Red panda fact sheet

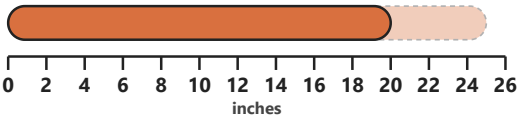
True facts about real red pandas



Fact card

Kind of animal	Mammal. The only living member of the family Ailuridae.
Scientific name	Ailurus fulgens, which means "shining" or fire-colored cat
Body length	51 to 64 cm (20 to 25 inches), says the San Diego Zoo
Tail	28 to 49 cm (11 to 19 inches)
Weight	3.6 to 7.7 kg (8 to 17 pounds), says the Smithsonian's National Zoo
Lives in	Mountain forests with bamboo in Nepal, India, Bhutan, Myanmar and China
Eats	Mostly bamboo leaves and shoots, plus fruit, acorns, roots, insects and eggs
Babies	Called cubs. Usually 1 or 2 at a time, up to 4.
Lifespan	Zoos say 8 to 10 years in the wild. Often 15 or more in a zoo.
Status	Endangered on the IUCN Red List. Fewer than 10,000 are thought to be left.

How big is a red panda?



A red panda's head and body are 20 to 25 inches long (51 to 64 cm). The dark part of the bar is the shortest adult and the light part is the longest. The tail adds another 11 to 19 inches.

Why two numbers?
Where sources give different numbers, this sheet gives the range. That is how scientists do it too.

My notes

8 true red panda facts

1. A red panda is about the size of a house cat.
2. Red pandas are not bears. They are the only living members of their own animal family, called Ailuridae.
3. Almost half of a red panda's total length is its bushy, ringed tail.
4. The tail helps it balance in the trees. In the cold, it sleeps curled up with its tail over its head, like a blanket.
5. Red pandas have a "false thumb." It is really a wrist bone, and it helps them hold bamboo.
6. Red pandas climb down trees head first, gripping the trunk with their back feet and claws.
7. Bamboo is most of what they eat: about 95 percent, says the Smithsonian's National Zoo.
8. Red pandas are endangered. Fewer than 10,000 are thought to be left in the wild.

Sources: Smithsonian's National Zoo; San Diego Zoo; National Geographic; San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Library; Columbus Zoo and Aquarium; Red Panda Network, and 1 more. Every source and link: lumiscove.com/animal-facts/red-panda

For personal and classroom use.

Red panda quiz and report

Page 2. The answers are upside down at the bottom.

Name: _____

True or false?

Circle your answer. Try it before you look at the fact sheet.

1. Red pandas are bears. **True** **False**
2. A red panda is about the size of a house cat. **True** **False**
3. Bamboo is most of what a red panda eats. **True** **False**
4. Red pandas climb down trees tail first. **True** **False**
5. The giant panda was named before the red panda. **True** **False**
6. Red pandas are endangered. **True** **False**

My red panda report

A red panda is a kind of

_____

Red pandas live in

_____

Red pandas eat

_____

My favorite fact

_____

_____

One thing I still wonder

_____

_____

Draw a red panda

Answers: 1. False. They are the only living members of their own family. 2. True. 3. True. About 95 percent, says the Smithsonian's National Zoo. 4. False. They climb down head first. 5. False. The red panda was named in 1825, more than 40 years earlier. 6. True. Fewer than 10,000 are thought to be left in the wild.

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