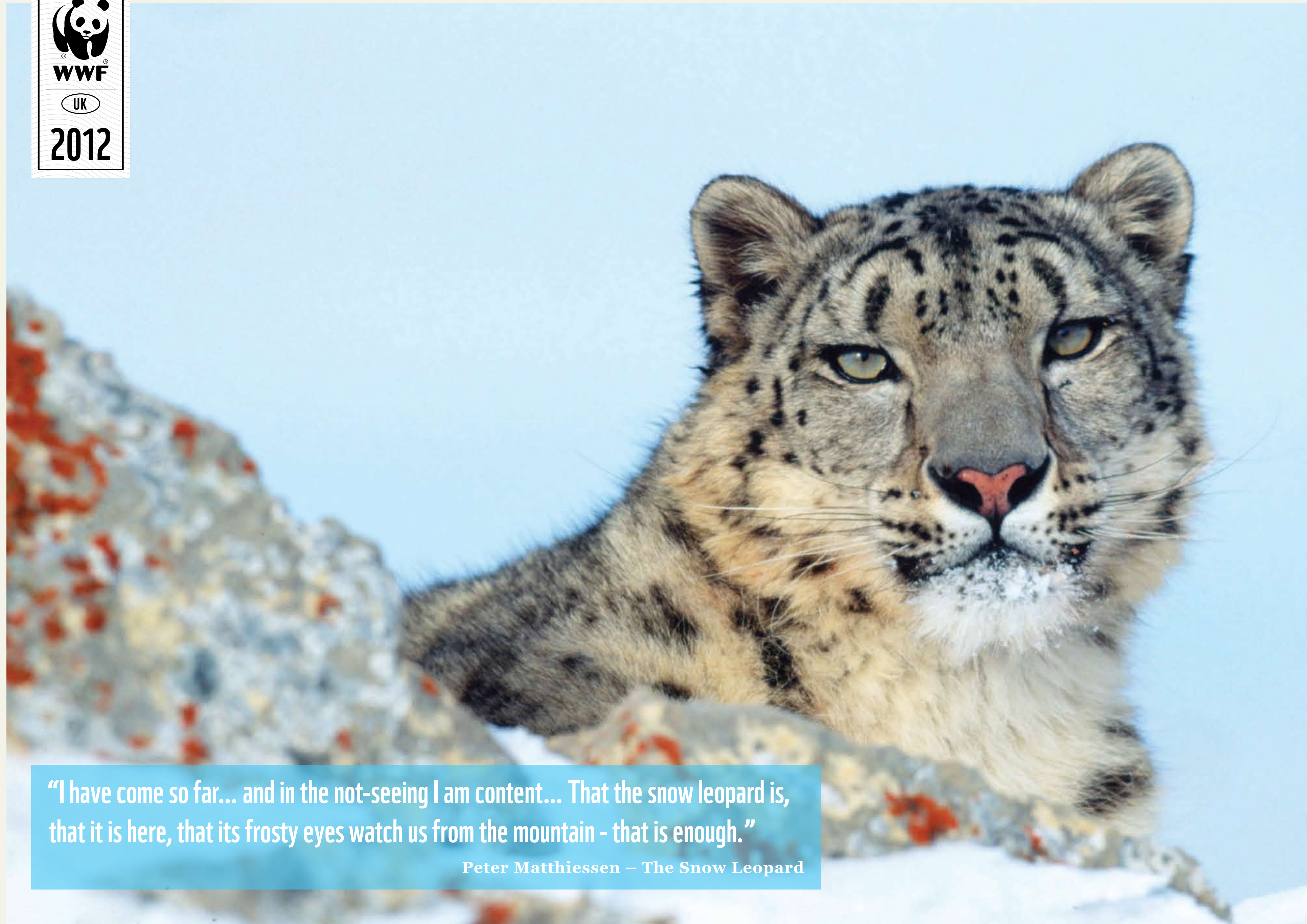




WWF

UK

2012



“I have come so far... and in the not-seeing I am content... That the snow leopard is, that it is here, that its frosty eyes watch us from the mountain - that is enough.”

