



## Endangered Species

What makes an animal endangered? Why would we want to prevent the extinction of a species? Explore resources about endangered species and what steps are being taken to conserve and protect wildlife.

### Conversation Questions

1. What challenges do we face in trying to protect species from becoming endangered or extinct?
2. What opportunities do we have to scale human enterprise and change our overall impact on the ecosystem?
3. Family question: Why are species endangered?

### Key Definitions

- *Species* – a class of individuals having common attributes and designated by a common name (from *Merriam-Webster*)
- *Biodiversity* – biological variety in an environment as indicated by numbers of different species of plants and animals (from *Merriam-Webster Word Central*)

### Core Resources

#### Endangered Species Act Overview

<https://goo.gl/uLg2qM>

This page from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service documents how the Endangered Species Act of 1973 was written and passed, how it is administered, and what protections might exist for species.

#### U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Endangered Species Database

<https://goo.gl/eZ5K7w>

This extensive catalog supports searching and identifying plant and animal species endangered in the U.S. and its territories, as well as exploring precautions being taken to prevent extinction.





## Family Resources

### **“Irrawaddy Dolphins: The Smiling Faces of the Mekong” from World Wildlife Foundation (WWF)**

<https://goo.gl/QJYkdu>

The Irrawaddy dolphin population is dwindling, and the WWF is working with local communities to manage fisheries and hydropower developments that affect their habitat.

### **“Fighting Extinction: Researching and Designing Solutions to Protect Endangered Species” by Sara Rust**

<https://goo.gl/fKEsB7>

This flexible lesson plan uses *New York Times* reporting to explore human activity threatening Earth's biodiversity. Includes link to a backyard science activity on species.

### ***Cecil's Pride: The True Story of a Lion King* by Craig Hatkoff**

Youth Little Learners Books – Animals & Nature

This picture book describes Cecil the Lion's rise to power in Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park and his untimely death.

## Explore Further

### **“The Fight over the Most Polarizing Animal in the West” by Elliott Woods**

<https://goo.gl/daKqMC>

The reintroduction of wolves to the Northern Rockies has led to a struggle between conservationists and groups concerned about the wolf's impact on ranching.

### **“The Rhino Hunter” from *Radiolab***

<https://goo.gl/KGuSsQ>

Learn about a professional hunter and the challenges stemming from his quest to hunt the black rhino in Namibia.

### **“Big Data Is Saving This Little Bird” from *Five Thirty Eight***

<https://goo.gl/6mddJS>

This podcast episode explores how data science has been used to track the marbled murrelet in northern California and how those data are used to help protect the species.

The CIVIC LAB at Skokie Public Library offers information and thought-provoking activities to support dialogue and engagement on issues that affect our community.

