

Conservation in Action

Week 32 — Wednesday | How We Protect Nature

Reading Time

Even though many animals are endangered, there is good news! People around the world — including scientists, governments, and ordinary citizens like you — are working hard to protect nature, and it IS working. Conservation isn't just about stopping bad things from happening; it's about actively helping nature heal and recover.

One way we protect animals is by creating **protected areas** like national parks, wildlife refuges, and marine reserves. In these places, hunting is strictly limited, and habitats are kept safe so animals can live and reproduce without human disturbance. The **mountain gorilla** population has actually increased from fewer than 700 in the 1980s to over 1,000 today, thanks to protected parks in Africa! Another successful project is the **bald eagle** — once endangered because of pesticide pollution, it made a huge comeback and was officially removed from the endangered species list in 2007.

Captive breeding programs help endangered species survive. Scientists breed animals in zoos and specialized sanctuaries to increase their numbers, then release them back into the wild. The **California condor** was brought back from the brink of extinction (only 22 were left in 1982!) through a captive breeding program, and today there are over 500 living! The **black-footed ferret** and the **Peregrine falcon** are other amazing success stories.

What can YOU do to help? You might think you're too young to make a difference, but your choices matter every single day! Here are simple actions: **Reduce** (use less water, turn off lights, don't waste food), **Reuse** (use reusable bags and bottles instead of plastic), and **Recycle** (put paper, plastic, and glass in the recycling bin). Planting native trees and flowers gives animals food and shelter. Picking up trash in your neighborhood keeps it out of waterways. Learning about nature and sharing what you know inspires others to care too!

Reading Questions

1. What are some ways humans protect animals and their habitats?

2. Name one conservation success story mentioned in the reading.

3. What is a captive breeding program and why is it useful?

4. List three things YOU can do right now to help protect animals and the environment.

Vocabulary Grid

 **Protected Area**

 **Captive Breeding**

 **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**

 **Population Recovery**

 **Native Species**

 **Sanctuary**



Conservation Success Stories

Fill in the chart with what you read (or research one more!)

Animal	Threat They Faced	How We Helped Them	Current Status
Bald Eagle			
California Condor			
Mountain Gorilla			



The 3 R's of Conservation

Sort each action into Reduce, Reuse, or Recycle. Some actions might fit more than one!

Action	Reduce	Reuse	Recycle
Turning off the faucet while brushing teeth			
Using a reusable water bottle			
Putting old newspapers in the recycling bin			
Buying a shirt made from recycled plastic bottles			
Taking shorter showers			
Using a jar to store pencils instead of a plastic case			
Turning off lights when leaving a room			
Giving old toys to a friend instead of throwing them away			



Design a Conservation Poster

Choose an endangered animal and design a poster to raise awareness about it. Include the animal's name, why it's endangered, and one thing people can do to help.

Mini-Project: Create Your Own Wildlife Habitat

Ask an adult to help you set up a small habitat in your yard or on a windowsill to attract local wildlife!

Choose your project:

 **Bird Feeder:** Hang a feeder with birdseed. Put a small bowl of water nearby. Keep a notebook and count how many different types of birds visit each day.

 **Pollinator Garden:** Plant native flowers (like sunflowers, coneflowers, or milkweed) in a pot or yard patch. Watch which insects visit the flowers.

 **Small Animal Shelter:** Build a simple brush pile (sticks and leaves) in a corner of your yard for lizards, frogs, and insects to hide in.

My Project: _____

I chose this because: _____

I hope to attract: _____

Draw your project and the animals you hope to see:



Think About It

If you could solve ONE environmental problem right now (like plastic pollution or deforestation), which one would you pick and how would you fix it?
