

# Animals at Risk!

## Educational Eco Guide

### Why are animals at risk?

An “animal at risk” is in danger of disappearing forever. An animal becomes extinct when the very last one of its kind dies. For example, dinosaurs don’t walk the earth anymore because they are extinct. Why are today’s animals at risk?

- **Habitat loss.** Humans destroy places where animals live. For example, people cut down forests or fill in wetlands to build new houses or farms.
- **Climate change.** People burn gasoline and coal to power cars and factories, but this makes the air dirty and changes the climate (it makes the planet too hot).
- **Pollution.** Plastic trash is piling up on the land and in the water. Animals get hurt when they eat it or get tangled in it.

### How can your family help animals at risk?

- **Study a local animal.** Is there is an animal at risk near you? Find out what is threatening it, then contact reporters and government leaders. Tell everyone why it matters and how your community can help it.
- **“Adopt” an endangered animal.** Donate money to a wildlife protection organization, and they will send you information about the animal you are helping.
- **Use less plastic.** Plastic pollutes the planet for hundreds of years, so choose toys made from wood or paper (like this game!). When you are done with them, they can be composted, or turned into soil by sun, rain, and worms.



### Polar Bear

Polar bears spend most of their time on sea ice. To get from one piece of ice to another, they sometimes swim for days at a time! They are found in the Arctic.



### Rhinoceros

Rhino horn is made from keratin, the same stuff as our fingernails. Rhinos live in grasslands, wetlands, and rainforests.



### Giraffe

These giants are the world’s tallest living land animals. A male giraffe can be taller than 3 adult humans! They live in the African grasslands.



### Koala Bear

These awesome animals aren’t really bears. They are marsupials (animals who have pouches where their babies grow). They live in Australian eucalyptus forests.



### Orangutan

Orangutans eat with their feet! They use both hands and feet to gather food and travel through trees. They live in tropical rainforests in Asia.



### Blue Whale

Blue whales are the largest living animals. The biggest one ever recorded was almost 3 school buses long! They live in oceans around the world.



### Gray Wolf

The howl of a wolf can be heard from ten miles away! They live in forests, mountains, grasslands, deserts, and tundra.



### Brown Bear

In the winter, mama brown bears hibernate in dens, resting for months while their cubs nurse. They live in mountains and forests.



### Sea Turtle

Sea turtles are some of the oldest creatures on the planet. They shared the planet with dinosaurs! They live in tropical oceans.



### Chimpanzee

Chimpanzees “talk” to each other using their voices, hand gestures, and facial expressions, just like us! They live in African tropical forests.



### Snow Leopard

These cats have been nicknamed “ghost of the mountains” because their spotted fur helps them blend into the land. They live in the Asian mountains.



### Panda Bear

Pandas need a lot of food – they eat bamboo for 12 hours a day! They live in mountain forests in China.



### Black Panther

Black panthers are actually jaguars or leopards whose fur is black. These big black cats live mainly in tropical forests.



### Bald Eagle

Bald eagles almost disappeared in the 1970s due to hunting and DDT (an insecticide that weakens bird eggs). When DDT was banned, they started to recover! They live near rivers and coasts in North America.



### Elephant

An elephant’s trunk is sensitive enough to pick up a blade of grass and strong enough to rip branches off a tree. They live in rainforests, grasslands, and deserts.



### Tiger

Tigers can hide in plain sight, because the deer they eat can’t see their orange stripes. Tigers live in rainforests, wetlands, and grasslands.

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