

Endangered Species at the National Zoo:

Caring for Conservation

Welcome to the National Zoo! You are about to embark on an adventure to discovery.

The animals in this booklet are just a few animals that the National Zoo is working hard to protect from extinction. You can help us. An important first step is to learn more.

Do you know what it means to be endangered?

Endangered means that a species is in danger of becoming extinct. If an animal or plant is endangered, there may be very few left or the population may be quickly diminishing.

Do you know what it means to be extinct?

Extinct means that every member of an animal or plant species has died. Tyrannosaurus rex, dodo birds, and woolly mammoths are all extinct species.

There are thousands of endangered plants and animals — and the number is growing. This is bad news because extinctions today are usually caused by humans. The good news is that if humans are causing a problem, we can do something about it.

"There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country."

Theodore Roosevelt (1912)



Cheetahs: Cheetah Conservation Station

Cheetahs have lost most of their habitat and food source making them an endangered species. What are two other reasons cheetahs are endangered?

What is the National Zoo doing to help protect the cheetah?

A safe home or habitat is important for an animal's survival. Draw a picture of one of the cheetah yards at the Zoo:

Asian Elephants: Elephant House

Elephants are endangered both in captivity and in the wild.

The captive population is aging quickly and scientists have only recently begun learning about their biology. Kandula is a very special elephant. What is special about him?

The wild populations of Asian elephants are endangered mostly because of loss of habitat to human development. Watch the videos in the Elephant House and list two things that the National Zoo is doing to protect elephants.

Kandula weighed 3,100 pounds in May. Check the sign in the Elephant House to see how much he weighs today and figure out how much he has grown since then.

Kandula's current weight: _____

How much has Kandula grown? _____

Can you figure out how much Kandula is growing on average every day?

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Guam Rails: Bird House

In the 1970s, Guam rail populations were quickly declining, and no one knew why. Scientists figured out the problem was a new species of snake that was introduced to the island. How did the snakes get to Guam?



What is the National Zoo doing to help the recovery of the Guam rail? How are scientists trying to decrease the brown snake population?

Did you know?

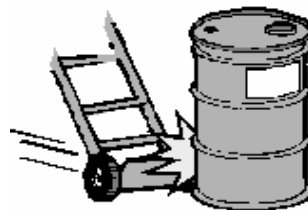
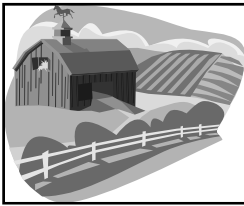
On some parts of Guam there were up to 14,000 snakes per square mile! That's more snakes per square mile than people per square mile in Washington, D.C.

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Brown Pelicans: Sea Lion Pool

What has caused the brown pelicans to become endangered?

How does a farm chemical end up inside a pelican? Circle the source of the chemicals then draw arrows from picture to picture showing the path that it takes to get to the pelican.



Pelicans also face harm from fishing nets and overhead wires. The National Zoo is home to three pelicans that were rehabilitated after being injured from such dangers. What can you do to help protect the pelicans?

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Golden Lion Tamarins: Small Mammal House

Golden lion tamarins (GLTs) are one of the world's most endangered species. In the early 1970s, there were fewer than 200 of these small monkeys in Brazil's Atlantic coastal forest. Thanks to the National Zoo, other zoos, conservation organizations, and Brazil's government, there are now more than 1,200 living in the wild.

The number-one reason they are endangered is because their habitat (coastal rainforest in Brazil) has been fragmented into small, unconnected areas, each area only capable of supporting a small number of groups. Imagine if all the trees were cut down and the entire rainforest were used for growing crops, raising cattle, or building houses. What would happen to the tamarins?

Since the 1970s, the National Zoo has been a leader in GLT conservation and protection. What is the Zoo doing now to prevent GLTs from going extinct?

In the Small Mammal House, you can see two of the four species of lion tamarins—golden lion tamarins and golden-headed lion tamarins. Draw both of them here:

Congratulations on finishing your exploration
of some endangered species at the Zoo!

Thousands more animals and plants in the United States and all over the world that are endangered or threatened. There are many more species to learn about.

If you want to find out more about endangered species you can:

- explore other exhibits at the Zoo
- visit the National Zoo's website — <http://nationalzoo.si.edu>
- read books about endangered species