


Young Pavement Artists Competition 2009



in aid of the

**Muscular
Dystrophy**
Campaign

These factsheets are designed to help children learn about some specific endangered species. They can also be used to promote discussion about the threats the animals face.

Animal factsheet: Turtle	
Scientific name: Cheloniidae / Dermochelyidae families	
Found: Open water and coastal habitats	
Group: Reptile	
First listed as endangered: 14 th June 1976	

Background:

The leather back turtle can grow more than 2 metres in length. Some turtles, like the box turtle, can pull in all their body parts in to their shell and stay closed for protection. Some turtles go to the bottom of lakes and streams when it gets cold. They also bury themselves in the soil during colder months.

All turtles leave the sea to lay their eggs. The female turtle digs a hole with her back legs and lays her eggs in the hole. After covering the hole and patting it, she goes back to the ocean. The mud mask turtle lays eggs smaller than a chicken's egg.


6 of the 7 species of marine turtles are listed as 'Endangered' or 'Critically Endangered', and the future is looking bad. In the Pacific ocean, leatherback turtles are heading for extinction fast, and in the Mediterranean sea, green turtle numbers have dropped very quickly.


Current threats and problems:


Each year about 150,000 turtles are killed by fishermen.


Marine turtles sometimes lay hundreds of eggs in one nesting season. But only a few young turtles survive their first year of life.


Predators such as crabs, foxes, and birds often kill the baby turtles as they make their way from the nest to the sea, and many more small turtles are taken by fish. When humans steal turtle eggs or disturb nesting beaches, more baby turtles die.


Animal factsheet: Orangutan	
Scientific name: Pongo pygmaeus	
Found: Borneo and Sumatra	
Group: Mammals	
First listed as endangered: Different species between 2 nd June 1970 - 22 nd June 1983	
<p>Background:</p> <p>The orangutan is found in the rainforest on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra and is the only type of ape in Asia. Orangutans have long red hair and long arms. Adults can grow up to 5 feet tall and when fully grown their arms can reach up to 8 feet long, so that they can move through the trees with ease. Males are twice as large as females. Although their arms are long and strong, their legs and feet are short and weak.</p> <p>The name orangutan means 'person of the forest' and they spend most of their time in the treetops of the rainforests. They pass from tree to tree by climbing or swinging. When climbing, orang-utans use all 4 limbs (their arms and legs). On the ground, orang-utans can stand upright but they normally walk with their arms too. At night the females and young males build nests in the trees to sleep in. Males often sleep on the forest floor because they are very heavy.</p> <p>Orangutans like to live on their own. Males only live with female orangutans during mating. Female orangutans usually give birth to 1 baby at a time, and have up to 4 children in total. Mothers provide a lot of care for their young, who remain with them for up to 6 years. Orangutans can live for up to 30 years.</p>	
<p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>Bornean orangutans are classified as highly endangered. There are only 50,000 left and they are disappearing at a rate of 5,000 a year. Dangers to orang-utans include loss of their homes by logging, mining, forest fires and trapping by poachers (people who catch them). Poachers often kill a mother orangutan so they can steal the baby and sell it to the pet trade. Although this species is protected by the law, poaching is still a problem.</p>	


Animal factsheet: Tiger	
Scientific name: Panthera tigris	
Found: Temperate and Tropical Asia	
Group: Mammals	
First listed as endangered: 2 nd June 1970	
<p>Background:</p> <p>The tiger is the largest and heaviest of the cats in the world. Males can reach 8 or 9 feet in length, and the females between 7 and 9 feet. Apart from the white tiger, tigers have brown or black stripes with orange fur.</p> <p>Tigers eat lots of meat including deer, wild boar, wild cattle and even young rhinos and elephants. They are excellent hunters and like to surprise their prey (their food). They use their body size and strength to knock over their prey.</p> <p>Tigers are great swimmers. They can also leap as high as 5 metres, and as far as 10 metres. They prefer to live on their own. The male marks its territory by spraying trees with its urine. Females give birth to 3 or 4 cubs, which stay with their mother for between 18 and 30 months.</p>	
<p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>3 of the 8 species of tigers are already extinct. There are less than 4,500 Indian tigers left in the wild.</p> <p>Tigers are also endangered because of loss of habitat and a shortage of natural prey (food). Other threats include people killing them for their bones and body parts for traditional Chinese medicines and for tourist souvenirs.</p> <p>Tigers nearly became extinct in the 1930s because they were hunted for sport. They are now protected by law and there are many organisations who try to help them.</p>	


