Has the King of the Forest Lost his Kingdom for Ever?

by Randy Collins

Article published on December 21st 2011 | Art

Animals in the wild fascinate us humans to no end. Most of these creatures are majestic specimens that have inhabited the Planet Earth and co-existed alongside us. It would surprise most of us to know that most of the beings have codes of conducts of their own. For instance, monkeys and parrots are believed to pair for life and never would indulge in changing their partners. One magnificent creature that stands out in the crowd is undoubtedly the Lion. Lions move in groups or prides as they are called with numbers ranging from 13 to about 40.

A typical lion, when it is fully grown would tip the scales at approximately 250 kilograms. It is only slightly smaller than a tiger. Males are distinguishable by their mane and sheer size. They are copper colored with a tinge of silvery yellow. The undersides are pale , sometimes yellow in color. However Lions are by no means â€œyellowbelliedâ€•. Rather, they are one of the most courageous animals that usually attack their prey directly. The structure of a fully grown male is impressive with massive shoulders that are prominent when it squats. Proportionately strong forelimbs equipped with sharp claws and strong jaws are made for the perfect kill.

The mighty roar of a lion is audible to a human eight kilometers away. The strongest male dominates the entire pride and occasionally joins in a combined hunt. The Lions are reputed to be great strategists when it comes to hunting. A prey is first selected and a group of 3 to 4 converge on the prey from all sides and led it into an ambush from which it can rarely escape. One swipe from the massive paw brings down the victim and a final lunge to the throat would complete the job. The Pride normally shares the proceeds of the hunt with the dominant male getting a Lionâ€™s share (pun intended).

Lions are primarily founds in the forest s of Africa and some parts of Asia more so in certain forests in India. They are normally referred to as the African Lions and the Asiatic Lions. Having been hunted down by humans for ages the population of these awe inspiring animals has dwindled alarmingly. So vulnerable have they become that unless concrete steps for their protection they could soon head towards extinction. The life span of a Lion in the wild is approximately ten to fourteen years. Surprisingly, the longevity gets increased to about twenty years in captivity. The primary reason could be because of grievous injuries sustained in the wild due to continual fighting with rival males for maintaining their supremacy However, they are very sociable within the Pride and besides the fight for leadership; there is seldom infighting in the group.

The mesmerizing and majestic face has prompted generations of humans to adopt the same as cultural symbols. Some royal clans in Egypt are reputed to have tamed them to the extent of having them as pets. It was indeed a dangerous hobby that had its own risks. Though lions can be friendly, they can also be totally unpredictable. There have been instances of zoo keepers and trainers being mauled badly, sometimes ending in fatalities.

International organizations are doing their bit to conserve these animals that have the reputation of being called the â€œKing of the Forestâ€•. Sadly though it is time we ensured that the Kingdom is not lost for eternity. Let us take a solemn pledge to do our part, however small or insignificant, towards conservation of such endangered species of the Wild. Exclusive programs on wild life are regularly aired by service providers like Dish Network who bring Wildlife right into out drawing rooms.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/art-articles/has-the-king-of-the-forest-lost-his-kingdom-for-ever.htm -

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The author Randy Collins is a freelance writer who has strong beliefs in conservation of wildlife and loves watching exclusive programs on his TV connected to a Dish Network.

Article Keywords:
Wildlife, dish TV packages, satellite TV

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