



Bug Club

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Big Cats



Big Cats

Written by Sarah Walker



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Introducing cats

Cat-like creatures have existed for millions of years. In size order, the seven biggest cats in the world today are: the tiger, lion, jaguar, leopard, snow leopard, puma, and cheetah. The largest cat is the Amur tiger. It can be up to 4 m long, from head to tail.

Cat Facts

- Cats kill other animals for their food, which makes them carnivores (meat eaters).
- Cats are mammals, which means that females produce milk to feed their young.

Big Cats
The height of a big cat is measured from its shoulder to the tips of its paws. How tall are you compared to these cats?



Domestic cat

Bobcat

Puma

Tiger

Cat habitats

There are 37 species of wild cats in the world. They live in many **habitats** from snow-capped mountains to deserts, and grasslands to tropical rainforests. Most of the seven biggest cats are found in places with wet and dry seasons where the weather is warm all year round.

KEY MAP GUIDE

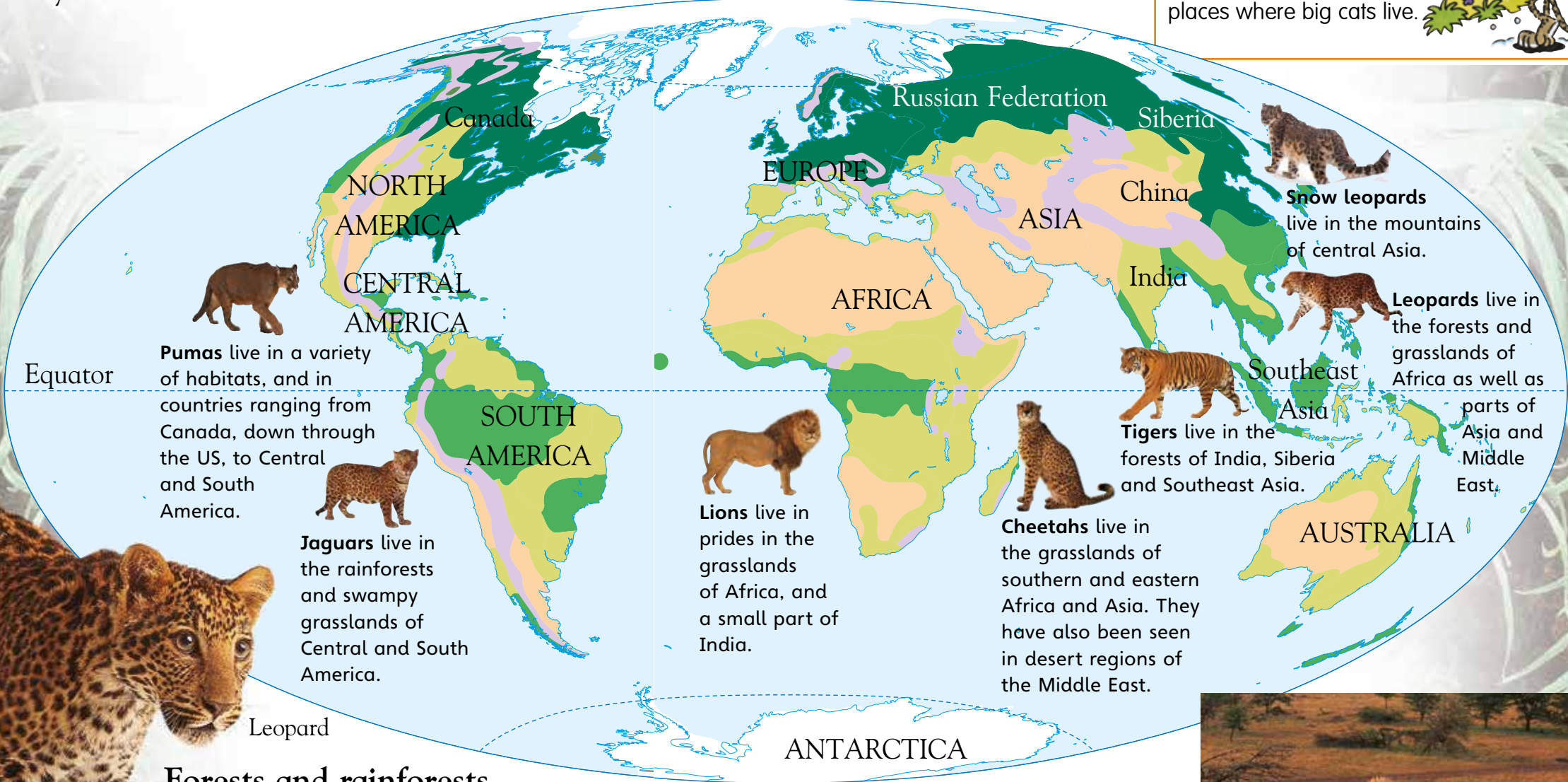
Rainforest

Forest

Grassland

Desert

Mountains



Leopard

Forests and rainforests

Tropical rainforests in Central and South America are home to jaguars and pumas. Tigers and leopards are

Mountains

The snow leopard lives high-up in the freezing Asian mountains.

