# **SNOW LEOPARDS** Panthera uncia

Known throughout the world for its beautiful fur & elusive behaviour, the endangered Snow Leopard is found in the rugged mountains of Central Asia. Snow leopards are perfectly adapted to the cold, barren landscape of their high-altitude home. Because of their huge territory range they have to cope with temperatures ranging from -40° Centigrade to +40°C.

#### **DISTRIBUTION & HABITAT**

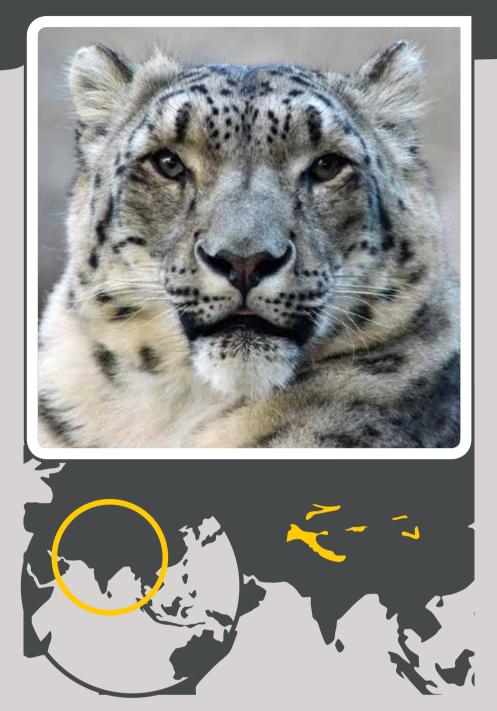
The Snow Leopard's habitat extends through twelve countries: Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, & Uzbekistan. Snow Leopards prefer the broken terrain of cliffs, rocky outcrops & ravines. This type of habitat provides good cover & clear views to help them find prey & sneak up on it.

#### DIET

The 3 most important prey species for Snow Leopards are the blue sheep (also known as Bharal), the Asiatic ibex (a large wild goat) & the Argali (another wild sheep species).

## **LIFE EXPECTANCY & BREEDING**

Life in the wild is harsh & life expectancy is around 10 to 12 years. In captivity Snow Leopards have been known to live for as long as 22 years. They mate in winter & cubs are born in spring. The female is typically pregnant



for 93-110 days before retiring to a sheltered den site & giving birth to her cubs (usually 2 or 3). The diligent mother raises her offspring alone, providing food & shelter for her cubs.

### **CONSERVATION STATUS**

**ENDANGERED** (IUCN Red List of Threatened Species) Despite a range of over 2 million square kilometres, scientists estimate there maybe less than 4,000 Snow Leopards in the wild.

PORT MACQUARIE, NSW

KOALA & WILDLIFE PARK



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