

## **8. Saving The Tigers**

I have always been a fan of big cats, especially tigers. Sadly, the survival of the tigers is in jeopardy, and it's important we learn about them, and spread the word to urge for protection against these creatures, whose lives are in peril.

Wild tigers populations are at an all time low. We have lost 97% of the wild tigers in the last century. About half of all cubs born don't survive beyond their first 2 years, which makes it even more important to work to protect tigers. At one time, there were 9 subspecies of tigers, however, 3 subspecies have already become extinct, one species has been become extinct in the wild, and now only 5 subspecies remain in the wild, all of which are endangered. It is thought that there may be only around 3200 tigers left surviving in the wild.

Tigers have been able to evolve over the course of the millions of years, from ancient tigers to the subspecies we see today. As a matter of fact, these amazing creatures managed to survive and evolved through the ice age. It is sad to think that these creatures survived through the test of time, however they are struggling for survival today, because of human-induced factors. The survival of tigers today is severely impacted by peoples choices. Poaching and habitat loss, both are which are mostly preventable, have taken a toll on this species.

Tigers are at the top of the food chain, making them important parts our ecosystem. Animals which tigers prey on would become overpopulated and could suffer starvation due to the need to compete for food. An adult male Siberian Tiger, the largest of the remaining species, can weigh around 700 pounds, making them the largest of the big cat species.

Recently tigers have been recognized as the most popular animal to many people, which is encouraging. We certainly hope that people will now recognize the need to help protect and respect these magnificent creatures.