Peter Matthiessen – The Snow Leopard



One Planet Schools®

WELCOME TO LEARN

This edition of Learn looks at the Green Ambassadors scheme and also explores the issues facing the beautiful but endangered snow leopard.



GREEN AMBASSADORS – PUPILS TAKE THE LEAD ON SUSTAINABILITY

Our Green Ambassadors scheme helps young people develop the knowledge and skills they need to lead sustainability in their schools. More than 1500 UK primary schools have already signed up since the launch in 2011, benefitting from materials, access to an online community, and termly activities.

In July 2012, nearly 70 children from nine schools took part in the first ever Green Ambassador Summit at Highgrove. They met His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, WWF-UK's President as he toured the 'Panda Parade' – a collection of giant panda sculptures previously decorated by the children with their own special messages about 'The future we want.' Find out more about the Summit, the Panda Parade, and the Green Ambassadors scheme at wwf.org.uk/schools

The scheme is currently available to primary schools but will be extended to secondary schools in Spring 2013. To join the Green Ambassador Scheme: visit: wwf.org.uk/greenambassadors

INFORMATION

Visit our website for weblinks, further activities, links to other resources and background information – wwf.org.uk/learnsnowleopards

A HIMALAYAN STORY

The snow leopard featured on the front of Learn is just one of many iconic species whose foothold on survival could be further threatened by climate change. Snow leopards are already endangered due to conflicts with people in the places where they live. Their survival is further compromised by the demand for their skin and bones – part of an illegal trade in wild animal parts worth between \$7.8 and 10 billion per year. Now a new WWF study shows that if greenhouse gas emissions keep rising steadily, 30% of snow leopard habitat may be lost as the treeline shifts upwards. See the 'In Focus' section for more information and to find out how WWF is tackling this issue.

LEARN

IDEAS FOR THE CLASSROOM

The activities are starter activities and are designed to give a flavour of how you could approach this topic in the classroom. Fully developed activities and resource sheets can be found on our website: wwf.org.uk/learnsnowleopards

BENEATH THE FUR

Invite pupils to find out more about snow leopards and make a digital collection of images, including their habitat. Pupils can use this as stimulus for short, haiku style poetry that captures the essence of the snow leopard and where they live.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU BUY

The illegal wildlife trade only exists because people want to buy things (eg medicines or souvenirs) made from animal parts or own exotic pets. Discuss with pupils: What makes people buy these things? Do they need them? Do they think they're buying the power or the beauty of the snow leopard? Pupils could then design a series of adverts that will make consumers think about their actions.

The following link may offer ideas:

assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/souvenirs.pdf

THE BIGGER PICTURE

The illegal wildlife trade is just one of the factors threatening the survival of endangered species like the snow leopard. Use newspaper and masking tape to make some 3D models of an endangered species for a class display. You could also use these models in a presentation that explains how species are also affected by factors such as climate change and habitat loss.

EYES: WINDOWS TO THE SOUL

Discuss the quote on the poster about animal eyes 'that its frosty eyes watch us from the mountain' and talk about why you think eyes feature so strongly in this short film by WWF-UK:

<http://vimeo.com/20873820>

Encourage pupils to use images of eyes in a presentation about the effects of climate change on species using an ICT package such as movie maker or PowerPoint. Their presentation should inform and inspire people to take action.

ANIMAL ADOPTION SCHEME

Discussion: Should our class/school adopt an animal? What would this achieve? How could we raise the money? support.wwf.org.uk/

A SILENCE OF SNOW LEOPARDS

Snow leopards cannot roar and when they leap, they land without sound. Their near silent lives are matched by the unbelievable silence of the mountains where they live. This silence now is more and more often interrupted by the sounds of people – their voices, and the sounds of bells on their yaks and cows. Here on the mountains where snow leopards meet with humankind, finding ways to enable them to live together remains the challenge we must try to address. Encourage pupils to use their skills to be the voice for snow leopards that they don't have themselves before they're silent forever. Consider: who you need to talk to; what you need to say and the best way for you to convey their message.

