

The Red Panda

These adorable pandas are very dependent therefore humans and other animals take advantage of this weakness. The Red Panda is a victim of deforestation humans are constantly cutting down forest for our selfish needs. And with each swing of the ax another Red Panda has lost both its shelter and a food source (leaves, insects). In both China and Nepal this species is protected by federal law. However despite this precaution Red Pandas are still game for illegal hunters. On the other hand they also face predators in the wild such as the Marten (a type of weasel) and the Snow Leopard. The reason most species remain alive is because over time they have evolved in order to adapt to their habitat. If the Red Pandas don't alter their survival technique soon the species will go extinct!

Adaptations

The Red Panda has three main problems being eaten, being hunted, and losing its habitat. The way that species have survived is through evolution. Who knows maybe the first humans didn't have thumbs! But one person had a genetic mutation and passed the trait down. This is what Red Panda needs to do. The 3 adaptations that would be most helpful in my opinion are a turtles shell, thick skin, and porcupine quills. The turtles shell would help against deforestation. As they are currently whenever the tree they live in is chopped down they have to travel sometimes for miles in search of a new one. This journey can be risky and dangerous. However if they had a shell whenever a tree of theirs is cut down they can temporarily live inside their shell until they are ready to continue on their journey. Their thick skin would protect them from hunters whenever a bullet is shot at them the blubber like layer would repel it greatly expanding their lifespan. Finally the quills would protect them in the wild whenever a marten or snow leopard tried to take a bite out of the Panda all they would get is a mouthful of quills! Ha Ha! These are the adaptations that would help the Red Panda survive longer. Without these the Red Panda must trek for miles in search of a new place to call home, take bullet shots day in and day out, and cower and beg a leopard for its life. With these adaptations the Red Panda's life will be a lot easier!

Food, Predators, Extinction and Environment

The Red Panda similar to its distant cousin the Giant Panda feasts on Bamboo but it also has a taste for leaves, insects, berries, flowers and bird eggs. Red Pandas have a thumb like adaptation that helps them grab hold of bamboo. Giant Pandas have the exact same adaptation. The Red Panda is considered vulnerable on IUCN List of Threatened Species this is due to the fact that there are 10,000 remaining and they are barely bigger than a cat! This makes them pray for the marten and snow leopard who share their environment in the Eastern Himalayas- Burma, Nepal, and China. The Red Panda is going extinct. Although they are protected this hasn't stopped them from becoming illegal game. If humans don't lay their guns down soon, in a couple of years they'll be shooting into thin air. Red Pandas are victims of deforestation. They are losing their homes due to construction and agriculture. The *Ailurus Fulgens* has almost disappeared from the face of this Earth.

Evolution

As you may have noticed the Red Panda shares looks with the Giant Panda and common Raccoon. They all share a common ancestor. The three species share many common facial features and are under the

same evolution branch. Their common ancestor is still unknown to science all that scientist currently know is that in some crazy way these animals are related!

Questions

1. The red panda resides in what part of the world?

Indonesia

China, Tibet, Myanmar

Canada

Mexico

2. In what natural habitat does a red panda live in the wild?

Savanah

Desert

Forest

Jungle

3. Like the giant panda, a red panda only eats bamboo.

True False

4. In what scientific family is the red panda?

Procyonidae

Ailuridae

Urisidae

Cervidae

5. What North American animal is a cousin to the red panda?

6. Which of the following statements best describes the red panda's living arrangement?

Lives in family group

Solitary

Lives in troupe of 20-30

Mates for life

7. The red panda is exclusively a nocturnal animal.

True False

8. Because the red panda is not a bear, it cannot be related to the giant panda.

True False

9. Which of the following activities are threatening to the existence of the red panda?

It depends on the region.

Habitat Degradation

Hunting

Deforestation

10. Besides humans, which of the following animals is a natural predator of the red panda?

Snow Leopard

Yak

Hyena

Cobra

