



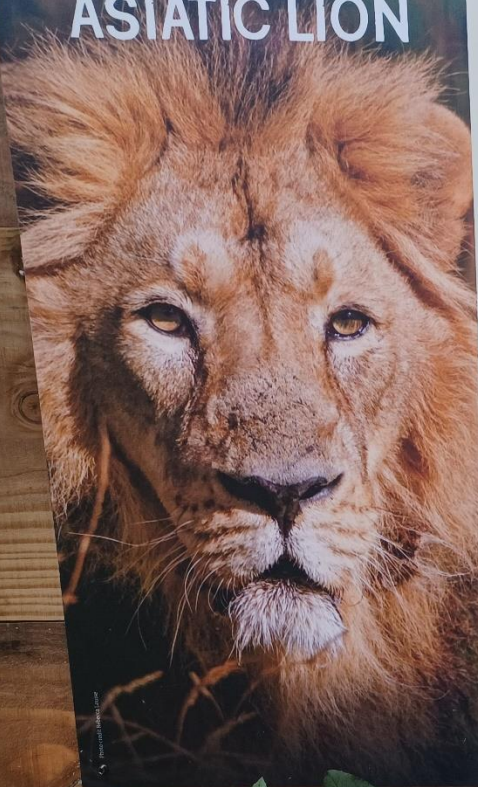
## New Lion Educational Signage at the Cotswold Wildlife Park



On the 6<sup>th</sup> August 2023 the Cotswold Wildlife Park invited Dr Amy Dickman of Oxford University to open their brand new Lion House. As part of this new area, new educational signage was developed by the education team using information and photos from the Safina Lion Conservation Fund. These two new signs can be seen below to give other collections ideas and inspiration for their own signage redesigns.



# ASIATIC LION



Lions were once widespread throughout Africa, Asia and even parts of Europe and were found in countries such as Turkey and Iraq 200 years ago, and in Iran only just over 100 years ago.

After years of persecution the Asiatic Lion population by 1913 was thought to be no more than 20, found only in the Gir Forest in North-West India. This is an area of 540 sq. miles of dry teak and deciduous forest and scrubland.



Lions are the only member of the cat family to show distinct intersexual differences. The males possess a large ruff of hair around the neck known as a mane.



These manes vary in size and colour as the male ages. It is thought that the males with the thicker manes are the most dominant and most attractive to the females. The mane is an armour, it protects the vital neck area during fighting as well as making the males look larger and more impressive to their rivals.

In comparison to Lions in southern and eastern Africa the Lions of the Gir Forest are generally a bit smaller in size, the manes in the males tend to be shorter but darker.



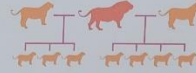
The belly, which is noticeably lighter in colour than the rest of the body, and the underparts are also lighter in colour and even lighter in the females.



ONLY 650 LEFT



Lions are the only truly social member of the cat family. Females live in groups called prides which are always made up of related individuals who will generally stay in their pride area for life. Asiatic Lions tend to live in smaller groups with prides of 2 or 3 females and cubs, typically defended by 1 or 2 males and are generally less social than African Lions.



A litter of 2-5 cubs is born after a gestation period of approximately 110 days. Cubs are weaned at around 6 months and will stay with their mother for the first two years of their life.

## DIET

ANTELOPE DEER WILDBOAR

WHEN FOOD IS SCARCE LIONS ARE ALSO KNOWN TO ATTACK LIVESTOCK

The Asiatic Lion population has suffered from habitat fragmentation and has recovered from extinction. These factors mean that inbreeding now become a real concern to the future success of the population, having descended from such small number. With all Asiatic Lions still restricted to one area this leaves them vulnerable to further encroachment, forest fires and natural disasters that could have a dramatic impact on numbers in the wild. Conflict with humans is growing as Lions disperse further out from the forest and venture into villages at night in search of livestock such as cattle and goats which are easy to hunt but economically important to the local communities.

Lions in Africa suffer from similar problems as the land becomes more human dominated, making it harder for Lions to disperse and prey species more difficult to find. Conflict with humans, loss of prey species, habitat fragmentation, illegal hunting and poisoning have become the leading threats to Lion numbers in the wild.



LOSS OF PREY SPECIES CONFLICT WITH HUMANS



ILLEGAL HUNTING HABITAT FRAGMENTATION

### NEW LION HOUSE 2023

Our Lion house has been designed to give the Lions a large, light and airy resting space, giving them different options to rest together or separately, on platforms or on the insulated floor. There are also two off-show dens to give the lions privacy and a secure outside holding area.

The Lion enclosure itself offers the Lions a large space with trees and shrubs for cover. Palm trees to climb and claw on, mounds, rocks and platforms to rest on, which give them vantage points. They also have a sand area offering them a dry resting space with a different substrate.