Tip: Why not send examples of your pupils' work to WWF – send to learn@wwf.org.uk and you could win one of our special 'The Panda Made Me Do It' mugs, and badges for your pupils. Remember to include your school name and postcode when you send it through.



LEARN

QUESTION TIME

These questions are provided to aid discussion, using the poster as a stimulus. The questions will need to be adapted to the needs of particular age groups and their prior knowledge.

See the **In Focus** section for help with the answers to these questions.

Question 1

What do we know about this animal? What would we like to know? Where does it live? What is the snow leopard's habitat like?

Question 2

What factors threaten the survival of this species?

Question 3

Snow leopards sometimes kill farmers' yaks, sheep or goats for food. These farmers sometimes kill snow leopards in order to protect their flocks. Should they be persuaded not to do this? How?

Question 4

Why do you think some people get involved in the illegal wildlife trade? What would stop people getting involved? What do you think would stop those people who are involved?

Question 5

Climate change is an increasing threat to snow leopards. Why? How does this connect with the way we live our lives?

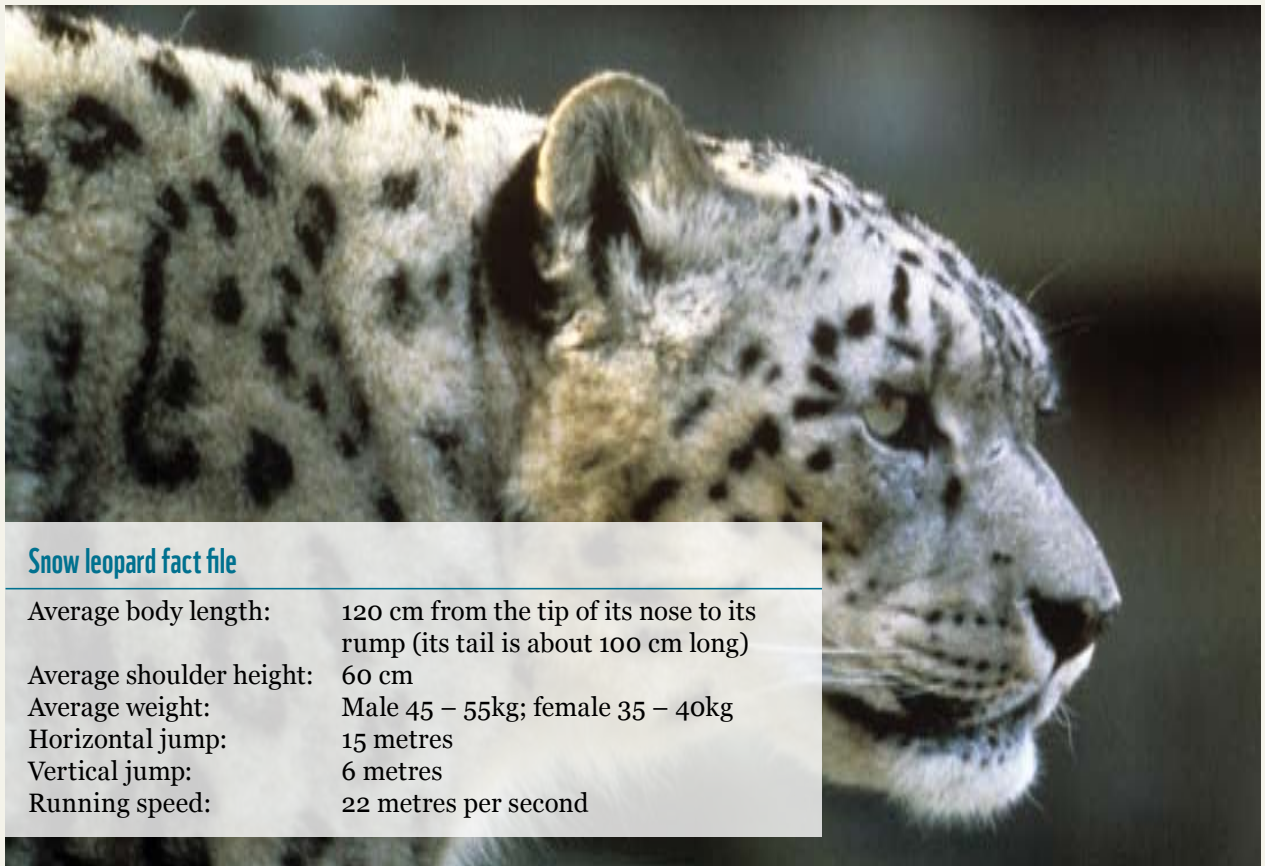
Question 6

Does it matter if species such as the snow leopard become extinct?

