



26th July to 2nd August 2008

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Join in the Jamboree



Red Panda

The Red Panda Subcamp have sponsored Lushan at Colchester Zoo!



Distribution Himalayas from Nepal to Assam.

Habitat Temperate forests found between 2200m and 4800m.

Diet Mainly bamboo, also small mammals, birds, eggs, blossoms and berries.

Gestation 4-5 months, 1-4 young born.

Longevity About 10 - 12 years.

Status in the wild Listed in CITES Appendix I and as endangered by the IUCN.

General characteristics Looking more like a Raccoon than a Giant Panda, the Red Panda has striking chestnut fur, a bushy, striped tail and a white face. They are a lot smaller than giant pandas, only reaching 50-60cm in body length and weighing 3-5kg. Experts are still unsure whether these beautiful animals are more closely related to racoons, pandas or bears. They remain an enigma.

Red pandas are mainly active at dawn and dusk, spending most of the day resting in the trees. They spend most of their time in trees and are well adapted for such a life. The pads of their feet are covered in hair to prevent them slipping and they can jump up to 1.5m from branch to branch. Red Pandas are normally solitary, only coming together at the beginning of the breeding season for mating. The young are born in a hollow tree, fully furred but blind and helpless. They generally stay with their mother until the following breeding season. They are territorial, marking the boundaries with scent, using urine and substances secreted from their foot pads, also by faeces deposited at specially dug latrines.

Red Pandas are called 'Wha' and 'Chitwa' by locals due to their twittering call used for communication. They are increasingly threatened by habitat loss and hunting by locals. Red pandas are endangered in the wild due to habitat loss, as their forest homes are being cut down for timber, fuel and land. Red pandas are also hunted for the pet and fur trades. Their fur is then made into clothing and hats to keep the locals warm.





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