READ THE TEXT AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

Endangered

Introduction

Endangered animals are those species that are considered likely to become extinct, based on a current population trend. Their numbers known in the wild are low and thought to be decreasing.

Sadly, some species of animals are already now considered **Extinct** or **Extinct in the Wild**, including the famous dodo, a flightless bird thought to have been about one metre tall. Further examples include the passenger pigeon, the Tasmanian tiger and recently the West African black rhino.

According to a recent update of the 'Red List' produced by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 834 different species have now been classified as 'Extinct' with another 69 as 'Extinct in the Wild'.

Some other species are currently classed as **Endangered** or **Critically Endangered**, if facing a high or extremely high risk of extinction. There are further categories including **Vulnerable** and **Near-Threatened** for species which may face a risk of endangerment in the near future.

A large proportion of primates (such as apes, lemurs and monkeys) are at risk. However, there are success stories too.

Some animals, like the bald eagle and the American alligator, were once on the brink of extinction but are now known to be recovering.

What causes endangerment or extinction?

Animal extinction can occur due to natural or human causes. Natural causes include change of climate or sea levels. In more modern times, the most common causes are from human intervention such as hunting or habitat destruction. There are other possibilities too such as pollution, new diseases, new predators or a single catastrophic event.

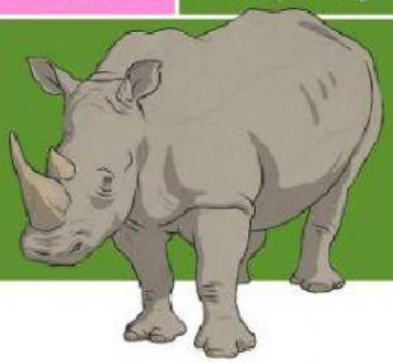
Why save them?

Plants and animals can be extremely important for the ecosystem of the Earth. Species depend on each other for survival. Aside from this, we want to be able to enjoy the beauty of nature and, once a species becomes extinct, it has gone forever.

Black Rhino

Population:	More than 5000
Status:	Critically Endangered

Hunted for food or simply entertainment, the black rhino population went into decline due to European settlers in Africa during the 20th century. Despite being one of the oldest groups of mammals on the planet, their habitats have been destroyed and, for many years, they have been killed for the illegal trade of their horn.

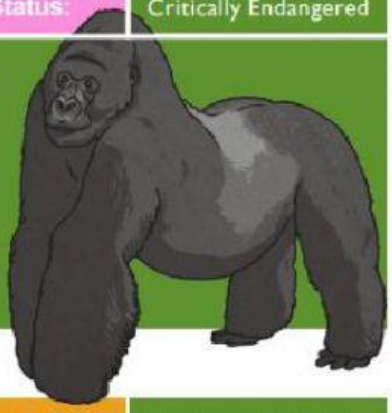


LIVEWORKSHEETS

Mountain Gorilla

Population:	880
Status:	Critically Endangered

Most surviving mountain gorillas currently live in the African country of Uganda. The population has suffered from years of war, hunting, habitat destruction and disease. At one point, scientists thought that the species would be extinct some years ago. Fortunately, due to increased conservation efforts, their numbers have been increasing again in recent decades.



South China Tiger

Population:	None identified in the wild
Status:	Functionally Extinct

In the 1950s, there were estimated to be around 4000 of the South China tigers living in the wild. After decreasing rapidly for decades, the Chinese government introduced a hunting ban in 1979 to prevent further decline. However, by 1996 the population was estimated to be just around 50 individuals. Now, as it has not been seen in the wild for more than 25 years, the South China tiger has instead been considered by scientists as 'functionally extinct'.



Giant Panda

Population:	1800 in the wild
Status:	Endangered

Considerable efforts have gone into conservation of the giant panda in recent years both in the wild as well as captivity. Although the animals have little in the way of natural predators, they have seen their habitat destroyed by roads, railways and other construction. Pandas play an important role in the bamboo forests where they roam and spread seeds to encourage growth of new plants. In turn, this area remains home to many other animal species that rely on the environment.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

According to the introduction of the text, how many species have now been classified as 'Extinct in the Wild'?

What other animals does the text list as being now extinct? Tick three.

Complete this table of information about some of the animals' features in the text:

Animal	Status	Population
Mountain Gorilla	Critically Endangered	
	Critically Endangered	More than 5,000
Giant Panda		1800 in the wild

In what year did the Chinese government introduce a hunting ban?

According to the text, why is this species of tiger considered to be 'functionally extinct'?

Find and copy a word which means reducing or getting smaller in number.

Match these facts with the correct animal in the text.

Bald Eagle	Killed for the ilegal trade for their horn
Mountain Gorilla	Flightless bird now extinct
Black Rhino	Once at risk of extinction, now recovering
Dodo	Suffered from years of war, hunting, habitat destruction and disease.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Listen to the audio and write one or two words only in each gap.

Joel Sartore: photographing endangered species

Sartore saw that (1) _____ which aimed to raise awareness of endangered species were not working.

The first creature Sartore took a photo of was placed in front of a (2) _____at a children's zoo.

Sartore set out to take pictures where animals would appear to have (3) _____ with viewers.

People soon started to appreciate Sartore's work and his (4) _____for it, too.

It is expected that Sartore's project will be a (5) _____ that people can look at in the future.

LIVEWORKSHEETS