NORTHERN TREE SHREW

updated March 2017

Range	Southeast Asia
Habitat	Deciduous and evergreen forests. Inhabit areas about 77° F (25° C), with at least 45–50 percent humidity
Diet (wild)	Fruits, seeds, insects, leaves, and occasionally small mammals and lizards
Diet (captivity)	
Description	Length: 4–8 inches; tail: 9–10 inches; weight: 3½–8 ounces. Squirrel-like appearance with a long bushy tail and pointed snout. Their dense coat is gray or brown in color. They have short whiskers and five functional toes on their front feet and sharp claws used for climbing.
Lifespan	Wild: 2–3 years. Captivity: 10–12 years
Reproduction	The female will have 2–4 offspring after a 50-day gestation period. Offspring are born pink and hairless with closed eyes and ears. The female visits every two days to nurse them but ignores them the rest of the time. Offspring are weaned at four weeks and, once they are out of the nest, the mother will take on the nurturing parent role and bring them food and teach them how to forage. Both parents will make a nest amongst tree roots. They are sexually mature around four months of age and will breed throughout the year.
Behavior	Northern tree shrews typically live in monogamous pairs. One male and one female have overlapping territories; the male will defend his territory from other males, and the female will defend hers from other females. They are diurnal and spend much of the day foraging for food on the forest floor. They use their sense of smell, vision, and hearing to detect prey. Constant eating is necessary because of their simple digestive tract. The long and pointed snout is used to dig through the leaves on the ground to find food. They are constantly moving in a varying path so they don't encounter predators as often. To communicate, tree shrews use different types of vocalization and scent markings are used to mark territories.
Our animals	1 female, 1 male. Born: 01/2010 (male), 05/2013 (female)
Cool stuff	• For decades, scientists were not sure whether to classify tree shrews as primates or insectivores. In 2000, the results of complete mitochondrial genome data supported the hypothesis of a closer phylogenetic relationship of tree shrews to rabbits than to primates. • Their brain-to-body-mass ratio is the largest of any animal, even humans. • Tree shrews use scent marking to indicate boundaries of their territories. • Northern tree shrews make eight distinct sounds; four can be directly associated with alarm, attention, contact, and defense. • Northern tree shrews' body temperature varies from 95° F (35° C) at night to 104° F (40° C) during the day. This difference is larger than any other endotherm (warm-blooded animal), and indicates that the circadian rhythms of body temperature and locomotor activity are synchronized.

Phylum	**Class**	**Order**	**Family**	**Genus**	**species**
Chordata	Mammalia	Scandentia	Tupaiidae	Tupaia	*T. belangeri*