



## Get Ready for the Endangered Species Day 2026 Chalk Art Contest!

*Engage Your Students in Wildlife Education and Action for Threatened and Endangered Species in Your Community!*

**Audience:** Primary and Secondary Education Institutions

**This activity can be used for a class, club, small group, or independent student project.**



**Subjects:** biology, natural science, environmental science, art, language arts

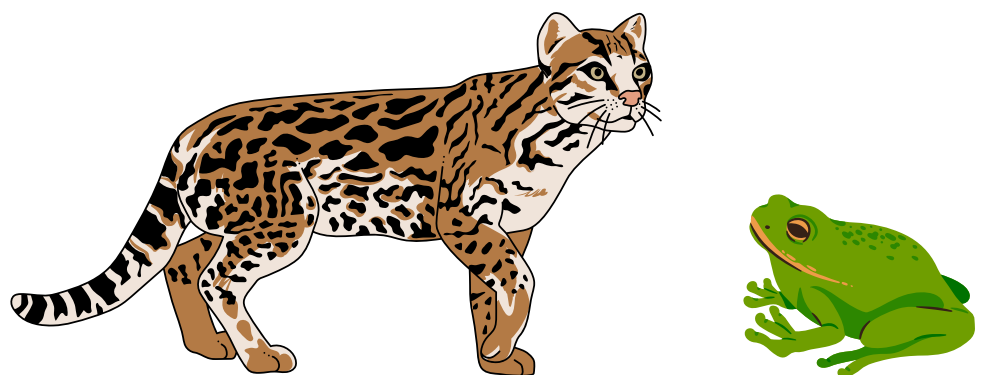
### Key learning progression across grade bands:

- Early grades (pre-K–2): Build basic understanding of plants, animals, habitats, and simple conservation actions (reduce impact on land, recycle, etc.).
- Elementary school (3–5): Explore how adaptations, behaviors, biodiversity, and resource use affect survival and why species become endangered.
- Middle school: Analyze ecosystem dynamics, why biodiversity is a metric of health, human impacts such as habitat loss and pollution, and evaluate conservation strategies.
- High school: Design or assess real solutions to protect biodiversity and mitigate human impacts on endangered species.

Overall, as students engage with these aligned NGSS standards, they will progress from building awareness to developing explanations, deepening understanding, and finally to communicating their knowledge through the Endangered Species Chalk Art Event. Learning will focus on how human activities impact species survival and biodiversity, and how science can be applied to protect ecosystems, with threatened and endangered species serving as subjects. See Next Generation Science Standards correlation information.

### Competencies and Skills:

- Research
- Creative writing
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Communication





### Materials:

- Access to the Internet and/or a library
- Paper (to sketch out the chalk art)
- Crayons or markers
- Chalk

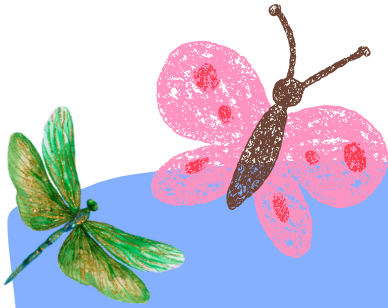
### Activity Steps:

- 1. Students will explore and learn about which species (plant and animal) are threatened and endangered in their community.** Here are a few helpful resources:
  - [State Wildlife Action Plans](#) (features species of concern in each state; Tribal-listed endangered species are often included in state wildlife action plans)
  - [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Endangered Species List](#) (species protected under the Endangered Species Act)
  - International Union for the Conservation of Nature's ([IUCN](#)) [Red List](#) (If students would like to explore internationally threatened and endangered species, they can use the IUCN Red List database of vulnerable and endangered species globally)
- 2. Students will choose a plant or animal species to focus their chalk art on. Chalk art projects can be done by individual students, a small group, or a class.**
- 3. Once the species is chosen, students will conduct research (either online or in the library) to learn more about their species.** Students are encouraged to learn about their plant or animal's habitat, diet, and behavior (if it's an animal), what threats it might be facing (e.g., habitat loss, pollution, etc.), and other interesting facts. Here are a few helpful resources:
  - [NWF's Wildlife Guide](#)
  - [U.S. Fish and Wildlife](#) (species search)
  - [IUCN Red List](#) (global species search)
- 4. Students will discuss ways to help the plant or animal that they have chosen and come up with a short message, call to action, or a fun slogan to add to their chalk art to help others learn and/or take action to help.** Here are a few examples:
  - Celebrate endangered species day
  - Keep trash out of the environment
  - Use reusable water bottles





5. **Students will design their chalk art first on paper using pencils, crayons, or markers.** Students can use the hard copy design for guidance when they draw their art on the sidewalk, sport court, or other outdoor smooth surface.
6. **Students will draw their chalk art to raise awareness for endangered species in their community or across the country (or around the world)! Endangered Species Day is on May 15, however, the time frame for the chalk art contest is May 1 – 18, 2026.** Students can draw their art and enter the contest between those dates. If rain is in the forecast, and rescheduling is not an option, teachers are encouraged to have their students draw their art on easel sheets or poster board and hang them up in the school in a visible place.



**Learn more about the**  
**Endangered Species Day Chalk Art Contest.**

**Tips for a Successful Chalk Art Event**

- Identify a good place for your chalk art and ensure you have permission to use this space.
- Check the weather and have a backup plan if rain is in the forecast.
- Take a lot of pictures of your chalk art.
- Don't forget to submit your photos to enter the Endangered Species Day Chalk Art Contest; submissions are due by May 18, 2026. All art should be drawn between May 1–18, 2026.

