

You Can Help These Animals!

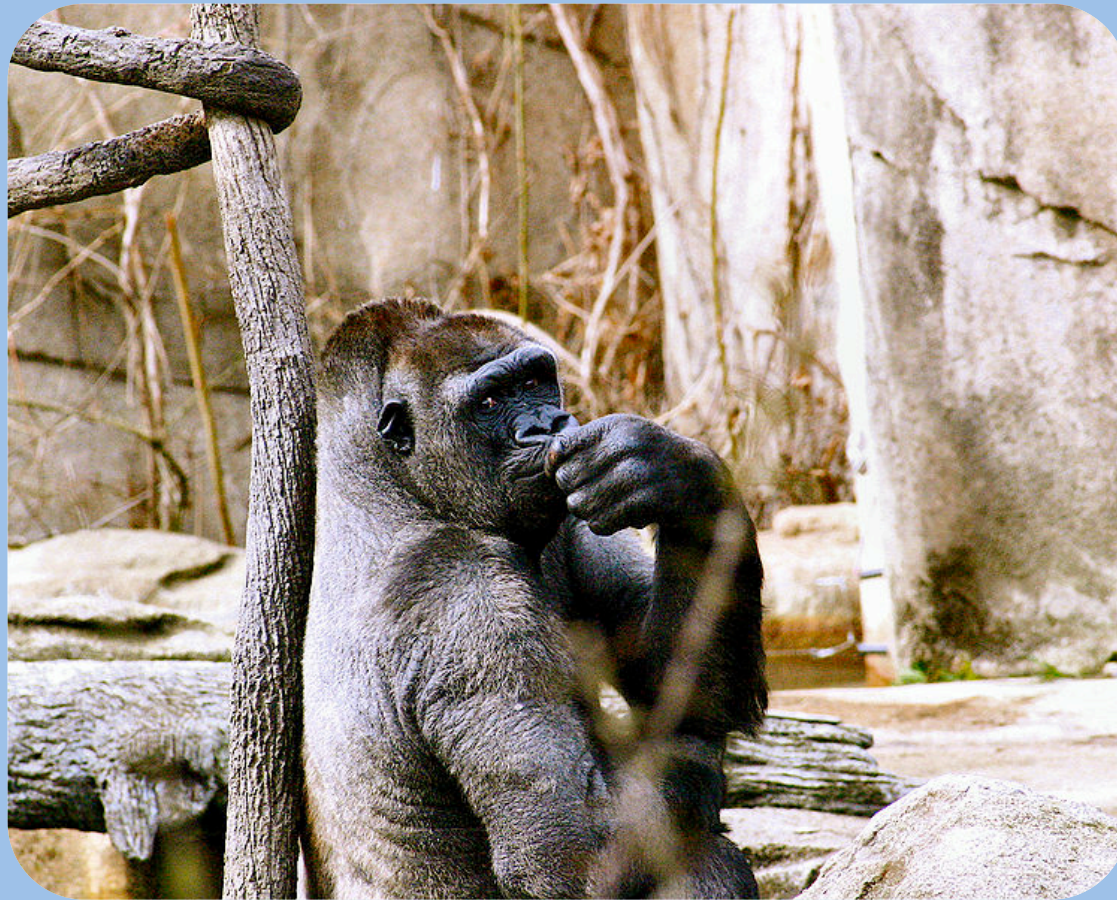


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Photo: Lea Maimone, <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/>

What do you think the spider monkey in this picture (see left) has in common with gorillas, giant pandas, and Sumatran tigers? They are all animals that need your help! These animals have been listed as either **endangered** or **critically endangered** by scientists. Usually these animals are at risk because of human activities like hunting, logging, and farming. This spider monkey, which is called a Geoffery's Spider Monkey, is an example of an **endangered** animal. Endangered animals are animals that have:

1. A small **population** size (the number of this type of animal)
2. A very limited area where they can live
3. A population size of 2500 adult animals or less
4. A high chance or being **extinct** in the wild in about 10 years



Photo:
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ailuropoda_melanoleuca_Schoenbrunn_07-

The giant panda is another example of an endangered animal. Giant pandas are now endangered because people have destroyed their **habitat** (the place where they live) through logging and farming. Also, bamboo- their food- is sometimes hard for pandas to find because it naturally goes through a cycle of blooming and dying. In the past, when bamboo around a panda's home started dying, the panda would just find another home that was closer to younger bamboo shoots. This is harder for pandas now though because there are fewer areas where pandas can find new homes due to the destruction of their habitats. However, the great news is that there has been a lot of work done to help pandas! Special areas in China have been made where pandas have lots of space and food.



Photo: Dick Mudde

Sumatran tigers are an example of a **critically endangered** group of animals. Critically endangered animals have:

1. A small **population** size (the number of this type of animal)
2. A very limited area where they can live
3. A population size of 250 adult animals or less
4. A very high chance of being extinct in the wild in about 10 years

Sumatran tigers are a critically endangered group of animals because they do not have many safe places to live. Much of their habitats have been deforested for farming and logging, so many tigers have been split up from one another and as a result cannot reproduce. Sumatran tigers are also poached and illegally traded. As you can imagine, there is work that needs to be done to make sure that these tigers are kept safe.



Photo: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorilla_gorilla_gorilla6.jpg

The gorilla is also critically endangered. The gorilla is critically endangered because it is hunted, has a high rate of disease, and has lost much of its habitat. Many gorillas get a virus called Ebola that makes them very sick. This causes a large decrease in their populations. People also hunt gorillas for fun (can you believe that?), food, or to protect their farms from being raided. This causes the gorilla population to dwindle even more. There is currently planning being done to save the gorilla population, such as law enforcement to make sure that gorilla hunters are punished if caught, as well as strategies to lessen Ebola outbreaks and habitat loss.

How do you think you might be able to help endangered animals like these gorillas, spider monkeys, tigers, and pandas?



Photo: Mike R., <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

As you might have thought, there are some things that are quite easy to do to help these animals, such as:

1. Talk about them! You know how people super care about the Jonas Brothers? Well, this is because people talk about them all the time! So, if you are a trend-setter, talk about these animals and other people will start caring about them too!
2. Learn more about types of critically endangered and endangered animals! Ask your teacher and parents to tell you more! There are many endangered animals and you can learn about them all!
3. Write to your president or prime minister (whoever is in charge of your country) and tell them you care! Draw them a picture of how they can help these animals!



Photo: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Red_Wolf_and_pup.jpg

The grey wolf shown above is another endangered animal

4. Do as much as you can to help the environment!
5. Go outside and look at all the animals and birds you share your environment with.

Words to Remember

Definitions in quotes from dictionary.com

Endangered Animals: A group of animals that have a small population size, a limited area where they can live, 2500 adults or less, and a high chance of becoming extinct in about 10 years.

Critically Endangered Animals: A group of animals that have a small population size, a limited area where they can live, 250 adults or less, and a very high chance of becoming extinct in about 10 years.

Population: The number of a specific type of animal.

Extinct: When there are no more members of a specific type of animal.

Habitat: A natural place where a type of animal lives.

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