Endangered Species: Why We Need to Protect Them

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Is there anything more exciting than seeing an observing wild animals? Whether it be in the zoo or in the wild, there is something inspiring about meeting our animal friends. But much of the wildlife we know and love is becoming endangered thanks to human-related activities such as poaching (killing animals illegally) and deforestation (cutting down trees). Air pollution and the colony collapse of bees, where too many worker bees leave the hive, are slowly destroying our plant life.

As the most intelligent species on Earth, humans have a responsibility to protect endangered animals and plants. It is important that we protect the planet because when plants and animals become endangered, so do we.

Here are four reasons why it is important to protect endangered species.

**Healthy Ecosystems**

An ecosystem includes all of the living things (plants, animals, and organisms) in a given area interacting with each other and non-living things (weather, earth, sun, soil, climate, and atmosphere). Did you know that plan and animal species are the foundation of a healthy ecosystem? Each species that is lot leads to the loss of other species within its ecosystem. Humans depend on healthy ecosystems for clean air, water, and land. Without the plants and animals to keep our ecosystems balanced and healthy, we are risking our own health.

**Medical Research**

Over 50% of the 150 most used medicines come from plants or natural products. Yet only 5% of know plant species have been tested for medicinal uses. If we continue cutting down rainforests and polluting our environment we will never know what cures might be found out there.

**Tourism**

Natural areas in the United States and wildlife activities like zoos and woodland hikes are huge tourist attractions. Our economies benefit from people traveling to participate in these nature-related activities.

**Sustainable Agriculture**

Farmers are the original conservationists (people who protect our land). Farmers set aside portions of their land to protect the environment and work with organizations that help to restore habitats for endangered species. Remember, plants and animals work together to make an ecosystem healthy. In other words, protecting endangered wildlife includes protecting our plants, which in turn protects our food…you know…what we need to survive.

**How You Can Help**

There are many things out of our control that affect populations of plants and animals. We must educate ourselves on how to do a better job at taking care of Earth. While one person may not be able to stop deforestation and land development, there are many things we can do to protect endangered species. For instance, we can learn what species are endangered in our region and tell others, volunteer at parks or wildlife refuges, and recycle to protect plants and animals.

It is our responsibility to take care of our planet and the living things in it.