

Endangered Animals at a Glance

Back to the Wild

Not all the news is bad about endangered animals. In the United States, dozens of endangered animals have been making a comeback. Here are a few of them:

Gray Wolf: By the 1970s, the gray wolf had all but vanished from Yellowstone National Park. In 1995 and 1996, federal biologists brought 66 wolves from Canada and set them free in the wilderness areas of the park and central Idaho. Today, about 285 gray wolves live in central Idaho, and 271 more roam Yellowstone.

Bald Eagle: Before Europeans came to North America, the sky was teeming with bald eagles. As settlers moved west, they destroyed the eagles' natural habitat. Egg collectors and pesticides almost wiped out the bald eagle population.

However, about 30 years ago the federal government passed laws to protect the eagles. Today, more than 7,678 pairs of bald eagles live in the lower United States.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Grizzly Bear.

Reading Passage

Grizzly Bear: In the 1800s, an estimated 50,000 grizzly bears roamed the West. Today, the bears are making a comeback in several Western areas, including Yellowstone Park.

Can Zoos Help Save Endangered Animals?

Emi is a crowd-pleasing Sumatran rhinoceros at the Cincinnati Zoo. Why is she so popular? In 2004, Emi gave birth to Suci, a healthy, wide-eyed female calf.



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Sumatran rhinoceros.

Although most visitors to the zoo enjoy gazing at Emi and Suci, scientists are happy for another reason. Suci's arrival brings scientists a step closer to pulling the Sumatran rhinoceros back from the edge of extinction.

As the populations of wild animals dwindle, conservationists are hoping that they can breed animals in zoos and later release them into the wild.

Scientists have reintroduced at least 19 species to the wild from captivity. For example, by 1985 only nine wild California condors were living in that state. Biologists captured all nine and began a captive breeding program. As of July 2005, the number of condors increased to 280, with more than 120 living in the wild.