

We lose things every day...



Like mittens, shoes, toys or glasses. These are things we may find again, and if not, we can replace them. But we are in danger of losing animals, plants and insects that we can't replace. **EVER.**

That is because some species are threatened with extinction. Right now, in Canada, there are 368 species (excluding extinct) that, without our help, could disappear forever. Twelve species are already extinct – gone forever. Sixteen more are no longer found in the wild in Canada, but survive elsewhere. Wildlife species need special places to live, called habitat. When we destroy or change habitat, we put species in danger because they may no longer have a place to live. Growing cities, pollution, alien species, illegal hunting, and development activities like mining, forestry and intensive agriculture can all change or destroy habitat if we're not careful. It's not too late, though. Canadians are helping to save many species, including the Whooping Crane, Peregrine Falcon, Wood Bison and Swift Fox.

Here are some examples of species at risk that are found in a variety of habitats in Canada.

We need to work toward saving species, so you, your family and friends can enjoy them, now and in the future. They're our responsibility.

Harbour Seal (Lacs de la Grande Rivière)

Status: Vulnerable
Habitat: Freshwater lakes east of Quebec

Little is known about this rare seal group of lakes in northern Quebec. Only two seal subspecies in the world live year round. Because only about 100 seals live in the area, scientists worry that a natural disaster, such as the building of a hydroelectric dam, could lead to extinction.



Vancouver Island Marmot

Status: Endangered
Habitat: Subalpine meadow on Vancouver Island

This marmot is one of the rarest mammals in the world and is found only on Vancouver Island. There are fewer than 70 Vancouver Island Marmots left. Marmots occupy subalpine meadow habitat and live in burrows where they hibernate for seven months of the year. Adults are about the size of a large house cat, with thick brown fur and a white muzzle. Clearcut logging has reduced survival, altered natural movement patterns and made these marmots more vulnerable to predators and disease. Scientists believe that recovery is possible because of the availability of natural undisturbed habitat.

Black-footed Ferret

Status: Extirpated (no longer found in the wild in Canada)
Habitat: Prairie grasslands

These weasel-like carnivores used to be common on the prairies. They are the only ferrets native to North America, and were believed to be extinct until a small group was found in the United States in 1981. The Black-footed Ferret almost disappeared because farmers poisoned the Prairie Dog, the ferret's food source, to protect their crops. Ferrets are being raised in captivity in Canada and the United States, and are being reintroduced in the United States.



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Pitcher's Thistle

Status: Endangered
Habitat: Sand dunes

This tough but pretty plant, which is the official flower of Scotland, grows along the beaches of the Great Lakes. The plant is important as a nectar source for many insects. Many people accidentally trample on the plant, not realizing it's so rare. White-tailed deer often snack on the leaves and small, pink flowers of the Pitcher's Thistle, reducing its production of seeds.



Harlequin Duck (Eastern population)

Status: Special concern
Habitat: Fast running waters and coastal marine environments in Eastern Canada

The mouse-like squeak of Harlequin ducks – sometimes called “sea mice” or “squeakers” – used to be common along both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts in winter. While there are still many on the Pacific coast, fewer than 2000 ducks remain in Eastern Canada. Oil spills, damming of fast-running streams where they breed, and illegal hunting continue to threaten the Harlequin duck in danger of disappearing.



Monarch Butterfly

Status: Vulnerable
Habitat: Places with milkweed/grassland

In summer, you can find Monarchs in all provinces, but by fall they begin heading south. Millions migrate to Mexico and California, where they spend winters in small areas that are subject to habitat loss. Protection of the Monarch has become an international effort. In Canada, important migration stopover areas are already protected.

Blue Racer Snake

Status: Endangered
Habitat: Southern Ontario prairies

In Canada, you'll find this speedy snake only on Southern Ontario's Pelee Island. The Racer is one of the world's fastest snakes, and may grow as long as two metres. The Racer is not poisonous. It kills its prey by nabbing and swallowing it whole. About 200 Blue Racer Snakes remain in Canada and are threatened by human disturbances like cottage building. Some snakes are also killed on purpose.



Nooksack Dace

Status: Endangered
Habitat: Fast moving creeks

This hand-sized fish is left over from the last ice age. In Canada, you'll find it only in the fast moving waters of four streams in British Columbia's Fraser Valley. Scientists believe it's disappearing because of water pollution and construction as Vancouver's suburbs expand.



TRIVIA QUIZ

- Why do Monarch Butterflies fly south for the winter?
 - To find food
 - To escape the cold
 - Changing wind patterns
- Which bird has been saved from extinction in Canada (so far)?
 - The Labrador Duck
 - The Passenger Pigeon
 - The Peregrine Falcon
- In which province can the Vancouver Island Marmot be found?
 - British Columbia
 - Vancouver Island
 - Alberta
- What is the biggest threat to wildlife?
 - Cars
 - Loss of habitat
 - Pollution
- How many species of wildlife are currently known to be at risk in Canada (excluding extinct)?
 - 1581
 - 37
 - 368
- How many animals are left if a species is extinct?
 - Less than 50 in the world
 - None in Canada
 - None at all
- What is the Nooksack Dace?
 - A fish
 - A famous West Coast hiking trail
 - A river from the ice age
- The Pitcher's Thistle is the official flower of:
 - The Great Lakes
 - Major League baseball
 - Scotland
- Why are wetlands important?
 - Swimming and boating
 - Hydroelectricity
 - Their biodiversity
- Which of the following form part of an ecosystem?
 - Animals
 - Plants
 - Rocks
 - All of the above
- On which ocean is the Harlequin Duck still plentiful?
 - Atlantic
 - Pacific
 - Arctic
- What does extirpated mean?
 - Gone from the Canadian wild
 - Upset
 - Found in Canada only during warm months

How do you catch a squirrel?
Climb a tree and act like a nut

Complete the puzzle below using the



Answers:

"When the earth is sick, the animals will begin to disappear..."

