



ENDANGERED WILDLIFE AROUND THE WORLD

Classifying animal species

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organisation. Since 1964, it has regularly published the 'IUCN Red List of Threatened Species', which is a worldwide standard for conservation status listing. Species are classified by the IUCN Red List into groups which are determined using certain criteria.

The standard classification of threatened or endangered species includes:

- Vulnerable (high risk of endangerment in the wild)
- Endangered (high risk of extinction in the wild)
- Critically Endangered (extremely high risk of extinction in the wild).

In Australia, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) describes lists of threatened species, ecological communities and threatening processes. The categories used in the EPBC Act are similar to the ones used in the IUCN Red List. State and territory governments sometimes have different classifying systems too.



Southern Corroboree Frog



Snow Leopard



Asian Elephant



Western Lowland Gorilla



Western Swamp Tortoise



Orange-bellied Parrot



Northern Quoll



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What's happening in Australia?

Unfortunately, Australia ranks in the top ten countries for threatened or endangered species (including plants), with 909 species labelled as Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable. This means Australia has a very high proportion of threatened animals. It also has one of the worst extinction records in the world.

According to the IUCN, only three countries have lost more animal species than Australia. Thirty-five per cent of all global mammal extinctions since the year 1500 have been Australian (30 out of 84 worldwide extinctions). This is the highest loss of mammal species anywhere in the world. Australia has lost 29 mammals since European settlement, with feral predators thought to be the cause of 28 out of 29 Australian mammal extinctions.

