

KID DEFENDERS

**WILD
ANIMALS**
That Need Our
HELP

Things to think about and do





About Defenders of Wildlife

Defenders of Wildlife is a national, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the protection of all native wild animals and plants in their natural communities.

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We—people, plants and animals—depend on each other. We need the same things. We need clean and safe water to drink, air to breathe, food to eat and places to live. Wild plants and animals play a big part in giving us these things. Trees and plants help filter our air so we can breathe. Earth worms help make the rich soil we need to grow crops. Birds eat insects that can damage crops and carry disease.

But no one plays a bigger part in keeping our world clean and healthy than we humans. It's up to us not to destroy the places where wild plants and animals live to build shopping malls, roads and houses. It's up to us to make the everyday choices that can make a difference, like recycling and using gas, water and other resources wisely. It's up to us to choose leaders who will defend and strengthen the laws we have to protect wildlife and wild places.

Defenders of Wildlife is proud to have almost 1 million members and supporters. Together we are doing our part to save our Earth. We are fighting to protect our nation's animals and plants. We are working to keep our planet healthy.

In this booklet, you'll learn a little about how plants and animals need each other and us. You'll find out what YOU can do to help wildlife right now. You'll get the facts about some of the animals Defenders is fighting for that really need our help. You'll see what they look like and get to color pictures of them. And you'll get to test what you know about our vanishing wildlife with word games created especially for Kid Defenders—beginner and advanced.



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The Web of Life

The world is full of living things. They come in all different shapes, sizes and colors and live in all kinds of places like forests, oceans, deserts and in your own backyard. The place where a plant or animal lives is called its habitat. In healthy habitat, a plant or animal has everything it needs to survive.

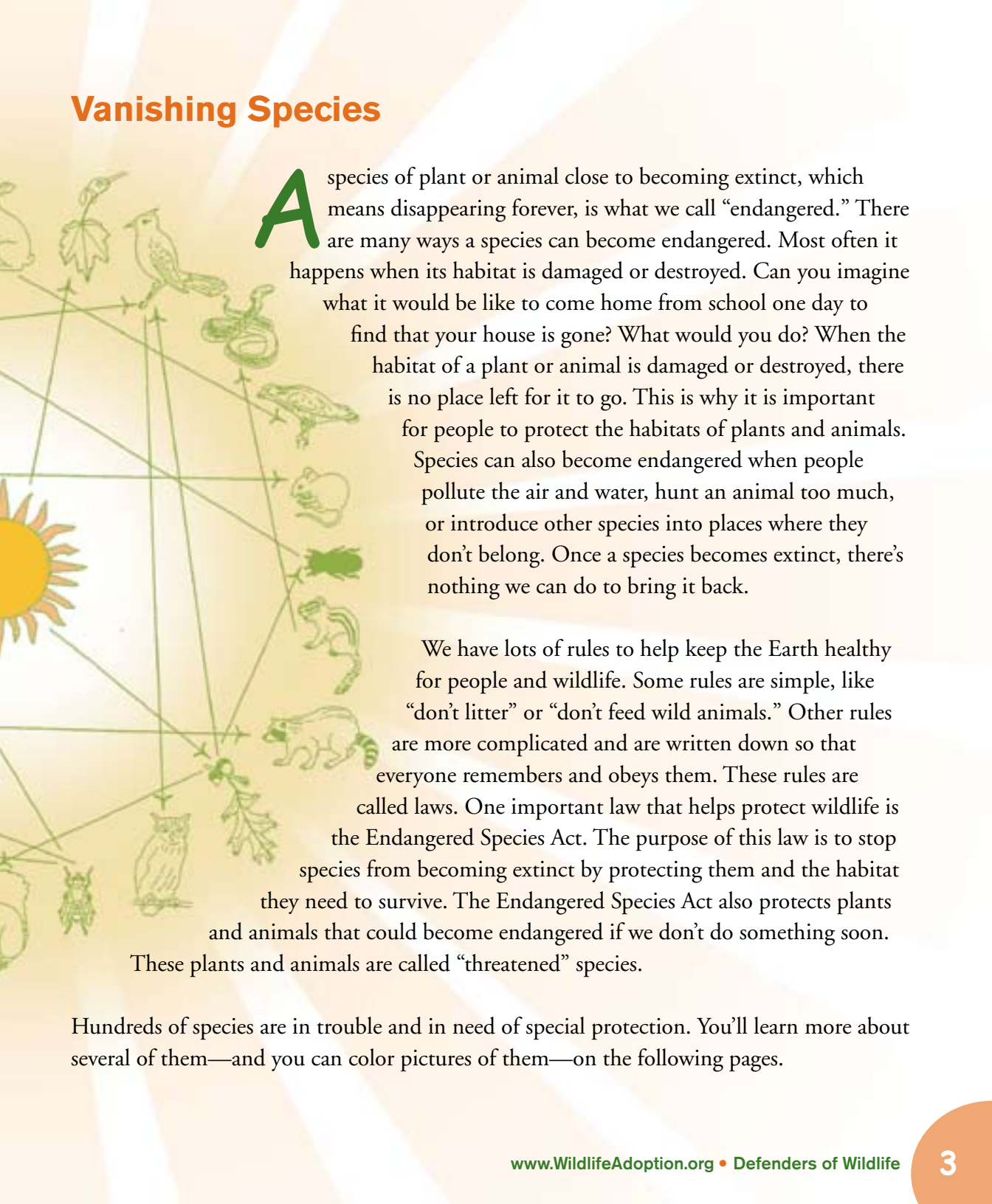
To understand all the different kinds of living things, scientists group them according to how alike they are. Individuals that have the most in common are called species. African lions, gray wolves, humpback whales and humans are all species of animals. Scientists think there are somewhere between 3 million and 30 million different species of plants and animals on Earth.

