

A Dangerous Swim

Does your pet cat run from water? Most small cats do not like to get wet. But what about big cats? If you go to the zoo, you might see tigers swimming in a pool. They seem to like getting wet!

Lions don't like swimming as much as tigers do. They can swim when needed. But they aren't likely to swim for long distances.

That's why it was a big surprise when two lion brothers, Jacob and Tibu, swam nearly a mile across a river in Uganda. Their swim was the longest lion swim ever measured.

Not only did they swim a long distance for lions, but they also swam through dangerous waters. The river was full of hippos and crocodiles. Up to two times bigger than adult lions, hippos and crocs can both harm a lion in the water. Jacob and Tibu were very brave.

Even more amazing, Jacob has only three legs. One of his legs was amputated after he was caught in a trap. Missing a leg didn't slow him down. He made the journey across the river just as surely as his brother did.

The lions didn't make it across the river the first time they tried. Two times they had to turn back. But the third time they successfully crossed in 45 minutes.

Jacob and Tibu went on to swim across the river 5 different times. Why did they put themselves in such danger? Scientists say they were looking for mates.

Their habitat on one side of the river was threatened. Humans had taken over the land and there were few lions left. When another group of male lions moved into the habitat, Jacob and Tibu fought them and lost. They had to cross the river to find female lions to start families.

This problem is not unique to Jacob and Tibu. Lion populations across Africa are getting smaller. It is harder and harder for male lions to find mates and fewer new lions are being born.

Jacob and Tibu were lucky that they survived their dangerous swim. Other lions may not be so lucky. Scientists say that now is the time for humans to help lions survive. If humans help to preserve lion habitats, they will not have to take risks like Jacob and Tibu.

Why did Jacob and Tibu swim across the river?

- A. They were looking for mates
- B. They like to swim
- C. They were afraid of hippos
- D. They only had 3 legs

How long did it take Jacob and Tibu to cross the river?

- A. 5 minutes
- B. 30 minutes
- C. 45 minutes
- D. 1 hour

How were Jacob and Tibu brave?

- A. They lived in Uganda
- B. They faced hippos and crocodiles in the water
- C. They got caught in a trap
- D. They didn't like the water

According to the passage, which cats like swimming the most?

- A. Pet cats
- B. Lions
- C. Jaguars
- D. Tigers

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