- Chief Seattle

Answers:

SPECIES AT RISK IN CANADA (2001)

Status	Birds	Mammals (Terrestrial and Marine)	Reptiles	Amphibians	Fishes	Molluscs	Lepidopterans (Butterflies & Moths)	Vascular Plants	Lichens & Mosses	TOTALS
Extinct	3	2	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	12
Extirpated	2	4	2	0	2	1	3	2	0	16
Endangered	20	15	5	4	10	7	3	49	2	115
Threatened	6	13	6	3	18	1	2	33	0	82
Vulnerable	23	25	8	9	40	1	2	44	3	155
TOTALS	54	59	21	16	76	11	10	128	5	380*

*This number includes the twelve species that are already extinct.

Clues provided:

Across

1. Rare west coast mammal
2. A species of special _____ is sensitive to human activity
3. A meat eater
4. Natural home of a plant or animal
5. A species likely to become endangered if no action is taken
6. Short for "biological diversity"
7. What geese and Monarch butterflies do each fall
8. Fraser Valley stream swimmer
9. Animals, plants or micro-organisms that are similar and are able to reproduce
10. Marsh, bog, swamp, etc.
11. This animal roams the Prairies

Down

1. Colourful butterfly that migrates to Mexico
2. When this happens, a species is gone forever
3. Pelee Island snake
4. At risk of becoming extinct
5. A species that is no longer found in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere
6. Wild animals or plants
7. This Harlequin is also known as a "sea mouse"

What do porcupines put on their beds?
quilts

"We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."

- Native American saying

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Do not disturb animals or collect plants in the wild – it may increase their vulnerability to predators and interfere with their feeding and reproduction.
- Use non-toxic products to eliminate pests in your garden – harmful pesticides can eventually affect other animals, including endangered species.
- Create wildlife habitat in your backyard or schoolyard: build bird feeders by recycling old containers; provide water for wildlife by building a drip pool; build nesting boxes for birds, or provide nesting materials; plant a butterfly garden.
- Read and learn how human actions can affect wildlife, and how people can help protect endangered species.
- Contact your local office of the Canadian Wildlife Service, or call **1-800-668-6767** for more information about these and other species.
- Check out the Endangered Species in Canada page on Environment Canada's WWW site, the Green Lane, at <http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/sara>

What do cats put in their drinks to keep them cold?
Mice cubes

GLOSSARY

Biodiversity	This means the variety of life on earth and it is short for <i>biological diversity</i> .
Ecosystem	All the living and non-living things in a certain area including air, soil, water, animals and humans. A lake is an example of an aquatic ecosystem.
Endangered	When a population of plants or animals is so small, it's at risk of becoming extinct.
Extinct	If this happens, a species is gone forever.
Extirpated	A species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but is found elsewhere (in another country, or a zoo, for example).
Habitat	The natural home of a plant or animal.
Migrate	When animals travel to a different area because of temperature changes or to find food. For example, geese and Monarch butterflies migrate every fall and spring.
Pesticides	Substances used for destroying pests such as insects.
Species	Animals, plants or micro-organisms that are so similar that they are able to have offspring.
Sustainable use	Use a natural resource in a responsible way, so it will be available in the future. For example, ensuring that new trees grow in areas where older ones have been cut down.
Threatened	A species likely to become endangered, if we do not take steps to protect it soon.
Special Concern (Vulnerable)	A species of special concern when it is especially sensitive to human activity or natural events.
Wetlands	Places where land and water meet or where the ground is wet for most or all of the year. Some examples include marshes, swamps and bogs.
Wildlife	Animals or plants not domesticated or cultivated by humans.

SPECIES AND THEIR HABITAT

Following the example given, match these species to their habitat (the place where they live):

Monarch Butterfly
Black-Footed Ferret
Harlequin Duck
Pitcher's Thistle
Nooksack Dace
Harbour Seal
Vancouver Island Marmot
Blue Racer Snake

Fast moving creeks
Subalpine meadow on Vancouver Island
Southern Ontario prairies
Fast moving streams and rivers
Places with milkweed/grass land
Sand dunes
Prairie grasslands
Freshwater lakes east of Hudson Bay

Monarch Butterfly: Places with milkweed/grassland
Black-Footed Ferret: Prairie grasslands
Harlequin Duck: Fast moving streams and rivers
Pitcher's Thistle: Sand dunes
Nooksack Dace: Fast moving creeks
Harbour Seal: Freshwater lakes east of Hudson Bay
Vancouver Island Marmot: Alpine tundras on Vancouver Island
Blue Racer Snake: Southern Ontario prairies

Answers: