

# Reader's Guide



*Endangered Species*, 2nd Edition, presents information on endangered and threatened mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, mollusks, insects, arachnids, crustaceans, and plants. Its 240 entries were chosen to give a glimpse of the broad range of species currently facing endangerment. While well-publicized examples such as the American bison, northern spotted owl, and gray wolf are examined, so, too, are less conspicuous—yet no less threatened—species such as the Australian ant, Cape vulture, freshwater sawfish, and Peebles Navajo cactus.

The entries are spread across three volumes and are divided into sections by classes. Within each class, species are arranged alphabetically by common name.

Each entry begins with the species's common and scientific names. A fact box containing classification information—phylum (or division), class, order, and family—for that species follows. The box also lists the current status of the species in the wild according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (which administers the Endangered Species Act). Finally, the box lists the country or countries where the species currently ranges.

Locator maps outlining the range of a particular species are included in each entry to help users find unfamiliar countries or locations. In most entries, a color photo provides a more concrete visualization of the species. Sidebar boxes containing interesting and related information are also included in some entries.

Each entry is broken into three sections:

- The information under the subhead **Description and Biology** provides a general description of the species. This

includes physical dimensions, eating and reproductive habits, and social behavior.

- The information under the subhead **Habitat and Current Distribution** describes where the species is found today, its preferred habitat, and, if available, recent estimates of its population size.
- The information under the subhead **History and Conservation Measures** relates, if possible, the history of the species and the factors currently threatening it. Conservation efforts to save the species, if any are underway, are also described.

Beginning each volume of *Endangered Species*, 2nd Edition, is an overview of the history and current state of endangerment and its causes and a discussion of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN–The World Conservation Union) that includes a brief history of the organization, its current focus, and a brief explanation of the status categories in which the IUCN places imperiled species. The final section focuses on the Endangered Species Act, briefly examining its passage, purpose, implementation, status categories, and current state.

Each volume ends with a Where to Learn More section composed of books, periodicals, Internet addresses, and environmental organizations. The book listing is annotated. The environmental organizations list—a selected catalog of organizations focusing on endangered species—contains mailing addresses, telephone numbers, Internet addresses (if available), and a brief description of each organization.

Finally, the volumes conclude with a cumulative index providing access to all the species discussed throughout *Endangered Species*, 2nd Edition.

The scope of this work is neither definitive nor exhaustive. No work on this subject can be. The information presented is as current as possible, but the state of endangered species, sadly, changes almost daily.

### **A note about the 2nd Edition**

Since the publication of *Endangered Species* in 1999, the endangered or threatened status of many of the species included in these volumes has changed. Through the efforts of conservationists and legislators, some of these species have re-

covered or were upgraded to a less threatened status. The Przewalski's horse, for example, was considered extinct in the wild in 1996 by the IUCN, but a program to reintroduce horses bred in captivity into their historical habitat was unexpectedly successful. By 2000, 84 Przewalski's horses had been reintroduced and 114 foals (baby horses) had been born in the wild. In the early 2000s, a population of around 142 Przewalski's horses roamed freely, and the animals appear to be doing better each year they spend in the wild. Other species have declined to the very brink of extinction. Some—like the scimitar-horned oryx—have dramatically fallen on the IUCN Red List. The status of the scimitar-horned oryx fell from endangered to critically endangered in 1996 to extinct in the wild in 1999. It is likely that, with a captive-bred population now being prepared for reintroduction to the wild, the scimitar-horned oryx will be upgraded on the Red List in the near future. There are also new stories in many of the existing entries. Chimpanzees and gorillas, for one sad example among many, began making the news in 2003 when a scientific study found that their populations had been reduced by nearly one-half since the 1980s and that an Ebola virus is currently ravaging the populations.

