

Endangered Animals

There are many animals on the endangered species list. These animals are considered endangered because they are very likely to become extinct. An animal becomes extinct when there are no more of them left on the earth. Dinosaurs are an example of animal that is extinct. They once roamed the earth, and now all that remains of them is their fossils. Dinosaurs became extinct due to natural causes.

Many animals are now endangered and at risk of becoming extinct because of humans. Pollution, hunting, and the destruction of their habitats are the cause of many animals becoming endangered. The loss of an animal's habitat (home) can be due to the growing human population. More people means more room needed for human homes, buildings, and fields of agriculture (food we grow). The expansion of human habitats is resulting in the destruction of animal habitats.

Pollution is another big reason that many animals are at risk of becoming extinct. Sewage and chemicals from large industrial companies can poison the water. Trash from landfills can blow into animal habitats. Litter can wash off city streets and into lakes and rivers. Once the litter is in the ocean, it will stay there for years. This makes it very likely for an animal living in the ocean to eat harmful plastic or get caught in a trap of garbage.

Hunting is another way some animals are becoming an endangered species. For example, some hunters illegally hunt rhinos for their horns. The hunters will sell the horns, although it is illegal, and they could go to jail for it. Overfishing is another problem for oceans. Humans are taking more fish from the sea than can naturally be produced. Therefore, there are many less fish in the sea today than there were 300 years ago.

It is not too late to save some animals that are endangered from becoming extinct. You can be a part of the problem or a part of the solution.



Check for Understanding

Define the following words:

1. Endangered: _____
_____.

2. Extinct: _____
_____.

3. Habitat: _____
_____.

4. Litter: _____
_____.

5. Illegal: _____
_____.

What are 3 causes of animals at risk of becoming extinct or endangered?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What is an example of an animal that has become extinct?



Brainstorm!
What is one way you could help a species from becoming endangered?