Animal factsheet: Ethiopian wolf	
Scientific name: <i>Canis simensis</i>	
Found: Ethiopia	
Group: Mammals	
First listed as endangered: 25 th June 1979	
<p>Background:</p> <p>The Ethiopian wolf has a reddish gold coat and its belly is white. Females are normally lighter in colour. Their legs are long, their teeth are small, and they have long muzzles. Their tails are bushy at the bottom with a black tip.</p> <p>Ethiopian wolves live on open, bushy moorlands where there are plenty of rodents, like the giant mole and grass rats, to hunt. They are territorial and like to hunt alone, but sometimes they hunt together to catch and eat young antelopes, lambs, and hares. When ready to meet others for breeding or to protect their territory they form packs of between 3 and 13. The lead female is the only female that breeds in the pack, and she usually has between 3 and 7 cubs.</p>	
<p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>It is estimated that there are only 500 adult Ethiopians wolves left in the wild.</p> <p>A lot of the wolves' habitat has been damaged by humans building homes and farmland. Farmers also shoot them if they think that they are going to eat their livestock.</p>	

Animal factsheet: Albatross	
Scientific name: Diomedidae	
Found: North Pacific	
Group: Bird	
First listed as endangered: 2 nd June 1970	
<p>Background:</p> <p>The albatross has the longest wingspan of any bird - up to 11 feet, that's the length of 2 men! Albatrosses use their long wingspans to float on the ocean winds and can glide for hours without rest or even flapping their wings. They spend a long time floating on the sea, but this can make them vulnerable to predators in the sea.</p> <p>Albatrosses aren't often seen on land and only gather to breed, when they form large colonies on remote islands. Mating pairs produce a single egg and they take turns caring for it. Young albatrosses can fly from 3 to 10 months old, depending on the species.</p> <p>Albatrosses mainly eat squid or schooling fish, but are familiar to fishermen because they sometimes follow ships in the hope that they can eat leftover fish.</p> <p>They can reach 50 years old.</p>	
<p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>Out of the 21 species of albatross, 19 are facing extinction.</p> <p>Albatrosses used to be hunted for feathers that were used to make women's hats in Europe during the late 19th century. The Laysan albatross was important to the native hunters of the northern seas in the early 1900s for their feathers and to provide them with food. Eskimos also used to eat albatrosses.</p>	

Animal factsheet: Lowland gorilla	
Scientific name: <i>Gorilla</i>	
Found: Central and Western Africa	
Group: Mammals	
First listed as endangered: 2 nd June 1970	
<p>Background:</p> <p>There are about 10,500 lowland gorillas in the tropical forests of western Africa.</p> <p>Gorillas are very heavy, with broad chests, and strong hands and feet. They are able to stand upright, but prefer to move around on their knuckles. Their arms are much longer than their legs. Baby gorilla's ride on their mother's back until they are four years old.</p> <p>Gorillas are mainly active in the morning. They are quiet and very friendly to each other and like to live together in families called 'troops' of up to 20 members. The troops have 1 main male (or silverback) and a few females and their children. In the wild, gorillas are herbivores which means they only eat fruits, plants, leaves, and tree bark.</p> <p>Gorillas can live to about 50 years old.</p>	
<p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>The lowland gorilla has an estimated population of only 50,000 to 100,000.</p> <p>Gorillas are endangered by human activities like cutting down forests, logging and hunting them for food. A small number of gorillas, especially babies, are caught to be sold on and others are killed for use in medicines. There are laws to protect the gorilla but many people ignore them.</p>	