*Endangered Species* cannot cover all threatened species worldwide, but 40 new species have been included in the 2nd Edition to ensure that the situations of species worldwide—as it stands five years after the first publication—are represented. Conservationists today are facing the same concerns as five years ago, many with more urgency and some new twists. The issues range from a worldwide decline in the amphibian and reptile populations to declining fish species that seem unable to recover from overfishing; from the effects of inbreeding in populations that have become very tiny to the lack of appropriate habitats in which to release the new captive-bred populations. Many of the new entries chronicle the enormous efforts of scientists to save species on the brink of extinction. For instance, the Chatham Islands robin population had dwindled to five birds in 1981, with only one female, “Old Blue,” remaining. Through a breeding-in-captivity program, that species now has 259 members, but all of them are direct descendants of Old Blue and her mate, Old Yellow. And sometimes these efforts may not be enough: There were only three Po’ouli (honeycreepers) left in 2003, and because their ranges

did not overlap, they had no chance of mating in the wild. Scientists were preparing to take these last remaining members of the species into custody as the only hope for saving the species.

### **Acknowledgments**

Special thanks are due for the invaluable comments and suggestions provided by the *Endangered Species* advisors:

Valerie Doud, Science Teacher, Peru Junior High School, Peru, Indiana

Melba Holland, Earth Science/Science Department Head, Slaton Junior High School, Slaton, Texas

Bonnie L. Raasch, Media Specialist, C. B. Vernon Middle School, Marion, Iowa

The editors of *Endangered Species* also graciously thank Tom Romig and Julie Carnegie for their commitment to this project and for their patience and understanding during its completion. It is a continuing privilege and pleasure to work with the U•X•L family.

### **Comments and Suggestions**

We welcome your comments on *Endangered Species* and suggestions for species to be included in future editions of *Endangered Species*. Please write: Editors, *Endangered Species*, U•X•L, 27500 Drake Rd., Farmington Hills, Michigan 48331-3535; call toll free: 1-800-877-4253; fax: 248-699-8097; or send e-mail via [www.gale.com](http://www.gale.com).

# Words to Know



## A

**Adaptation:** A genetically determined characteristic, or inherited trait, that makes an organism better able to cope with its environment.

**Alpine:** Relating to mountainous regions.

**Arid:** Land that receives less than 10 inches (250 millimeters) of rainfall annually and has a high rate of evaporation.

## B

**Biodiversity:** The entire variety of life on Earth.

**Brackish:** A mixture of freshwater and saltwater; briny water.

**Browse:** A method of grazing in which an animal eats the leaf and twig growth of shrubs, woody vines, trees, and cacti.

## C

**Canopy:** The uppermost spreading branchy layer of a forest.

**Carapace:** A shell or bony covering on the back of animals such as turtles, lobsters, crabs, and armadillos.

**Carnivore:** An animal that eats mainly meat.

**Carrion:** Dead and decaying flesh.

**Cetacean:** An aquatic mammal that belongs to the order Cetacea, which includes whales, dolphins, and porpoises.

**Chaparral:** An ecological community of shrubby plants adapted to long, dry summers and natural forest fire cycles, generally found in southern California.

**CITES:** Abbreviation for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; an international agreement by 143 nations to prohibit trade of endangered wildlife.

**Clear-cutting:** The process of cutting down all the trees in a forest area.

# Where to Learn More



## Books

- Ackerman, Diane. *The Rarest of the Rare: Vanishing Animals, Timeless Worlds*. New York: Random House, 1995. Naturalist and poet Ackerman travels from the Amazon rain forests to a remote Japanese island in search of endangered creatures and their habitats, revealing the factors that are contributing to their endangerment and describing preservation efforts.
- Baskin, Yvonne. *The Work of Nature: How the Diversity of Life Sustains Us*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 1997. Science writer Baskin examines the practical consequences of declining biodiversity on ecosystem health and functioning, highlighting examples from around the world.
- Chadwick, Douglas W., and Joel Sartore. *The Company We Keep: America's Endangered Species*. Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1996. Wildlife biologist Chadwick chronicles past and current conservation efforts, profiling dozens of birds and animals on the top ten endangered list. The book, for readers aged ten and above, also includes rich photographs by photojournalist Sartore, range maps, habitat descriptions, population counts, and current status for all endangered North American species.
- Cohen, Daniel. *The Modern Ark: Saving Endangered Species*. New York: Putnam, 1995. Aimed at young adult readers, this work explains the problems faced by endangered species and the solutions—such as the Species Survival Plan—to help protect their futures.
- Dobson, David. *Can We Save Them? Endangered Species of North America*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 1997. For students aged seven to ten, Dobson's work introduces readers to twelve species of endangered animals and plants in North America and suggests ways to restore each one's natural environment.
- Earle, Sylvia. *Sea Change: A Message of the Oceans*. New York: Putnam, 1995. Marine biologist and leading deep-sea explorer Earle writes about her three decades of undersea exploration and makes an urgent plea for the preservation of the world's fragile and rapidly deteriorating ocean ecosystems.

