creature** found in the mountains of Nepal, Myanmar, and central China. These animals **spend most of their lives in trees** and even sleep aloft. When foraging, they are most active at night as well as in the gloaming hours of dusk and dawn.



Distribution and Habitat: Red pandas live in the cool temperate **bamboo forests in Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces in China, in the Himalayas, and in Myanmar.** It is also found in northern India, Bhutan and northern Myanmar. Accurate population figures in the wild are difficult to find, with estimates ranging from less than 2,500 to between 16,000 and 20,000. Although it is protected by law in all countries where it lives, its numbers in the wild continue to **decline mainly due to habitat loss and fragmentation, poaching, and inbreeding depression.** They share part of their range with giant pandas. The Red Panda is quite adaptable to living in captivity and is common in zoos worldwide. As of 2006, the international studbook listed more than 800 individuals in zoos and parks around the world. The primary threats to Red Pandas are direct harvest from the wild (live or dead), competition from domestic livestock resulting in habitat degradation and deforestation resulting in habitat loss or fragmentation. Red pandas are endangered, victims of deforestation. **Their natural space is shrinking as more and more forests are destroyed by logging and the spread of agriculture.**