

All About Andean Bears

Paddington Bear is a celebrity! You can read all about how he got his start in a book written by Rosanne Tolin called *MORE THAN MARMALADE: Michael Bond and the Story of Paddington Bear*.

Find out what inspired Michael Bond to create Paddington. Michael took him everywhere he went!



Read on for more fun facts about the **REAL** bear behind the storybook character.

Did you know...

- Paddington is an Andean bear from Peru!
- The lovable looking Andean bear is also known as a Spectacled bear and is the only surviving species of bear that is native to South America.
- Why named a Spectacled bear? The rings of white or light fur around its eyes can look like glasses (or spectacles) against the rest of the bear's black or dark brown fur. Its chest is sometimes covered in light colored fur.
- Male bears can weigh from 220-440 pounds and average 254 pounds. Female bears weigh 77-181 pounds and average 143 pounds. That's as much as a small refrigerator!

- The Spectacled Bear is a southern hemisphere bear! The species is almost entirely found in the Andes Mountains in northeastern South America. Its range span includes Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, western Bolivia and northwest Argentina. Can you find these countries on the map?



- Andean bears are between 4 and 6 feet tall when standing on their hind legs.
- Because food is available year-round where they live, Andean bears are active year-round and do not spend months hibernating in dens, like American black or brown bears.
- Wild Andean bears are omnivores, known to eat more than 300 plant species and over 20 animal species.
- Common in their diet are plants, especially fruits and palm leaves. Bears living in a scrubland habitat have been known to feed on snails and even eat cacti. Ouch!

- The Spectacled bears habitat has decreased due to logging and farming.
- There are not as many of these bears as there once was. They are now considered a **vulnerable** species, since the number of them continues to be going down and not increasing. This means they're in danger of extinction.
- Only 39 zoos have Spectacled bears as part of their exhibits. Among the zoos that have Spectacled bears are the San Diego Zoo, the Smithsonian National Zoo, the Philadelphia Zoo, the Cincinnati Zoo, and the Reid Park Zoo in Tucson, Arizona.