Although living things may look different from one another and live in different places, we need many of the same things to survive. We need food, water, air, sunlight and shelter. And we need each other! Wild plants and animals depend on one another like you depend on your parents, brothers, sisters, teachers and friends. Just as you play a role in your family and in your school, each and every living thing plays a role in the world around it. We form what is called the web of life. In this web all living things are connected and work together to survive.

The wide variety of plants, animals and habitats help keep the Earth and the web of life strong and healthy. The connections among the living things that form the web are like the links in a chain. When one link is broken, it affects the whole chain. When we lose one species, many other species may be harmed—or lost—as well.



Vanishing Species



A species of plant or animal close to becoming extinct, which means disappearing forever, is what we call “endangered.” There are many ways a species can become endangered. Most often it happens when its habitat is damaged or destroyed. Can you imagine what it would be like to come home from school one day to find that your house is gone? What would you do? When the habitat of a plant or animal is damaged or destroyed, there is no place left for it to go. This is why it is important for people to protect the habitats of plants and animals. Species can also become endangered when people pollute the air and water, hunt an animal too much, or introduce other species into places where they don’t belong. Once a species becomes extinct, there’s nothing we can do to bring it back.

We have lots of rules to help keep the Earth healthy for people and wildlife. Some rules are simple, like “don’t litter” or “don’t feed wild animals.” Other rules are more complicated and are written down so that everyone remembers and obeys them. These rules are called laws. One important law that helps protect wildlife is the Endangered Species Act. The purpose of this law is to stop species from becoming extinct by protecting them and the habitat they need to survive. The Endangered Species Act also protects plants and animals that could become endangered if we don’t do something soon. These plants and animals are called “threatened” species.

Hundreds of species are in trouble and in need of special protection. You’ll learn more about several of them—and you can color pictures of them—on the following pages.

What **you** can do to protect wildlife

- **Think of yourself as part of the web of life.** Remember that everything you do has an effect on dolphins, wolves, polar bears, jaguars, sea otters and other wildlife.
- **Draw or color a picture of your favorite wild animal.** Send your drawing to our lawmakers. Include a message telling them to help protect your animal. Ask your family and friends to write letters about the wildlife they care about, too.
- **Learn more about endangered and threatened species.** Find out about plants and animals that need special protection in your state. Ask your teacher if you can share what you find out with your classmates.
- **Provide food and shelter in your backyard for wildlife.** Plant a native tree or bush with seeds, fruit and berries birds like, or build and hang a birdhouse.



Defenders has a Web site full of facts, fun and games just for you. Check it out and pass the word to your teachers—there's stuff for them, too.

www.kidsplanet.org

- **Ask your parents not to use weed or bug sprays** in your yard or garden. They can be very harmful to wildlife.

- **Don't buy or keep wild animals.**

This includes anything from frogs and turtles to exotic birds.

- **Reduce, reuse and recycle!** The choices you make every day affect plants and animals. By saving water, turning off lights and recycling bottles, cans and paper, you are helping to protect the world and the species that live in it.

