

# Habitat Destruction

**Cross-Curricular Focus: Life Science**



Humans are the leading cause of plants and animals becoming endangered or extinct. An endangered species has so few members that the species may die out. Unless something is done to protect an endangered species, they will be gone forever. We will not have any more of that kind of plant or animal on Earth.

The most dangerous thing humans do to endangered animals is **destroy** their habitats. This is usually because we do not pay very close attention. When there is an area of land we want to use, we don't notice what is already living there.

Thousands of acres of tropical **forest**, or rainforest, have been destroyed by humans. People wanted the land and lumber for building projects. Countless plants and animals have been lost in this one habitat alone. Many of the organisms that live in the tropical rainforest do not live anywhere else. We are just beginning to discover medicines and other resources there. We risk losing that knowledge if more species die out.

Most of us don't live near a tropical rainforest. However, that does not mean we are far away from habitat destruction. When a town expands, more houses and businesses are built. The town pushes the local wildlife farther from its natural habitat. **Wetlands** and **grasslands** are unique habitats that are especially at risk. Thankfully, people are more aware of the problem. This is the first step toward protecting habitats.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) Why are so many plants and animals endangered?

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2) What do we risk losing in addition to plants and animals if we continue to destroy rainforests?

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3) What happens when towns want to expand onto more land?

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4) What kinds of habitat are especially at risk?

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5) How can we help prevent more habitat destruction?

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Name: **Key** \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

**Actual answers may vary.**

1) Why are so many plants and animals endangered?

**They lose their habitats.**

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2) What do we risk losing in addition to plants and animals if we continue to destroy rainforests?

**medicines and resources**

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3) What happens when towns want to expand onto more land?

**Expansion pushes wildlife farther from its habitat.**

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4) What kinds of habitat are especially at risk?

**Wetlands and grasslands**

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5) How can we help prevent more habitat destruction?

**Be aware of how human actions impact nature.**

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