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NOT EVALUATED	DATA DEFICIENT	LEAST CONCERN	NEAR THREATENED	< VULNERABLE >	ENDANGERED	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	EXTINCT
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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Asiatic Black Bear

The **Asiatic Black Bear** ("moon bear"), *Ursus thibetanus*, is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It has a patchy range roughly coinciding with forest distribution from southeastern Iran, through southern and eastern Asia, north to Japan, Korea, and the Russian Far East.

This species is valued for its skin, paws and gall bladder, the latter from which bile is extracted for use in Traditional Chinese Medicine. The illegal killing of bears, combined with widespread habitat loss, is causing rapid and widespread population declines, especially in Southeast Asia and China. The commercial farming of thousands of bears in China and Vietnam for bile extraction, ostensibly to save wild bears, has increased poaching either to stock farms or to satisfy the increased demand generated from the availability of the farmed product.

Although Asiatic Black Bears are legally protected in most of the 18 range countries, poaching (especially by snaring and poisoning) is rampant. The bears are also killed when ransacking crops. The control of poaching and smuggling, and the protection of forest habitats are important conservation priorities, vital to the species' survival.

www.iucnredlist.org
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