- **Visit a state or national park or local nature center.** Talk to the rangers who work there. Ask them what the park is doing to help protect endangered and threatened species and other animals. See if there's anything you can do to help. While you're there, look for and follow all the rules posted to protect these special places.

- **Join Defenders of Wildlife!** Encourage your parents, teachers and friends to become members of Defenders of Wildlife or to adopt a favorite animal today through Defenders' Wildlife Adoption Center. Visit www.defenders.org for more information.





Dolphins

Dolphins are mammals. They breathe through a blowhole on the top of their heads. Dolphins are known for their intelligence and for the acrobatics and playful behavior that make them fun to watch. Many species of dolphins will leap out of the water or spy-hop (rise straight up out of the water to look around). They even do flips. These clever animals often coordinate their movements with one another. At least 33 species of dolphins are found in the world's oceans. They live in social groups of as many as several hundred. It's much easier to hunt for food together in a group.

Habitat and Range: Tropical and temperate oceans throughout the world. Three species live in rivers.

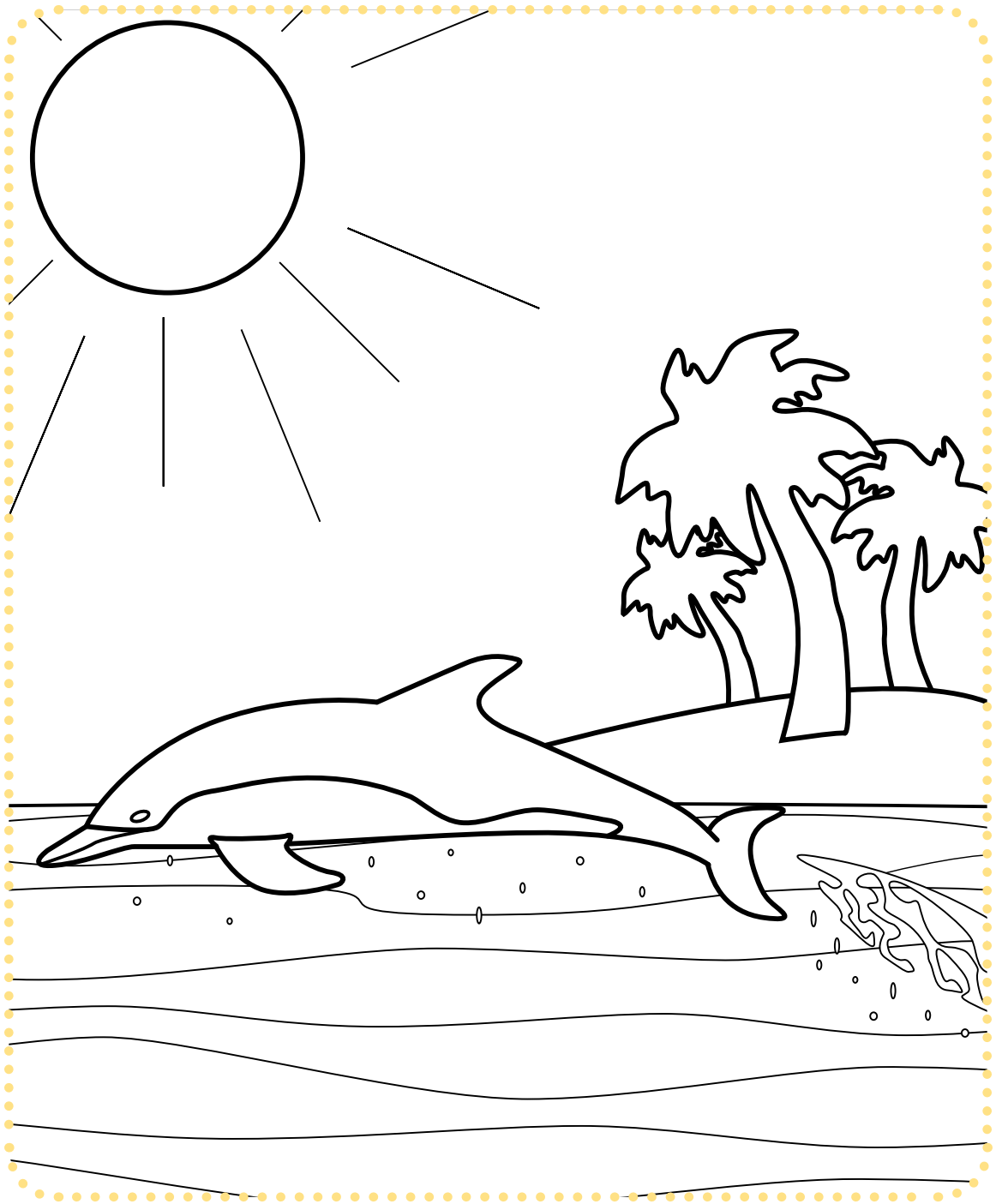
Threats: Marine pollution, habitat degradation, harvesting, entanglement in fishing gear, boat traffic and sonar (sound pulses sent through water by equipment used to navigate, communicate or locate objects underwater).