## Web Sites

- Birdlife International  
<http://www.birdlife.net/>
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species  
<http://www.wcmc.org.uk:80/CITES/english/index.html>
- EcoNet: Habitats and Species  
<http://www.igc.apc.org/igc/issues/habitats>
- EE-Link: Endangered Species, University of Michigan  
<http://www.nceet.snre.umich.edu/EndSpp/Endangered.html>
- Endangered! Exploring a World at Risk: The American Museum of Natural History  
<http://www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/Endangered>
- Endangered Species Act (brief history), University of Oregon  
<http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~cait/>
- Endangered Species Home Page, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
<http://www.fws.gov/~r9endspp.endspp.html>
- Endangered Species Protection Program, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
<http://www.epa.gov/espp>
- Endangered Species Study Web: General Resources  
<http://www.studyweb.com/animals/endang/endanger.htm>
- Endangered Species Update, University of Michigan  
<http://www.umich.edu/~esupdate/>
- EnviroLink: Largest online environmental information resource  
<http://www.envirolink.org/>
- Environmental Education (EE) Link: Endangered Species  
<http://eelink.net/EndSpp/specieshighlights-mainpage.html>
- Environmental Organization Web Directory: Wildlife and endangered species focus  
[http://www.webdirectory.com/Wildlife/General\\_Endangered\\_Species](http://www.webdirectory.com/Wildlife/General_Endangered_Species)
- Green Nature  
<http://greennature.com>
- IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals  
[http://www.wcmc.org.uk/data/database/rl\\_anml\\_combo.html](http://www.wcmc.org.uk/data/database/rl_anml_combo.html)
- IUCN Red List of Threatened Plants  
[http://www.wcmc.org.uk/species/plants/plant\\_redlist.html](http://www.wcmc.org.uk/species/plants/plant_redlist.html)
- SeaWorld Education Department: Endangered Species  
<http://www.seaworld.org/infobooks/Endangered/home.html>
- Society for the Protection of Endangered Species (group of endangered species-related weblinks)  
<http://pubweb.ucdavis.edu/Documents/GWS/Envissues/EndSpes/speshome.htm>

Terra's Endangered Species Tour (includes range maps)  
<http://www.olcommerce.com/terra/endanger.html>

## Organizations Focusing on Endangered and Threatened Species (selected list)

African Wildlife Foundation  
1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 265-8393; Fax: (202) 265-2361  
Internet: <http://www.awf.org>  
Organization that works to craft and deliver creative solutions for the long-term well-being of Africa's remarkable species and habitats.

American Cetacean Society  
P.O. Box 1319  
San Pedro, CA 90733-0391  
(310) 548-6279; Fax: (310) 548-6950  
Internet: <http://www.acsonline.org>  
Nonprofit organization that works in the areas of conservation, education, and research to protect marine mammals, especially whales, dolphins, and porpoises, and the oceans in which they live.

Animal Welfare Institute  
P.O. Box 3650  
Washington, DC 20007  
(202) 337-2332; Fax: (202) 338-9478  
Organization active in the protection of endangered species, among other issues, related to animal welfare.

Center for Biological Diversity  
P.O. Box 710  
Tucson AZ 85702-0710  
(520) 623-5252; Fax: (520) 623-9797  
Internet: <http://www.center@biologicaldiversity.org>  
A nonprofit regional conservation organization with over 7,500 members, dedicated to protecting biological diversity through science, policy, education, and environmental law. The Center has been a premier endangered species advocate. It has obtained, often by filing lawsuits in the federal courts, ESA protection for 280 species and the designation of over 38 million acres of critical habitat, helping to protect U.S. coasts, oceans, deserts, forests, rivers and grasslands for threatened species.

Center for Marine Conservation, Inc.  
1725 DeSales St., NW, Suite 500  
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(202) 429-5609; Fax: (202) 872-0619