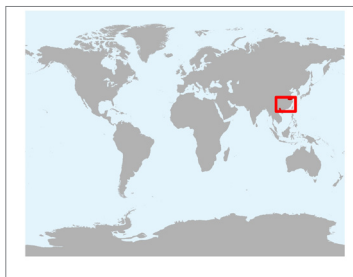




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NOT EVALUATED	DATA DEFICIENT	LEAST CONCERN	NEAR THREATENED	VULNERABLE	ENDANGERED	<b>&lt; CRITICALLY ENDANGERED &gt;</b>	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	EXTINCT
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Geographical range

## Species of the Day: Yangtze Giant Softshell

The **Yangtze Giant Softshell**, *Rafetus swinhoei*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This enormous softshell turtle, of which only four surviving individuals are known, can reach 120 kg in size and historically inhabited the Red River of Yunnan and Vietnam, and the lower Yangtze floodplain.

Although worshipped in some areas, capture for consumption, wetland destruction, and water pollution, have all severely impacted upon this species. Two wild males remain in different lakes in Vietnam, and a male and female survive in the Suzhou and Changsha zoos in China; these were brought together and have produced several egg clutches over the last two years. Though none have hatched yet, captive breeding efforts continue. The two wild animals are closely monitored; one was saved after the dam impounding its lake broke during flooding and it was captured downriver and returned to its repaired lake.

Field surveys to locate additional animals in the wild continue. The species' prospects for survival remain dire, but international conservation efforts are beginning to turn the tide.

Join us in celebrating World Turtle Day, 23 May, 2010.

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