Fun Facts

Some dolphins can hold their breath for up to 15 minutes.

Some dolphins can swim as fast as 30 mph.

To learn more and hear what dolphins sound like, visit www.defenders.org/animals.





Gray Wolf

The wolf is the largest member of the dog family. Gray wolves are not necessarily gray. They can be brown, black or white, too. They live, travel and hunt in packs of four to seven animals. Members of the pack develop close relationships with one another. They may even sacrifice themselves to protect other family members. Each pack can have a territory of several hundred square miles. Packs hunt together and eat large animals such as elk, deer, moose and caribou. They also eat beavers, rabbits and other smaller animals. Gray wolves were once common throughout all of North America. Unfortunately, people who did not want them around shot and poisoned them. By the mid-1930s they were gone from most areas. Today, wolves are making a comeback in the Great Lakes, northern Rockies and southwestern United States. There are about 7,000 to 11,200 wolves in Alaska and more than 5,000 in the lower 48 states. In 1995, biologists reintroduced wolves in Yellowstone National Park. The park is now one of the best places in the world to see and hear wild wolves.

Habitat and Range: Woods and forests in Canada, Alaska, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Threats: People and loss of habitat

Fun Facts

Wolves don't howl at the moon, but they do howl more when it's lighter outside as it tends to be when the moon is full.

Wolves do very little chewing. They typically tear off chunks of meat and swallow them whole.

To learn more, see photos and video and hear what wolves sound like, visit www.defenders.org/animals.



Jaguar



The jaguar is the largest cat in the Western Hemisphere. The biggest males can weigh up to 400 pounds! The jaguar is often confused with another large cat, the leopard. The two look very similar. Both are yellow and orange with black markings. You can tell them apart by looking at the detail in their markings. Both have black, flower-like markings called “rosettes,” but jaguars have spots inside their rosettes, leopards don’t. There are less than 300 jaguars left in the world—fewer than 100 of them in the United States.

Habitat and Range: Jaguars live in tropical rainforests and wet grasslands in the southwestern United States and in Central and South America.

