

Okapi

Okapia johnstoni



Range: Democratic Republic
Congo

Size: :190-250cm (74-98in)
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Weight :200-350kg (440-770)
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Horns: :15cm (6 in)
: none

Habitat: rainforest

Estrus cycle: 13-16 days

Estrus: 2-3 days

Gestation :430-435 days

Litter: 1

Weaning: 8-9 weeks

Sexual maturity: 24months

Activity: Diurnal

Social: solitary

Breeding: monogamous

Movement : sedentary

Food: Leaves

IUCN: Vulnerable

Subspecies : monotypic

Longevity: captive: 24 yrs

Wild: n/a

Order: Artiodactyla Family: Giraffidae

The Okapi is a solitary animal from the Central African forest. It lives in the closed high canopy rainforest which does not provide the undergrowth that provides the Okapi with food, so the Okapi depends on gaps from tree falls for foraging. Today the species is restricted to the Ituri Forest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The major threats to the Okapi are habitat destruction and poaching. For decades the area has been torn by civil war. This has lead ecological and financial turmoil leading locals to turn to bushmeat for food. Also, even though the species and forest are protected by law, the money and manpower necessary for the protection was lacking. Logging and human settlement are the leading causes of habitat loss.

The coat of the okapi is quite distinctive and serves dual purposes. The white stripe on the dark background provide excellent camouflage In the sun dappled forest. The coat also has an oily covering which provides waterproofing necessary in the high humidity and rainy environment.