

Endangered Species Coalition Top Ten Report Teachers' Guide

Introduction:

The Endangered Species Coalition produces our annual Top Ten Reports to highlight essential issues facing endangered species, share successful recovery efforts for key animals and plants, and bring attention to broad environmental concerns. We view these reports as springboards to engage student learning about the rich diversity of the natural world. Importantly, the reports provide suggestions for student participation in efforts toward species preservation. We provide actionable tools that can be used by teachers and other educators to encourage students to express their voices in support of endangered species.

We invite K-12 classroom teachers and other educators to inspire student learning with valuable information, images, and maps that are included in our Top Ten Reports. Here are suggestions for using one or many of the reports as powerful tools for understanding and acting in support of endangered species in your classroom and beyond.

Top Ten Reports In Your Classroom

- **Read** one or more of the Top Ten reports individually or in small groups. Students can record and present key themes of the reports to the class, highlighting facts about endangered animal or plant species. As a group, students can share and discuss ideas for taking action now to help these species.
 - **Learn** essential information about species survival by reading one or more Top Ten report. Students can develop a list of criteria needed by all endangered species, such as habitat, food sources, access to water, and more. With this information, students can then identify common threads across species and consider ways we can better advocate for these requirements and help species survive.
 - **Use** the supplemental materials and resources listed below the Top Ten reports to increase student knowledge about endangered species diversity. Present a slide show and facilitate a class discussion using images and maps from the reports. Students can also use these links independently to research, write about, or create a presentation featuring the remarkable qualities, importance, and value of endangered animals and plants.
 - **Write** about the challenges facing endangered animals and plants, and share your concerns by sending letters to local or national elected officials. Students can research key subjects within the Top Ten reports, using this information to communicate with decision makers and advocate for solutions that support endangered species.
 - **Find** common themes within the Top Ten reports demonstrating how large-scale environmental issues affect endangered species. These problems may include climate change, water resource challenges, or habitat loss. Use this information to jumpstart research and discussion around these concerns and as a resource for ways to address these challenges.
- Inspire** students to become advocates for environmental issues within their own communities. What actions are shown by the reports to be effective tools for discussion and change making? What educational choices and careers are directly informed and impacted by the issues addressed in these reports? What actions expressed in the reports can empower and inspire students to

become endangered species allies? Students can create a report or presentation sharing their findings with the class or to the community at large.

Extended Learning – In and Beyond the Classroom

-Go on a field trip to a local area where it is possible observe one or more of the species featured in the report studied. This could include a nature center, wildlife reserve or other outdoor space. After your visit, students can write to local news publications and elected representatives about what they observed, sharing ideas and raising awareness for ways we can protect these species. An adaptable template for letters can be found at:

<http://www.endangered.org/campaigns/endangered-species-day/toolkit/>

-Participate in habitat restoration efforts for species native to the region in which you live. Join in an existing project at a nature center or wildlife reserve or create new habitat through a project that will take place in your community or at your school. You can locate or create projects in your community, specifically related to Endangered Species Day (May 19th, 2017) at:

<http://www.endangered.org/campaigns/endangered-species-day/>

-Invite guest speakers to your class from local environmental organizations or government agencies to speak on subjects addressed by the reports. Before your guest visits, have students learn about the species or issue that will be discussed so that they can ask great questions or advocate for conservation policies after the presentation.

Learning Activities for Specific Top Ten Reports

You'll find examples of the Top Ten Reports at www.endangered.org

Top 10 Species Priorities for a New Administration (2016) Discover critical conservation issues faced by extraordinary animal and plant species and use this report to advocate for their protection. Each page includes *A Note to the President* describing political actions that support the survival of unique endangered species. This information can be used by students and educators to contact government agencies and officials to voice support for policies and actions that reinforce conservation. The report also connects highlighted species to other imperiled plants and animals under the *Facing the Same Threats* text box on each page. Students can use these connections to develop a broad understanding of the complexity and diversity of ecosystems, how the same problems affect multiple species, and how conservation strategies can help a broad spectrum of animals and plants.

No Room to Roam (2015)

Learn about wildlife corridors in your state or region. Are there currently corridors that allow wildlife passage, and if not, where would these be beneficial? Students can write a report about species *in need of safe corridors, describing why and how these passageways help animals. They can create maps that show areas where corridors are needed. These reports and images can be shared with local and national decision-makers to raise awareness of these issues.

Vanishing (2014)

In 2015, the Endangered Species Coalition created a K-12 standards based curriculum, the Missing Species Report, based on the *Vanishing* report and campaign. These free, downloadable lessons

incorporate environmental science, writing, and visual art and allow students to advocate for endangered species. Students can research and write a report about one or more of the ten species featured in this project. They can illustrate an educational poster, designed to look like a missing pet poster, of the animal or plant they investigated. The posters and reports can be shared with elected officials or presented within your school or a community space.

Download the Missing Species Reports curriculum and view additional project resources:

<http://www.endangered.org/msr-educator-letter-and-curriculum/>

Back from the Brink (2013)

Read about conservation success stories and the effective measures taken to support imperiled species. How did scientists determine the best strategies to protect these animals and plants, and what actions were taken to implement their research? Why were these successful? Are there other species in your area or from another Top Ten Report that you think might benefit from dam removal, reduced speed on roadways, preservation of an, or other key examples? Write a report or create a presentation for your class that shares your plan and inspires concrete actions.