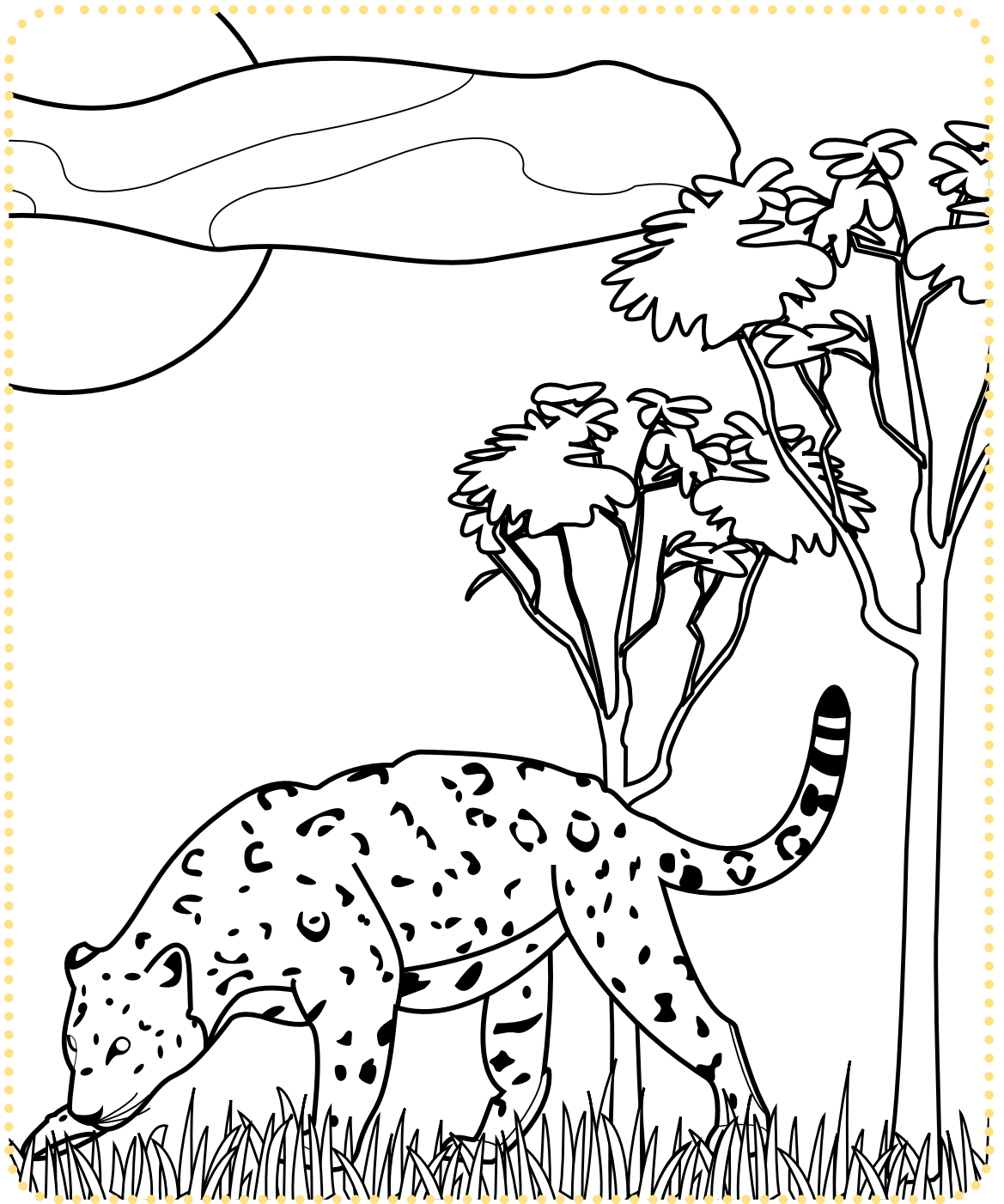
Threats: Loss of habitat due to logging and other human activities that destroy forests, over-hunting and competition with people for food as its habitat disappears.

To learn more and hear what jaguars sound like, visit www.defenders.org/animals.

Fun Facts:

Jaguars are excellent tree climbers.

Jaguars love to swim!



Polar Bear



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Polar bears are the largest land-dwelling, meat-eating animal (carnivore) in the world. They can be eight to 10 feet tall and weigh as much as 1,700 pounds. The white or yellowish fur of the polar bear blends well with its snowy Arctic habitat. Polar bears can swim well, but spend most of their time on the the edges of the ice near the water. There they hunt for food such as seals, walruses and birds. They also feed on dead animals they find and on seaweed. Their fur is thicker than that of any other kind of bear. It even covers their feet for added warmth and for better footing on the ice. They also have a thick layer of blubber to keep them warm and buoyant in the chilly waters. There are between 20,000 and 25,000 polar bears in the world.

Habitat and Range: Icy coastal areas throughout the Arctic in Alaska, Canada, Russia, Greenland and Norway.