Grasslands

The rich grasslands of Africa are home to lions, cheetahs and leopards. A few of

DISAPPEARING WORLD

Today more than two-thirds of the world's wild cats are now rare or endangered. This is because many habitats are disappearing as humans move into places where big cats live.



Tiger tales

Tigers are the largest and most powerful of all the big cats. A tiger is ten times stronger than a person. All five types of tiger are covered in striking stripes. Each animal's markings are **unique**, just like human fingerprints.



The biggest of them all

Amur tigers are the largest of all tigers. They live in the freezing forests of Russia, China and North Korea. A thick, furry coat protects them from the cold.

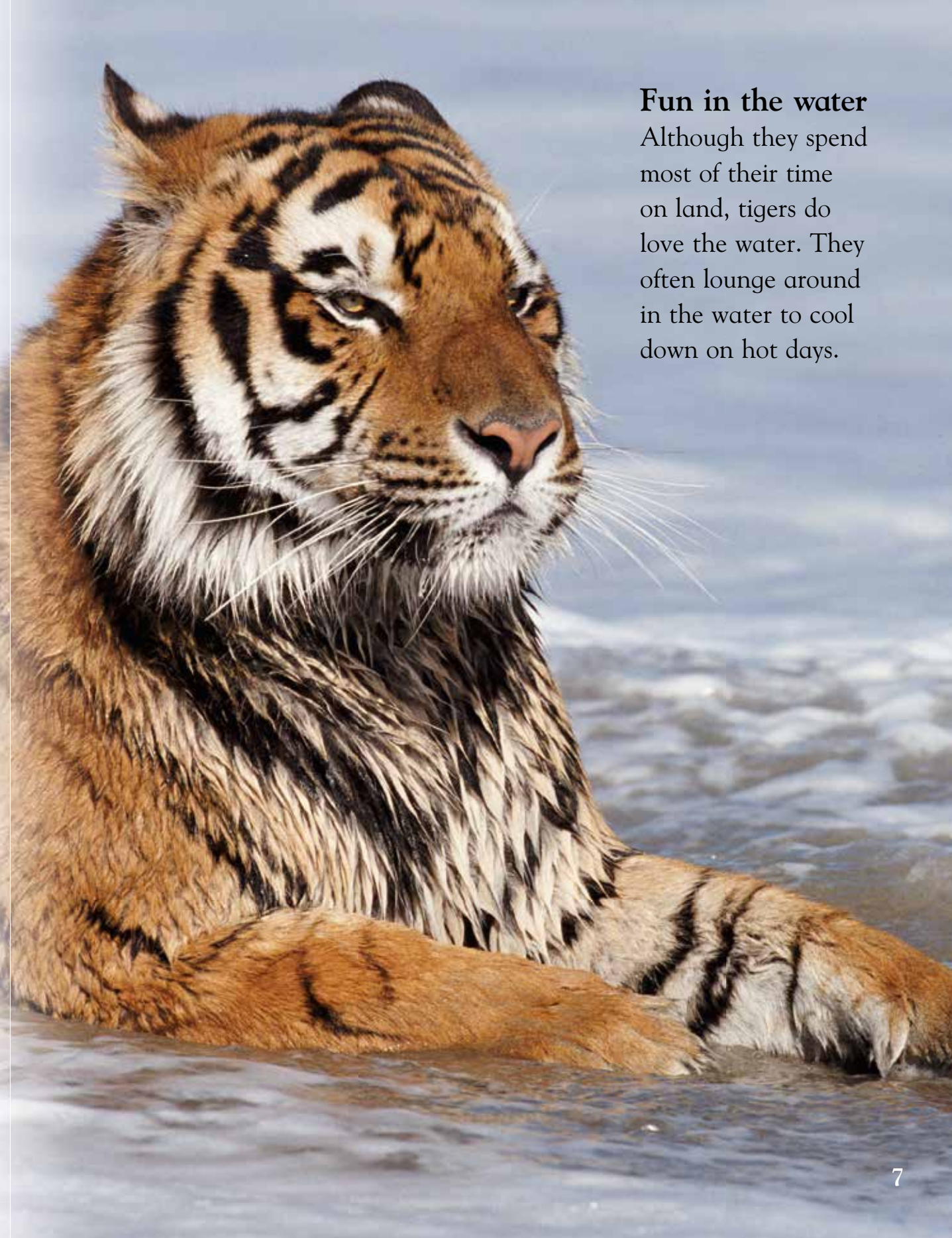
A rare sight

Only Bengal tigers give birth to white cubs, and these are very rare. Few white tigers exist in the wild.



Skills for life

Play fights teach cubs important skills. When they are older they will have to protect their own **territories** and cubs.



Fun in the water

Although they spend most of their time on land, tigers do love the water. They often lounge around in the water to cool down on hot days.

Glossary

- camouflages** hides or disguises
- feline** relating to cats
- habitats** places where animals or plants live or grow
- predators** animals that hunt other animals for food
- prey** animals that are hunted for food
- scrubland** land that is thinly covered by plants
- siblings** brothers and sisters
- solitary** living alone
- species** group of animals or plants made up of similar individuals
- stealthy** careful not to be seen or heard
- tactics** methods for getting something done
- territories** areas defended by animals against others of their kind
- unique** different from any other
- vibrations** shaking movements

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