

Other interesting facts

- Giant panda bears have to eat every day which means, unlike other bears, they cannot hibernate in the winter.
- Giant pandas' bodies are able to digest meat but they rarely eat it.
- Until recently, scientists thought that pandas spent most of their lives alone, but new studies show that small groups of pandas can share a large territory.

Why are people concerned about the giant panda?

Many people fear that giant pandas will become extinct as only a few are born in the wild each year and they do not always survive. Bamboo supplies are diminishing in panda habitats, cutting off a vital food supply. In addition, poaching and humans moving into the pandas' territory have also reduced their numbers.

There are very few pandas in zoos, although this is changing. Where there are pandas in captivity, important programmes are in place to try to increase their numbers and find out more about these puzzling creatures.

How can people help?

There are projects where people are invited to 'adopt a panda'. The money goes towards researching, protecting and monitoring them. It also goes towards supporting them in the wild.

What about the future?

In two of China's main research centres, 19 cubs have been born. There are now over 300 pandas in captivity and the next challenge is to return them to the wild. The Chinese government has created 50 panda reserves to continue the work.

Did you know?

In China, the panda is a symbol of peace.

The Chinese word for panda is 'Xiongmao' (giant cat bear) because a panda's eyes are shaped like a cat's. Over the centuries, pandas have also been called 'spotted bear' and 'black and white bear'.



1. Look at the section headed: **Why are people concerned about the giant panda?**

Find and copy one word which shows that there are lots of things we do not yet know about giant pandas.

1 mark

2. ... cutting off a **vital** food supply.

What does the word *vital* mean in this sentence?

Tick **one**.

essential

available

useful

healthy

1 mark

3. According to the text, why are giant pandas under threat of extinction?
Give **two** reasons.

1. _____

2. _____

2 marks

4. Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is a **fact** or an **opinion**.

	Fact	Opinion
Giant pandas are fascinating animals.		
Giant pandas' main food in the wild is bamboo.		
Giant panda cubs weigh about 150g when born.		

1 mark