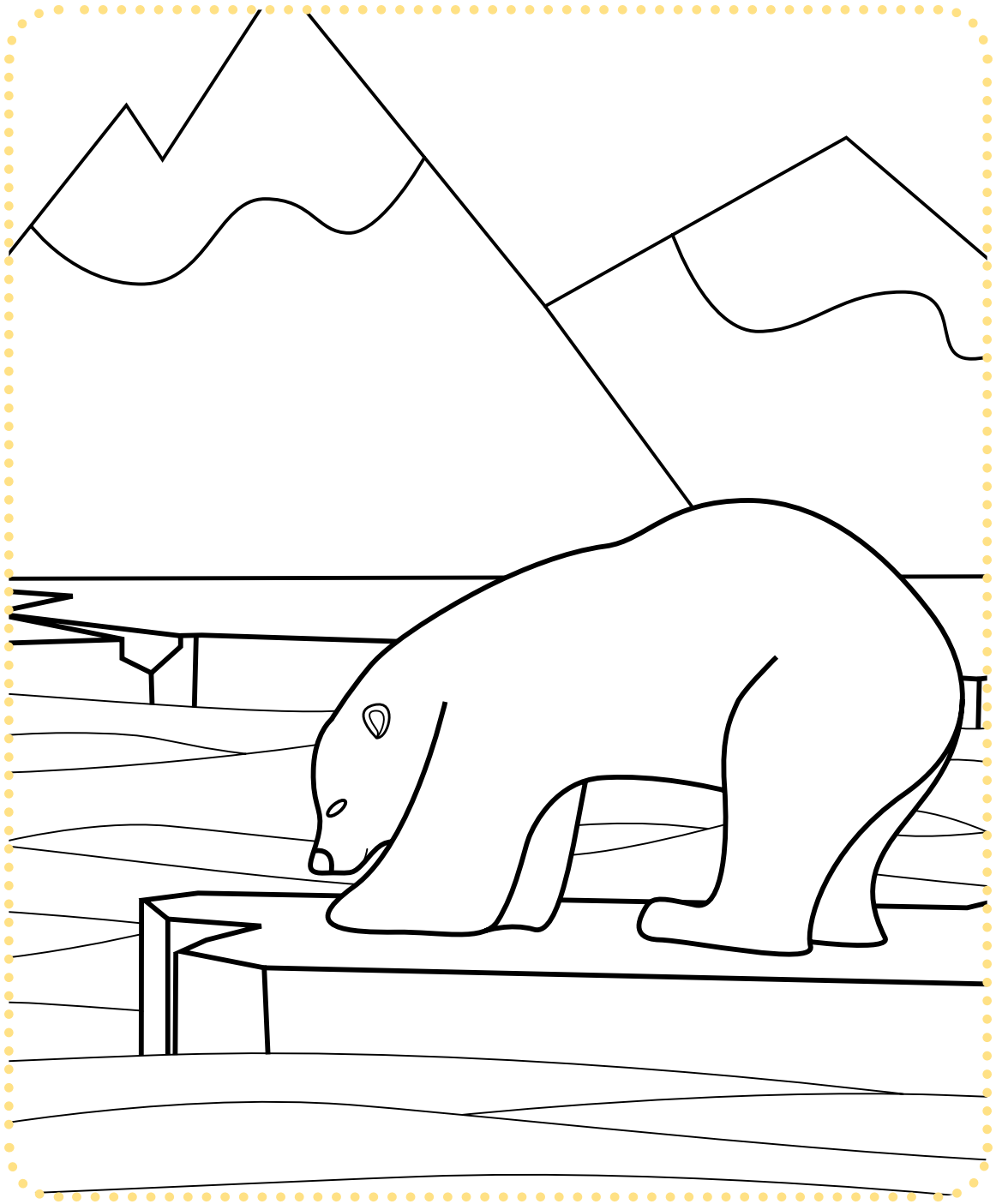
Threats: Loss of sea-ice hunting grounds to global warming, oil drilling in their Arctic habitat and trophy hunters who shoot them.

Fun Facts

Polar bears can swim long distances—more than 50 miles from land or sea-ice, according to some reports.

Under their white fur, polar bears have black skin. Their noses and lips are also black.

To learn more, see video and hear what polar bears sound like, visit www.defenders.org/animals.



Sea Otter



The sea otter is the largest member of the animal family that includes ferrets and weasels. It's the second smallest of the marine mammals, the group to which whales and dolphins also belong. Unlike other marine mammals, sea otters do not have a layer of fat to help keep them warm. Instead, they have the thickest fur in the animal kingdom. Their fur has up to a million hairs per square inch! Sea otters are also one of the only mammals known to use tools. They use small rocks or other objects to pry shellfish from rocks and to hammer them open. Their diet includes sea urchins, abalone, mussels, clams, crabs and snails. They eat about a quarter of their weight in food each day. Once there were about a million sea otters. Thanks to the fur trade, only about 1,000 to 2,000 were left by the early 1900s. Today, there are about 2,750 southern sea otters off the coast of California. There are between 64,600 and 77,300 northern sea otters in Alaska, Canada and Washington.

Habitat and Range: Coastal waters of California, Washington, Alaska, Canada, Russia and Japan.

Threats: Oil spills, habitat loss and damage, food limitation, disease, entanglement in fishing gear and conflict with shellfish fisheries.

