



Endangered Species in Your Classroom

Pre- and Post-Visit Activities

An “endangered” species is a species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A “threatened” species is one that is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.

Teacher Objectives:

Students will know...

1. Examples of endangered species and reasons why they are endangered.
2. Ways they can help conserve and protect endangered species and their habitats.

Pre-Visit Activities:

Who Are They? (Grade 2-8)

Have students choose an endangered animal that they may see at the Denver Zoo (you can download a list of them on the website, www.denverzoo.org/teacher), and research the animal.

- Where is the animal found in the world?
- What other animals depend on the endangered animal? Who eats them, or whom do they eat?
- What are the reasons for the animal’s endangered status?
- What can humans do to help?

Extension: Have students create a poster on why their endangered animal should be saved. They should come up with a slogan or clever ad campaign to be displayed around the school or presented in class.

Standards: Science 3.1 and 5, Reading and Writing 2, 4, and 5

Habitat Earth (Grade K-5)

(adapted from Sea World’s “Got the Whole World in our Hands”)

Materials:

- plastic globe
- deck of “habitat cards” – half will be factors that may prevent the habitat from thriving (*limiting factors*) and the other half will be possible solutions.

Limiting factors/threats to wildlife:

- global warming
- throwing away aluminum, plastic, or paper
- driving short distances
- wasting water
- clearing land for agriculture or development
- cutting trees for fuel
- pollution
- poaching





- over hunting
- human fears

Possible solutions:

- carpool
- use canvas bags at the grocery store
- recycle
- adopt an animal
- support wildlife/nature conservancies
- plant trees
- write to legislators
- conserve water
- be energy efficient in your home
- buy things made out of recycled materials
- don't buy items made from parts of animals like ivory, fur, etc.



Procedure:

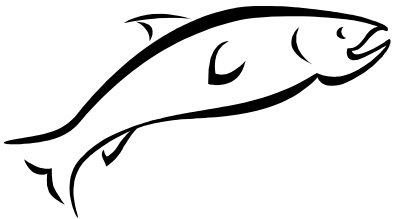
1. The globe should be full of air. Begin by letting some air out of the globe as you give one reason why plant/animals may be threatened or endangered (i.e. global warming).
2. Then pass the globe around to students and have them state something they think causes animals to disappear (this is where the "habitat cards" may come into play). If you don't think your students can come up with enough on their own, allow them to use the cards.
3. As students state limiting factors, have them let air out of the globe.
4. When the globe is empty, ask students if this is the kind of world they want to live in.
5. Now have them go around the circle and name things they think they could do to help endangered animals survive. Again, you may want to use cards to help prompt students.
6. As they name a possible solution, you can blow the globe back up until it's full again. Even though there are many threats to nature, there are things that we can do to help stop extinction.

Standards: Science 3.1 and 5

Post-Visit Activities:

Community Project * (Grade K-12)**

- ❑ ***Adopt an Animal:*** Raise money to adopt an endangered species at the Denver Zoo. Your students can do this by recycling aluminum cans, creating work-of-art birdhouses and selling them, or making pies (biodiversity blueberry, protected peach, or rare raspberry).
- ❑ ***Backyard Habitat:*** Design a garden with native plants that will create a habitat for native animals like rabbits, chipmunks, insects and spiders. You can even design your own birdhouses to add to the





garden. Students will need to research native plants and animals to know what to include. You may also want them to come up with a scale map, plotting out the backyard habitat.

- **Recycle, Reduce, Reuse:** Start a recycling program if your school doesn't already have one.

****The Denver Zoo can provide some guidance through our Community Leadership Project. Please call 303-376-4893 if you need additional information.*

Standards: Science 3.1 and 5, Reading and Writing 5, Math 2, Civics 4.4

Endangered Species Debate (Grade 5-12)

1. Place six endangered species around the room. You can create a poster about the plant/animal with facts, or just use a picture.
2. Tell students they have to decide which species deserves to be saved, and be prepared to defend their answer. Have them go stand under the species they want to support.
3. After everyone has chosen, ask each student why they chose the species they did.
4. Now give them information about the animals/plants you have on the wall and see if any of them change their minds.
5. Explain to them how scientists, lawmakers, and citizens have many different considerations when allocating money for species preservation, such as if it's a keystone species, how much public support it receives, or how likely the efforts are to be successful.

Standards: Science 3.1 and 5, Reading and Writing 5, Civics 4.4