Question 7

Look at the quote on the poster. What do you think it means? Look into the eyes of the snow leopard. What do you think it's saying to you?

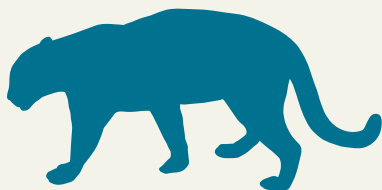
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Snow leopard fact file

Average body length:	120 cm from the tip of its nose to its rump (its tail is about 100 cm long)
Average shoulder height:	60 cm
Average weight:	Male 45 – 55kg; female 35 – 40kg
Horizontal jump:	15 metres
Vertical jump:	6 metres
Running speed:	22 metres per second

A new WWF study shows that climate change is an increasing threat for already-endangered snow leopards in the eastern Himalayas - making it harder for them to live, breed and hunt.



5,000

LESS THAN 5,000 SNOW LEOPARDS ARE BELIEVED TO BE LEFT IN THE WILD

Under threat

In many areas the fragile alpine habitat of the snow leopard is becoming degraded and fragmented. This is a consequence of intensifying grazing pressure from increasing numbers of livestock which also compete for habitat with the natural prey species of the snow leopard such as blue sheep, bharal or ibex. In some places domestic animals such as young yak can account for 30% of the snow leopards' diet and this loss of domestic livestock leads to retaliatory killing by herders protecting their livelihoods.

Sadly, across their range, snow leopards are also hunted for their highly-prized pelts and bones. Despite protection under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which makes the international trade of snow leopards in any form illegal in all signatory countries, poaching to trade bones and body parts for use in traditional Asian medicine still persists.

But there's another big threat putting even more pressure on the already pressurised snow leopard – climate change. Warming high up in the Himalayas is happening faster than the global average – the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects temperatures there to increase by 3-4 degrees Celsius by the end of the century, along with an increase in annual rainfall. These changing conditions will likely result in forests moving up into alpine areas: snow leopards rarely venture into forested areas preferring steep terrain broken by cliffs, ridges, gullies and rocky outcrops. And there's a limit to how high they can ascend because of the lower oxygen levels at altitude.

This also has the potential to bring snow leopards closer to human activities like livestock grazing, increasing the risk of human-wildlife conflicts.



3-4°C

THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECTS THAT TEMPERATURES IN THE HIMALAYAS WILL INCREASE BY 3-4°C BY THE END OF THE CENTURY.

What are we doing?

WWF is working to protect the Eastern Himalayan landscape so the leopards have large, connected areas in which to live, hunt and breed. We're working with communities to help manage the conflict between snow leopards and humans, eg constructing predator-proof livestock pens and setting up community-managed compensation mechanisms for farmers who lose livestock. We're also working with TRAFFIC (the wildlife trade monitoring network) to help prevent trade in the snow leopard and its body parts. And then of course there is the wider issue of climate change...

The science says we need to keep global warming below 2° C (compared to pre-industrial levels), otherwise we risk uncontrollable changes to the way our planet works – and that means serious threats to a third of all species on Earth. To keep temperatures down, we have to cut greenhouse gas emissions drastically – at least 80% by 2050, with a more immediate target of 40% by 2020.

We're taking action in a number of ways including lobbying for a global deal on cutting carbon emissions, pushing for a move to renewable energy sources, campaigning for greater energy efficiency in our homes, looking at low carbon transport options, and working to preserve forests which help regulate CO₂ levels.



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

wwf.org.uk

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