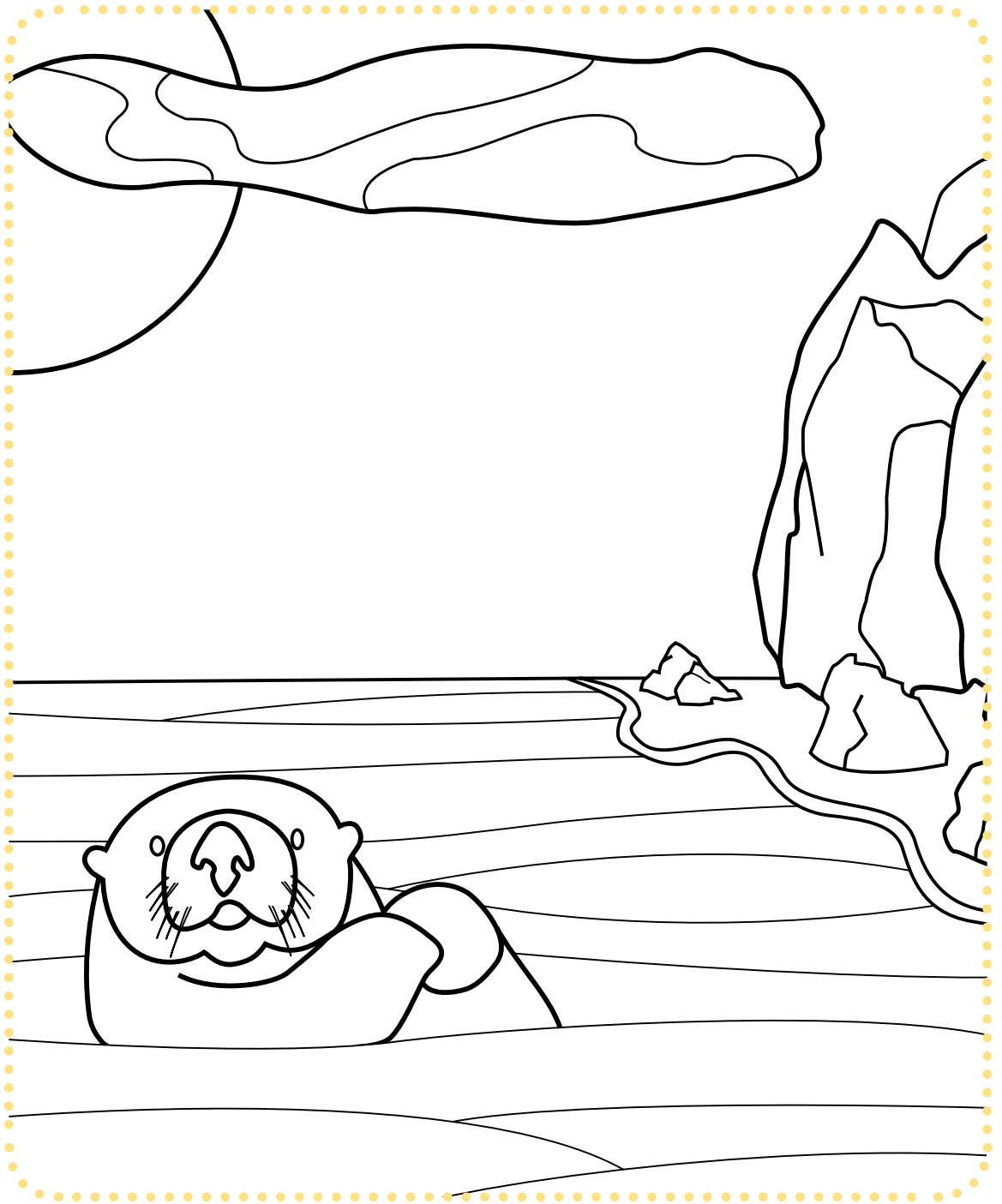
To learn more, see video and hear what sea otters sound like, visit www.defenders.org/animals.

Fun Facts

Sea otters can dive as deep as 330 feet when foraging for food.

Sea otters swim up to 1 mph on the surface and 6 mph underwater.

Sea otters don't "haul out" on land very often; they spend most of their time in the water.

