

Endangered Species
Cross-Curricular Focus: Life



Today, some types of animals are an **endangered** species. This means there are very few animals of that kind left on Earth. The animals could face **extinction**. Extinction is when all the animals of that kind die. When a type of animal is extinct, it is gone forever.

One problem for animals is that their habitat is sometimes destroyed by humans. As human populations increase, more and more space is needed for people. Building areas for people to live pushed animals out of their natural homes. Forest and swamp habitats are the most threatened. Trees are cut down to make room for homes and businesses. Swamps are filled in so that neighborhoods can expand. The habitat is destroyed. The animals have nowhere else to go. Without a habitat, the number of animals begins to go down.

Humans must prevent the extinction of animals due to the loss of their habitat. We have to become more aware of animal populations when considering building and expansion projects. Other options may not be as convenient, but the survival of the animals needs to be taken into consideration. Better planning and an awareness of how human actions affect animals can make a difference. It is still possible to maintain a diverse animal population for future generations to enjoy.

Another major cause of endangerment of animals is overhunting by humans. The practice of shooting animals as a sport can quickly bring the animals to extinction. This is a worldwide problem. The governments of countries around the world must unite to agree on laws regarding animals. Some animals may have large enough populations so hunting will not endanger them. Others must be protected.

There is still hope for animals who are already on the endangered species list. Some organizations are working hard to recreate habitats for them. Breeding programs are helping animal populations increase. We all have to be aware and think before we act. The things we do can affect more than just ourselves.

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

- 1) What would be the result if worldwide laws were passed to protect animal habitats?

- 2) Give an example of something that can be done to help keep endangered animals from becoming extinct.

- 3) What statement supports the idea that the author believes animals need to be protected?

- 4) Based on the article, what does extinction mean?
