

10 things you can do to stop extinctions

By TDG Community

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From the Endangered Species Coalition:

1. *Learn about endangered species in your area.*

2. *Visit a national wildlife refuge, park, zoo, or other open space.*

3. *Provide a habitat for wildlife by planting native vegetation in your yard.*

- The spread of non-native species has greatly impacted native populations around the world.

Invasive species compete with native species for resources and habitat. They can even prey on native species directly, forcing native species toward extinction.

4. *Minimize use of herbicides and pesticides.*

- Pesticides may keep yards looking nice, but they are in fact hazardous pollutants that affect wildlife at many levels. Many herbicides and pesticides take a long time to degrade, and build up in the soils or throughout the food chain. Some groups of animals such as amphibians are particularly vulnerable to these chemical pollutants and suffer greatly as a result of the high levels of herbicides and pesticides in their habitat.

5. *Recycle.*

- Buy recycled paper and Forest Stewardship Council wood products to protect forest species.
- Recycle your cell phones, because a mineral used in cell phones and other electronics is mined in gorilla habitat.

6. *Place decals on windows to deter bird collisions.*

- Millions of birds die every year because of collisions with windows. You can help reduce the number of collisions simply by placing decals on the windows in your home and office.

7. *Slow down when driving.*

- Many native animals have to live in developed areas and this means they must navigate a landscape full of human hazards. One of the biggest obstacles to wildlife living in developed areas is that created by roads. Roads divide habitat and present a constant hazard to any animal attempting to cross from one side to the other. So when you're out and about, slow down and keep an eye out for wildlife.

8. *Avoid supporting the market in illegal wildlife including tortoiseshell, ivory, and coral.*

- Overseas trips can be exciting and fun, and everyone wants a souvenir. But sometimes the souvenirs are made from species nearing extinction. Avoid supporting the market in illegal wildlife, including tortoiseshell, ivory, and coral. Also, be careful of products including fur from tigers, polar bears, sea otters, and other endangered wildlife; crocodile skin; live monkeys or apes; most live birds including parrots, macaws, cockatoos, and finches; some live snakes, turtles, and lizards; some orchids, cacti, and cycads; and medicinal products made from rhinos, tiger, or Asiatic black bear.

9. *Report any harassment or shooting of threatened and endangered species to your local state or federal wildlife enforcement office.*

- Harassing wildlife is cruel and illegal. Shooting, trapping, or forcing a threatened or endangered animal into captivity is also illegal and can lead to their extinction. Don't participate in this activity, and report it as soon as you see it.

10. *Protect wildlife habitat.*

- Perhaps the greatest threat that faces many species is the widespread destruction of habitat. Deforestation, farming, overgrazing and development all result in irreversible changes such as soil compaction, erosion, desertification, or the alteration of local climatic conditions. Such land use practices vastly alter or even eliminate wildlife habitat.

- In area where rare species are present, habitat destruction can quickly force a species to extinction.
- By protecting habitat, entire communities of animals can be protected together, and when communities are kept intact, less conservation intervention is required to ensure species survival. Parks, reserves, and other protected lands are now all too often the only habitats that are left untouched by habitat destruction.

- Support wildlife habitat and open space protection in your community. When you are buying a house, consider your impact on wildlife habitat.

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