



India

Lesson 2
Animals of India

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India is home to nearly 90,000 types of animals, including over 350 mammals and 1200 bird species. Many of these animals are found only on the Indian subcontinent. The Asian elephant, Asiatic lion, Bengal tiger, Indian rhinoceros, and several types of monkeys make their home in India. Let's take a look at some of these amazing animals that God placed in India.

Asian Elephant

The elephant is probably one of the most recognizable animals in the world. In India the elephant is loved and revered. It is very common in India for the people to bathe and decorate the elephants with vegetable paints. The Asian elephant can be found in the tropical rain forests of India and in the cooler mountain forests up to 10,000 feet. They can also be found in the grasslands and farm areas of India.



The Asian elephant stands between 9 and 10 feet and can weigh around 6 tons. The average life expectancy is 60–70 years in the wild. The average Asian elephant eats approximately 300 pounds of vegetation a day. Many Asian elephants have been domesticated, but wild Asian elephants are now considered endangered.

Asiatic Lion

Many years ago, the Asiatic lion could be found on grasslands and plains of India, now it can only be found in the Gir National Park in the state of Gujarat.



The Asiatic lion grows to a height of approximately 36 in., with their length ranging from 115 – 120 in. Their long and hard tails add another 24–36 in. to their length. The lions breeding season takes place in October and November. They have a gestation period of 3 ½ months, with litters of 3–4 young. The life expectancy of a lion is between 20–30 years. Lions live in large prides. These prides can sometimes have up to 3 adult males, but only one of the males is the dominant leader. The

male lion is known for its laziness. The females do all the hunting. The males may help with the hunting of very large aggressive animals like the buffalo. Once the kill is made, the males always get the first meal from the kill.

Bengal Tiger

The Bengal tiger is the national animal of India. The Bengal tiger lives in a variety of habitats: open jungles, humid evergreen forests, and mango grove swamps. The tiger is well known for its immense strength and power. A tiger is known to bring down animals weighing ten times their own weight. Its diet consists mostly of deer, antelope, and wild pigs. The Bengal tiger prefers to hunt on its own. They usually lead a solitary life. A tiger weighs between 400–550 lbs. The majority of their weight is in their muscle mass, their skeleton is relatively small and fragile. The tiger grows to an average of 10 ft. The average tiger can eat up to 55 lbs. in a day. The life expectancy is between 15–20 years. The gestation period of a tiger is a short 105 days. The tigresses give birth to 3–6 cubs. Usually only a couple of the cubs live to maturity.



Indian Rhinoceros

The Great Indian Rhinoceros is found in the tall grasslands and forests in the foothills of the Himalayas. The Indian rhino has one horn, and it has skin with loose folds which make it appear armored.



The Indian rhino eats mainly grass, reeds, and twigs. They feed mostly in the morning and evening. Their well-developed upper lip helps them to eat tall elephant grass and aquatic plants, which they are able to pull up by the roots. The rhino leads a solitary life, and spends long periods lying in the water and wallowing in mud.

This is just a look at a few of the amazing animals that can be found in India. Can any of these animals be found in the wild in the United States?