

HELP WILD ANIMALS



Preservation & Protection of Wildlife & Their Habitats Starts With Each Individual Human

The actions of humans have created many threats to wild animals. As human populations increase, these threats multiply, leading to a fewer number of some species, and total extinction of others. All animals contribute to the ecology of the earth and are vital to its health and continuation. Many wildlife species are threatened with extinction, and many critical wildlife habitats are being destroyed. The problems are large and complex—requiring the combined efforts and cooperation of numerous groups, organizations and agencies around the world. But most importantly, preservation and protection of wildlife and their habitats starts with each individual human. Together, we all play an important role in protecting wild animals and their homes. By joining a conservation organization, welcoming wildlife into your yard with native plants, reducing and recycling, refraining from using of herbicides and pesticides, and speaking out for wildlife and nature, you can help wild animals everyday.

THREATS TO WILD ANIMALS

HUMAN ACTIVITIES: By 2025 as many as one fifth of all animal species may be lost, gone forever, as a result of human activities. Habitat destruction by logging; ever-encroaching human settlement; pollution of water, soil, and air; commercial fishing; and hunting to supply the demand for skins, hides, traditional medicines, food, and tourist souvenirs all threatens species' existence. Over-exploitation of wildlife for commercial purposes, the introduction of harmful exotic (nonnative) organisms, environmental pollution, and the spread of diseases all pose serious threats to wildlife.

FUR: Each year more than 40 million animals are tortured and killed for fur.

ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY: Animals used in the circus spend the majority of the year imprisoned in small cages or on chains. The training is almost always based on intimidation; trainers must break the spirit of the animals to control them. Animals used in rodeos are abused with electrical prods, sharp spurs, and "bucking straps". While zoos and aquariums may appear to be educational and conservation-oriented, most are designed with the needs and desires of the visitors in mind, not the needs of the animals. Captivity is cruel for wild animals.

PET INDUSTRY: Thousands of wild animals are peddled as "pets" each year. Highly intelligent and social animals, they suffer terribly. Wild animals are bred in captivity and taken from their mothers within hours or days of birth, or stolen from their mother in the wild who is often killed in the process. Sold like toys, profit is put above the welfare of the animals.

ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION: Despite better alternatives, wild animals continue to suffer in horrific medical experiments and product testing. The practice is inhumane, unnecessary, bad science and unethical.



ENDANGERED SPECIES

Well over 900 plants and animals are endangered, and hundreds more are threatened. Many of the reasons certain animals are disappearing forever are because of human activities. The mnemonic HIPPO represents the five major causes of declining wildlife biodiversity: **H** - Habitat Loss; **I** - Invasive Species; **P** - Pollution and Pesticides; **P** - Population Growth (human) and the Pet Trade; **O** - Over-hunting and Over-collecting.

Habitat Loss results from human activities and land development. Many animal species are in decline because their environment is no longer able to fulfill their basic requirements. All species require food, water, shelter, space and the ability to find a mate and have children. Some species require small habitats, while others need large areas to successfully survive.

Invasive Species are plants and animals transported from one country or region to another and introduced into the wild. Often they out-compete native plants and animals for their niche in the ecosystem, upsetting the balance of nature.

Pollution and Pesticides, in forms of garbage and trash, air and water pollution, soil contamination and noise and light pollution, harm ecosystems and wildlife. Pesticides are toxic and harm more than their target. Pollution harms the environment and animals.

Population Growth and the Pet Trade threaten countless animal species. As humans take more and more wilderness



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areas for housing and industry, less land is available for wildlife. Native animals are often forced into less suitable habitats and can decline or disappear forever. Many "pets", including fish, reptiles, spiders, birds, rodents and exotic mammals, are harvested from the wild.

Over-hunting and Over-collecting has impacted many endangered species, reeking havoc on ecosystems and eliminating entire species forever.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

CONSERVE HABITATS: One of the most important ways to help threatened plants and animals survive is to protect their habitats permanently in national parks, nature reserves or wilderness areas. Donate to, or volunteer at, a nature preserve or wildlife sanctuary. Support initiatives that preserve wildlife habitat.

EDUCATE: Distribute fact sheets to everyone you know; everywhere you go.

WRITE LETTERS: Send letters to legislators, companies and businesses.

SHOP RESPONSIBLY: Purchase only cruelty free and environmentally responsible products. Buy organic and non-GMO products. Shop local. Refrain from supporting animal "entertainment" such as rodeos, bullfighting, racing, aquariums and zoos.

MAKE SPACE FOR ANIMALS: Plant trees, bushes and plants that benefit wildlife in your area. Place a birdbath, birdhouses and bat-houses in your yard. Compost in your garden - it eliminates the need for chemical fertilizers which are harmful to the planet and its animals. Refrain from using harmful chemicals whenever possible.

REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE: Reduce the amount of products you buy, and the amount of electricity and water you use. Reuse items whenever possible. Use electric and water-saving devices. Buy products with less packaging. Recycle items that are recyclable, and try to refrain from purchasing items that are not recyclable.

PLANT NATIVE PLANTS: Plant native plants instead of non-native varieties.

SPEAK OUT: Tell everyone you know about threatened species and what they can do to make a difference. Start a group dedicated to protecting animals in your area or to help care for a nature preserve. Write letters and articles about endangered species to local newspapers. Call radio programs to discuss your concerns.

LIVE IN HARMONY WITH WILDLIFE: Cap your chimney, don't evict animals living in your yard, leave wild animals alone, use only humane traps if you must trap an animal. Supply wildlife with clean, fresh water daily, especially during hot weather. Keep companion animals away from wildlife and their homes and nests.

FIGHT LITTER: Never litter. Clean up litter that might harm wildlife.

LET WILD ANIMALS BE WILD: Wildlife are wild animals, not pets. Captivity is cruel.