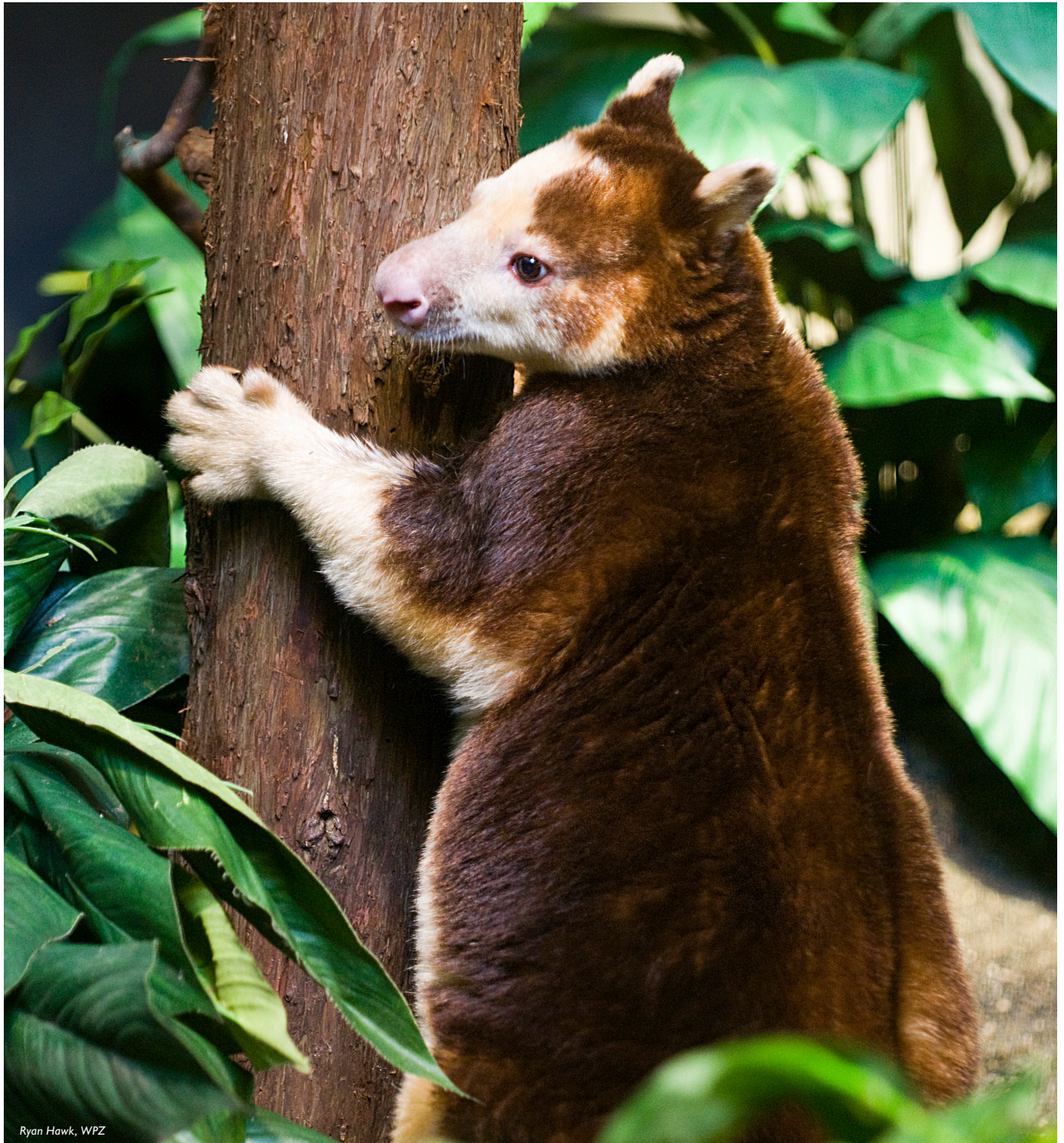




TEACHER PACKET

ENDANGERED SPECIES



Ryan Hawk, WPZ



ENDANGERED SPECIES

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Recommended for grades 5–12

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Dear Teacher,

The extinction of species has always been an integral part of the ever-changing natural world. However, the current rate of extinction of plants and animals has increased to an alarming rate not seen in a naturally balanced system. Now, more than ever, every effort should be made to bring new awareness to this vital issue. Zoos are in the unique position of being able to contribute to the conservation of endangered species through careful study of behavior of captive animals, captive breeding, support of conservation in natural settings and education. With increasing awareness of endangered species, people also come to appreciate all of the earth's wildlife and the habitats on which they depend. Armed with this awareness, we can all help to prevent more species and habitats from becoming endangered.

Using the information provided in this packet, you can help your students to learn about endangered plants, animals, habitats and cultures; endangered species legislation; the significance of the loss of biodiversity; the main causes of endangerment; and how the efforts of zoos, conservation organizations and individuals can help prevent species from going extinct. Woodland Park Zoo hopes to promote an increased appreciation for wildlife and an understanding of the global problems that threaten so many species. There are many ways in which individuals and groups, such as classrooms, can contribute to the conservation of endangered species. With the appreciation and understanding gained through the study of endangered species, we hope that your students will be inspired to take part in conservation efforts.

Due to the complexity of the issues and the nature of the subject matter related to endangered species, this packet has been designed for use with students in grades 5 through 12. For younger students, it is also important to inspire an appreciation of plants, animals and their habitats. As they mature, students will be motivated by this appreciation to increase their understanding of wildlife and conservation. Much of the background information and activities in this packet are adaptable for use in grades K through 4 and we have included a few activities specifically aimed at these grades. We leave it up to the teacher's assessment, in light of the students' interests and capabilities, as to whether this topic is appropriate for the younger grades.

The information and activities in this packet have been designed for use before, during and after a visit to Woodland Park Zoo for a self-guided tour or to participate in a program on endangered species. However, if you are unable to visit the zoo, the majority of the information and activities can also be covered in the classroom and/or outdoor settings apart from the zoo. Background information about endangered species at Woodland Park Zoo, in Washington state, and around the world has been included to assist you in planning a study unit with your students. The activities in this packet have been developed for use with different grade levels, to reach multiple disciplines and learning styles, and to tie in with Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements and Environmental and Sustainability Education standards.

Please see the Education section of the zoo's website (www.zoo.org) for more information or to register for a self-guided visit or a school program at the zoo.

Sincerely,

Woodland Park Zoo
Education Department

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This packet was developed by Katie Remine and Margaret White in 1998-1999 and was revised in 2006 by Jenny Mears in Woodland Park Zoo's Education Department. Additional assistance and classroom-testing of activities in this packet were provided by Rob Viens and Woodland Park Zoo's Teacher Advisory Council.