



# Endangered Species at the Denver Zoo

## Field Trip Guide

Your most important duty is to keep students with you at all times

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.

Possible reasons for endangered/threatened status...

- Habitat destruction/human encroachment (agriculture, logging, mining, commercial development, overpopulation, etc.)
- Poaching (over-hunting for meat, fur or recreation)
- Pollution
- Introduced species (animals and plants)
- Disease

### Chaperone Objectives:

1. To keep students engaged and learning in a safe environment!!!
2. To help students explore endangered species at the Denver Zoo, and discover why they are endangered.
3. Teach students what humans can do to help conserve and protect the earth’s endangered species.

### Structuring Your Zoo Experience:

- You can visit any area of the Zoo to find endangered species. Here are some examples of animals you may want to visit. Make sure to read the signage at these exhibits.
- **Tropical Discovery** (closest to School Entrance)  
Explore and find:
  - Signs entitled “Caring through Conservation” to see how humans can help conserve
  - Madagascar rainbow and killie fishes (located in the mangrove swamp exhibit) – Endangered due to pollution
  - Komodo dragon (located in the Dragons of Komodo exhibit) – Endangered due to overpopulation of humans
  - “Frogs: Disappearing Treasures” exhibit – Threatened by disease, acid rain, loss of wetlands, and UV radiation. Their skin is like a sponge that soaks up pollution.
- **North American Animals**  
Explore and find:
  - River otter (located in Northern Shores) – Once practically extinct due to development and pollution.
  - Bison (located in North American Wildlife) – No longer exists in wild herds due to overhunting and human encroachment.

Encourage students to learn by observing

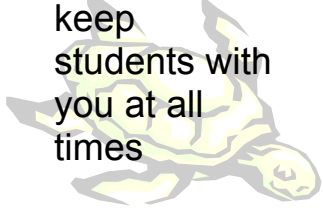


Ask questions to keep students involved



- **Felines**

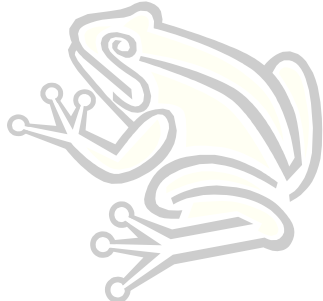
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Explore and find:

- ❑ Amur tiger – Endangered due to poaching. Have students read the SSP (Species Survival Plan) signage. Look for the logo on other endangered species signs around the Zoo.
- ❑ Snow leopard – Endangered due to over-hunting for pelts.

*Interesting fact:* It takes 12 snow leopard pelts to make one fur coat.

▪ **Pachyderms Building**

Explore and find:

- ❑ Asian elephant – Endangered due to habitat loss and poaching for their ivory tusks.
- ❑ Black rhinoceros – Rhinos are poached for their horns, which are used for many medicinal purposes.
- ❑ Malayan tapir – Endangered due to habitat loss.

▪ **Primate Panorama**

*Interesting fact:* 1/3 of all primate species and subspecies are listed as endangered.

Explore and find: (follow path to the right, first entering Emerald Forest)

- ❑ Ring-tailed lemur, red-ruffed lemur, and red-bellied lemur (in Emerald Forest building) – Endangered due to overpopulation of humans.
- ❑ Golden lion tamarin – endangered due to tourist development. Read about the successful reintroduction program in Brazil.
- ❑ Sumatran orangutan and western lowland gorilla (in Great Apes building) – Endangered due to logging, bushmeat, and pet trade. Have students read the signs about conservation.
- ❑ Mandrill – Have students read signage about the bush meat crisis and write a note about how it makes them feel.

**Regroup Discussion Questions...**

- ❑ Ask students what they think was the most common reason for animals being endangered.
- ❑ Why is it important to protect endangered species?
- ❑ Why is it important to protect habitat?
- ❑ What are some of the things they can do to help conserve endangered species right here at home?
  - Recycle
  - Carpool
  - Don't buy ivory, fur coats, or any other products made from animals
  - Travel to other countries to see wildlife/support locals - ecotourism
  - Write letters to legislators showing support for local wildlife and the importance of conserving wild places.
  - Educate friends/family on animals that are endangered, why they are endangered, and what kinds of things people can do to protect them.