MEET THEM AT PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

BINTURONG

Arctictis binturong · *also called bearcat*

Teacher & Student Fact Sheet · © **2026 Plumpton Park Zoological Gardens Inc.**
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Fast facts

ANIMAL GROUP	Mammal (civet family, Viverridae)
NATIVE REGION	South and Southeast Asia
HABITAT	Tropical and subtropical forest
DIET	Omnivore, especially fruit
LENGTH	Body 2 to 3 feet; tail 22 to 35 inches
WEIGHT	20 to 44 lb
LIFESPAN	About 16 to 18 years in the wild; up to 25 in human care
STATUS	Vulnerable
OUR BINTURONGS	Bali, Percy, Peter the Bint, Poppy and Stitch



Photo: Plumpton Park Zoo

Did you know?

- A binturong is called a “bearcat,” but it is neither a bear nor a cat.
- Binturongs smell like buttered popcorn. Scientists found the popcorn chemical in all 33 binturongs they tested.
- A binturong’s ankles can turn backward, so it can climb down a tree headfirst.
- Baby binturongs are called binlets.
- By eating fruit and dropping the seeds, binturongs help forests grow, especially fig trees.

Words to know

Prehensile: Able to grip, like a binturong’s tail.
Omnivore: An animal that eats both plants and meat.
Seed dispersal: Spreading seeds to new places so new plants can grow.
Vulnerable: At high risk of disappearing from the wild.

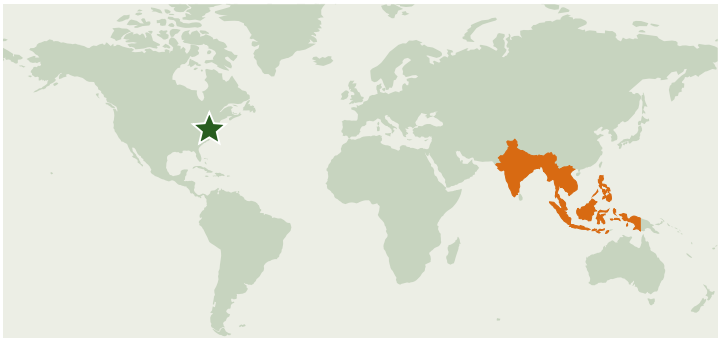
Think about it

1. What family does the binturong belong to, and which animals are its closest relatives?
2. Why do scientists think binturongs leave a popcorn smell behind?
3. How does a binturong’s tail help it in the trees?
4. How do binturongs help forests regrow?
5. What threatens binturongs in the wild?

Draw it

Draw a binturong in a tree. Label its shaggy coat, long whiskers, long claws and its gripping tail.

Where it lives in the wild



Lives in the wild ★ Plumpton Park Zoo, Rising Sun, MD

STANDARDS · GRADES 2–4 **WRITTEN FOR GRADES 3–5**

Maryland and Delaware (NGSS): **4-LS1-1 · 2-LS2-2**
Pennsylvania (STEELS): **3.1.4.A · 3.1.2.B**

Draw here

Learn more: plumptonparkzoo.org/mammals/binturong/ · **Sources:** Animal Diversity Web; Duke Today; Science News; IUCN Red List.
Supports Maryland and Delaware (NGSS) and Pennsylvania (STEELS) standards: 4-LS1-1 (3.1.4.A) · 2-LS2-2 (3.1.2.B)
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FIELD TRIP WORKSHEET · PLUMPTON PARK ZOO

BINTURONG

Before and after your visit

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Before you visit · 5 minutes

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Predict: where in the wild does the binturong live?
Circle one (or more if it lives on more than one):

Africa | Asia | Australia | Europe | North America | South America

2. Predict: what does it eat?
☐ plants ☐ other animals ☐ both

3. Word hunt: find these words on page 1. Put a check by each one you already know.
☐ Prehensile ☐ Omnivore ☐ Seed dispersal ☐ Vulnerable

Pick one word and write what it means in your own words:

_____

_____

4. My question: one thing I want to find out when I see the binturong.

_____

_____

At the zoo · look closely

Watch for one minute. What is it doing?
☐ resting ☐ eating ☐ moving ☐ watching ☐ with others

Draw or describe one body part that helps it survive, and say how it helps.

Draw here

After your visit · talk it over

1. Check your prediction. Native region: South and Southeast Asia. Was your guess right?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ partly

2. Diet check. The fact sheet says: Omnivore, especially fruit. What did you learn about how it finds or eats food?

_____

_____

3. Discuss with a partner, then write your best answer.

- Why do scientists think binturongs leave a popcorn smell behind?

_____

- How does a binturong's tail help it in the trees?

_____

4. Exit ticket.

One thing I learned: _____

One thing I still wonder: _____

ADJUST IT
Grades K–2: talk and draw instead of writing; read the questions aloud. **Grades 6–8:** add evidence from the fact sheet and the animal page to every answer.