Animal factsheet: Elephant	
Scientific name: Elephas maximus	
Found: South-Central & South eastern Asia	
Group: Mammals	
First listed as endangered: 14 th June 1976	
<p>Background:</p> <p>There are two species of elephant - the African and the Asian.</p> <p>The elephant's strong trunk is used to eat, drink, smell, breathe and bathe. Its tusks (which are really teeth) can grow up to 3 metres long. Most African elephants have tusks, but only some male Asian elephants can grow them. Elephants can live for around 70 years. Groups of elephants are made up of mothers and their young. Males leave the herd and live alone.</p> <p>Asian elephants eat mostly plants. They also eat grass, twigs, bark and leaves and spend up to 18 hours a day looking for food. Because of their huge size and the amount of food they eat, the Asian elephant needs large forest areas to graze and live. Adult males live alone or together in small groups and only have contact with females during the mating season. Males only eat together if they are at the same water hole. Females produce 1 calf (baby) at a time and often have up to 12 calves in total. Calves stay with the mother for about 3 to 4 years.</p>	
<p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>A long time ago African elephants roamed the forests and deserts but now their homes have become a lot smaller. This is because there are more humans now that have built on the land on which they used to live.</p> <p>Many elephants are killed for meat and their tusks. Only 30,000-40,000 wild Asian elephants survive today, mostly in India.</p>	

Animal factsheet: Rhino	
Scientific name: Diceros bicornis	
Found: Sub-saharan Africa	
Group: Mammals	
First listed as endangered: 14 th July 1980	
<p>Background:</p> <p>There are 5 species of rhino and each is endangered even though some are actually increasing in numbers. The Javan, Sumatran and Indian rhino live in Asia; the black and white rhinos live in Africa.</p> <p>The skin of the black rhinoceros is actually grey, not black although its skin may sometimes look black after its daily mud bath. The mud helps them keep insects away and keeps the rhinos cool in hot weather. The black rhino can run up to 35 mph when ready to charge. Rhinos have poor eye sight, but can smell very well. They have 2 horns on their head. This type of rhino can be aggressive when they think they are in danger. The Indian rhino has thick silver-brown skin, the tops of its legs are covered in bumps and it doesn't have much hair. The Indian rhino only has 1 horn but it can reach up to 101 cm long.</p> <p>Rhinos eat mostly leaves, grass and twigs. Males are alone until it is time to breed or when bathing in waterholes with other rhinos. The female gives birth to only 1 calf which stays with her for up to 3 years.</p>	
<p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>It is thought that there are only 18,000 rhinos left.</p> <p>Rhinos are endangered because people kill them for their horns. The horn is used for knife handles and worth a lot of money on illegal markets. It is also considered a symbol of wealth in many countries, and in Asia it is used in medicines.</p> <p>Asian rhinos have also suffered because their rainforest and marshland home has been flattened for humans to build their homes on. The birth rate is also very low.</p>	

Animal factsheet: Malayan Sun Bear	
Scientific name: Helarctos malayanus	
Found: Southeast Asia	
Group: Mammals	
First listed as endangered: 1996	
<p>Background:</p> <p>The sun bear is the smallest member of the bear family. It likes to live alone.</p> <p>The sun bear from Asia has always been rare. It loves honey and has a yellow-orange mark on its chest which legend says looks like the rising sun. They have a short build, small ears, and a short muzzle. Their black coat is short to stop it getting too hot in the tropical weather, but thick enough to provide protection from twigs, branches and rain.</p> <p>Sun bears are nocturnal, which means they sleep during the day and are awake at night. Sun bears are skilful climbers, helped by long claws on all four feet. These long claws - up to 15cm long - allow the bears to dig for honey and grubs, which they lick up using their long tongues. Their diet also includes fruits, insects, small mammals, and birds. Smell is the sun bear's most important sense as their eyesight is not very good.</p> <p>Current threats and problems:</p> <p>The sun bear is endangered because their habitat (home) is being destroyed by humans cutting down forests. People also hunt them for body parts and fur. As natural food sources disappear, sun bears are forced to hunt on farmlands, where they are shot or trapped by angry farmers because they eat crops such as coconuts and bananas. Females are also killed so their cubs can be taken and raised as pets.</p> <p>Parts of bears, like their fat, meat and bones, are also used in some Asian medicines.</p>	