

Amur Leopards Move Even Closer to Extinction

A female, one of only seven left, was found shot in Russia.

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Only six adult female Amur leopards remain in the world after one was recently shot and killed. (Photo by Vasilii Solkin of the WWF) Just a few days after reporting that only seven female Amur leopards were left on the planet, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said it appears that another one has been killed.

Hunters in Russia's Far East have shot and killed one of the last surviving female Amur leopards living in the wild, according to the WWF.

Last week, environmentalists said a new census estimated that only somewhere between 25 and 34 Amur leopards were still alive in the wild, but at least 100 are needed to guarantee the species' survival.

A hunter shot the Amur leopard through the tail bone. It tumbled over and was then hit over the head with a heavy object, Pavel Fomenko, WWF's regional biodiversity coordinator said.

"The killing of even one female is a huge loss for a cat on the brink of extinction. This year's census showed a desperate situation, with just seven female Amur leopards left in the wild and four rearing cubs. Now we've lost a mature, reproductive leopardess and her potential cubs," said Darron Collins, a WWF spokesman.