



TEACHER GUIDE

Endangered Animals at London Zoo

Spring
2024



LONDON ZOO

a ZSL conservation zoo



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide highlights a number of animal species at London Zoo that are either endangered or critically endangered due to human activity.

ENDANGERED

When a species is at risk of disappearing forever.

We recommend that you visit a selection of the animals in this guide and share the information with your students.

While there are many reasons that animals become endangered, we have focused on the following four:

HABITAT LOSS

When an animal's habitat is destroyed or changed in some way that makes it impossible for animals to live in.

ILLEGAL HUNTING

When animals are deliberately killed by humans for food, sport or to sell products like ivory or medicines.

ILLEGAL PET TRADE

When animals are taken from the wild and sold on as pets.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The impact of rising global temperatures, caused by use of fossil fuels, deforestation and agriculture.



1. TINY GIANTS (CORAL REEF)

TOP TIP: TINY GIANTS WORKS BEST AS A ONE-WAY SYSTEM, FOLLOWING THE PATH TO THE RIGHT AS YOU ENTER. THE CORAL REEF IS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BUILDING.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

**ILLEGAL PET
TRADE**

CLIMATE CHANGE

WHO LIVES HERE?

Welcome to our beautiful coral reef, home to many species of fish and coral.



CONFISCATED CORAL

The coral you see here was originally destined for display in private fish tanks, or to be dried and turned into jewellery.

These species were confiscated by the UK Border Force and given a new home here at the zoo.

CORAL AND THE CLIMATE

Coral are sensitive to changes in ocean temperature, and can die if the ocean stays too hot for a long time.

ZSL scientists have been monitoring coral in the Chagos Archipelago to study the impact of high temperature events on coral reefs, and the subsequent impact of climate change.



2. ASIATIC LIONS

Endangered. About 350 individuals in wild.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

HABITAT LOSS

ILLEGAL HUNTING



FIND THE FACTS!

Land of the Lions recreates the feel of a village in the Gir Forest, India. The best way to learn about our lions is by engaging with the immersive signage throughout the habitat.

Look closely - even the 'advertisements' have secret lion facts! Can your students spot them?

HELPING LIONS

ZSL works with partners in India to protect Asiatic Lions.

Head up the ramp to the top to find the rapid response hut, and see for yourself how conservationists work to protect Asiatic lions.





3. WESTERN LOWLAND GORILLAS

Critically Endangered.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

HABITAT LOSS

ILLEGAL HUNTING



HOW MANY ARE IN THE WILD?

Western Lowlands Gorillas live in some of the most remote rainforest habitats, so it's hard to estimate their numbers. However, we do know their numbers are in decline.



POACHING PROBLEMS

Gorillas are hunted for food (also known as the bushmeat trade). Gorilla meat has been found in London markets. They are also hunted for sport, and as souvenir trophies.

GUARD THE GORILLAS – RECYCLE YOUR PHONE

Deforestation of rainforest habitat for coltan is a major threat to gorillas. Coltan is a material used in mobile phones and laptops. Rainforest habitat is destroyed to make space for coltan mines, which affects gorillas and many other rainforest species.

You can help gorillas by recycling your old electronics, and buying new phones less often.



4. SUMATRAN TIGERS

Critically Endangered. Less than 600 in the wild.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

HABITAT LOSS

ILLEGAL HUNTING



WHO LIVES HERE?

Sumatran tigers are the most endangered subspecies of tiger. In the wild, they're found on the Indonesian island of Sumatra.

PALM OIL PROBLEMS

Sumatran tigers are affected by deforestation for palm oil plantations, and illegal hunting for their skins and body parts.



HELPING TIGERS

ZSL works with the WILDCATS Conservation Alliance to create safe habitats for tigers and prevent illegal hunting.

You can help tigers by choosing to purchase products that use sustainable palm oil.

Look for the RSPO logo on products you buy.





5. WHITE-CHEEKED GIBBONS

Critically Endangered. Number unknown but decreasing.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

ILLEGAL HUNTING

**ILLEGAL PET
TRADE**



WHO LIVES HERE?

Our father and son duo, Jimmy and Yoda.

JIMMY'S STORY

Jimmy was born in the wild but was sadly taken from his home to be sold as a pet. Thankfully he was rescued and given a home here at London Zoo.

Many gibbons just like Jimmy are taken to be sold as pets, or killed and turned into food or traditional medicines.

HELPING THE HAINANS

ZSL works with Chinese conservationists and scientists to protect Hainan Gibbons, a critically endangered gibbon species in China with only 35 individuals left in the wild.

An important part of our work is bringing together experts from China and other countries. It takes a global effort to save critically endangered species like the Hainan Gibbons.



6. RAINFOREST LIFE

TOP TIP: ASK OUR FRIENDLY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE RAINFOREST TO TELL YOU MORE ABOUT THE ANIMALS!

DISCUSSION POINTS

HABITAT LOSS

WHO LIVES HERE?

Rainforest Life has a variety of different animals sharing the same space. There are three endangered species to look out for:

**GOLDEN-HEADED
LION TAMARIN**



Endangered

**RODRIGUES
FRUIT BAT**



**Endangered
(Population increasing)**

**GOLDEN
LION TAMARIN**



Endangered



6. RAINFOREST LIFE (continued)

DEFORESTATION

The biggest threat to our rainforest animals is deforestation. Trees are often cut down to make space for cattle farms, palm oil plantations, and other human activities.

To learn more about the issues affecting the rainforest and how you can help, encourage your students to find the items below.

