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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Chinese Giant Salamander

The **Chinese Giant Salamander**, *Andrias davidianus*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is the largest of all amphibian species, sometimes growing up to 1.8 metres in length. The Chinese Giant Salamander was formerly widespread in central, southern and southwestern China.

This once common species has suffered a drastic population decline largely due to over-harvesting (it is now considered to be a luxury food). Furthermore, their habitat has suffered from the construction of dams, local pesticides, fertilizers and pollutants. Although this species is commercially farmed, wild individuals still suffer from heavy collecting pressure because of their high value for food and as new stock for breeding farms.

In China, seventeen nature reserves have been established for the conservation of the Chinese Giant Salamander, but there are concerns that development around reserves, and plans for tourism, will disrupt healthy rivers and their habitats. Many Chinese Giant Salamanders are produced in commercial breeding farms yearly and a small number of captive-bred individuals have been released back to the wild.

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