RAINFOREST SCAVENGER HUNT



Find the statistics on how quickly the rainforest is being cut down.



Find the camera trap. What is it and how does it help rainforest animals?



Find the big board that shows ways you can help the rainforest.



7. PYGMY HIPPO

Endangered. Less than 2,500 wild mature individuals.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

HABITAT LOSS

ILLEGAL HUNTING



WHO LIVES HERE?

Pygmy hippos are an endangered species of hippopotamus, and are much smaller in size than the common hippopotamus. In the wild, they live in the forests of West Africa.

NO HOME FOR HIPPOS

Logging, mining and other human activities have damaged the pygmy hippo's forest home.

It's also put them into closer contact with people, putting them at greater risk of being hunted.

HOW MANY HIPPOS?

Counting endangered animals is a tricky business, and the current estimate of pygmy hippo numbers is from a survey in 1993!

This is why Pygmy hippos are part of ZSL's Edge of Existence programme, which highlights and works to protect the most unique, extraordinary and overlooked species on the planet.

You can help pygmy hippos by telling more people about them!



8. RETICULATED GIRAFFE

Endangered. Estimated 15,000 individuals.

TOP TIP: IF YOU CAN'T SEE THE GIRAFFES OUTSIDE, FOLLOW THE PATH AROUND TO THEIR INSIDE DEN.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

HABITAT LOSS

ILLEGAL HUNTING



WHO LIVES HERE?

There are a mix of giraffe subspecies in our giraffe habitat. Nuru, the youngest giraffe, is an endangered reticulated giraffe.

15,000 GIRAFFES? SOUNDS LIKE A LOT!

Between 1987 and 2017, the number of these giraffes has halved.

While the reason for this hasn't yet been fully investigated, the decline is most likely due to habitat loss and illegal hunting.

BREEDING PROGRAMME

Nuru is at London Zoo as part of a European breeding programme. One of the roles of zoos in conservation is to keep a healthy population of endangered species in case the species ever go extinct in the wild.



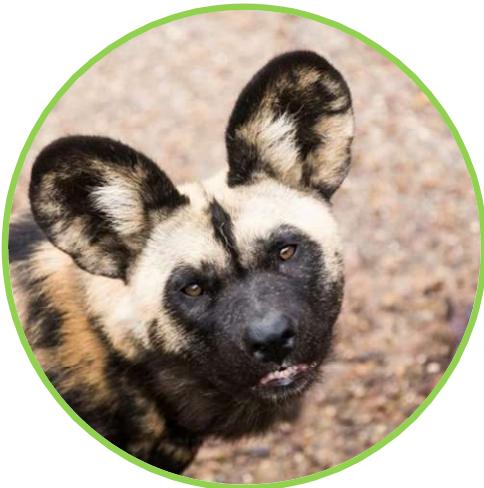
9. AFRICAN WILD DOGS

Endangered. About 1,400 mature individuals in wild.

**DISCUSSION
POINTS**

HABITAT LOSS

CLIMATE CHANGE



HABITAT

Wild dogs used to live across much of sub-Saharan Africa, but their habitat has been fragmented by human settlements and farms.

While they still live in open plains and sparse woodlands, they can now only be found in small numbers in southern African.

HOT DOGS

Wild dogs are well adapted to living in high temperatures, but rising global temperatures are having an impact.

ZSL scientists measured the activity levels of wild dogs in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Botswana. They found that wild dogs became less active as temperatures rose, hunting less overall. With less food to go around, sadly this has led to a drop in the number of pups surviving to adulthood.



10. OKAPI

Endangered. Exact numbers unknown, but decreasing.

DISCUSSION POINTS

HABITAT LOSS



WHO LIVES HERE?

The shy, stripy-legged okapi are the only living relative of the giraffe.

In the wild, they are only found in the dense tropical rainforests of the Democratic Republic of Congo in Central Africa.

OKAPI OBSTACLES

Okapi numbers have dropped dramatically in recent years due to deforestation and illegal mining in the rainforest, amongst other issues.

OKAPI POO GIVES US A CLUE

Okapi are very shy and hard to find, so how do we count them? Looking for okapi poo helps scientists to guess how many live in the forest, and how the population is changing over time.

Okapis are now part of ZSL's Edge of Existence programme, which highlights and works to protect the most unique, extraordinary and overlooked species on the planet.

You can help the okapi by telling more people about them!



FURTHER INFORMATION

If you or your students would like to learn more about the animals and conservation projects mentioned in this guide, you can use our quick links to the ZSL website below.

1	Coral reefs (Tiny Giants)	Tiny Giants London Zoo
		Climate change impact on coral reefs ZSL
2	Asiatic Lions	Asiatic lions London Zoo
		Asiatic lion conservation ZSL
3	Western Lowland Gorillas	Western lowland gorilla London Zoo
		The soundscape of conservation ZSL
4	Sumatran tigers	Sumatran tigers London Zoo
		WildCats Conservation Alliance ZSL
5	Gibbons	Northern white-cheeked gibbon London Zoo
		Hainan Gibbon Conservation ZSL



FURTHER INFORMATION

6	Rainforest Life	Rainforest Life London Zoo
		Sustainable palm oil ZSL
7	Pygmy Hippo	Pygmy hippo London Zoo
		Pygmy Hippo Conservation ZSL EDGE
8	Giraffes	Giraffe London Zoo
		London Zoo conservation breeding London Zoo
9	Wild dogs	African wild dog London Zoo
		Climate change impact on wild dog mortality ZSL
10	Okapi	Okapi London Zoo
		EDGE of Existence Evolutionarily Distinct & Globally Endangered