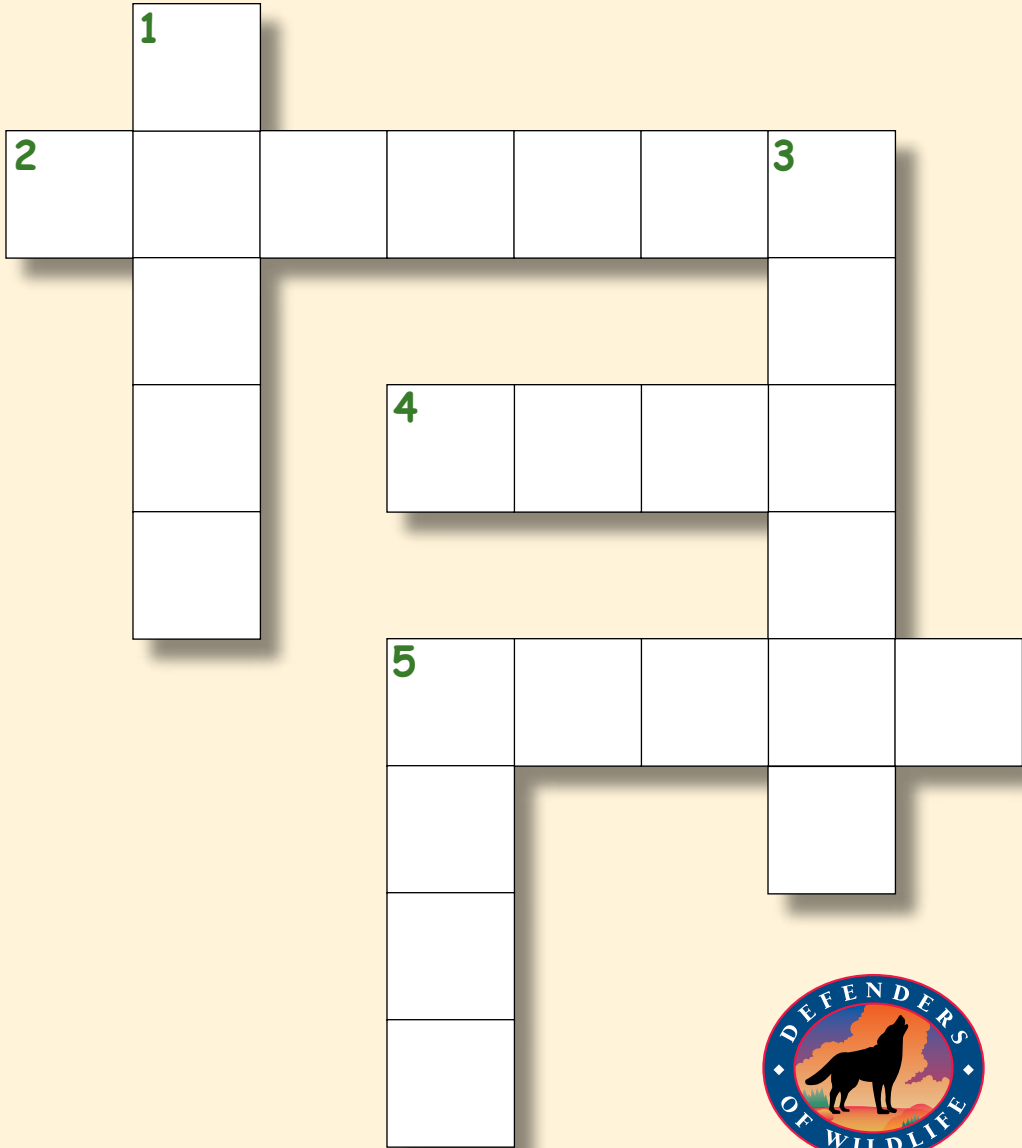


Across

2. The place where an animal or plant lives.
 4. The grizzly _____ sleeps all winter long. Its babies are called “cubs”.
 5. The blue _____ is the biggest animal in the world. It lives in the ocean and has a blowhole.
-

Down

1. The bald _____ is America’s national bird.
3. The sea _____ lives in the ocean. It has a large shell on its back and moves very slowly on land.
5. This animal looks like a large dog. It lives with a pack.



activity
2

BEGINNERS Word Search

R	V	I	B	F	O	R	E	S	T
M	D	F	D	H	E	Y	K	L	E
P	O	C	E	A	N	V	X	X	B
A	U	O	R	B	C	D	P	V	T
N	W	T	R	I	C	E	D	I	U
T	O	T	Z	T	B	S	B	L	R
H	L	E	U	A	M	E	E	P	T
E	F	R	A	T	V	R	A	E	L
R	W	H	A	L	E	T	R	M	E
F	E	A	G	L	E	T	H	A	T

HABITAT

OTTER

WHALE

TURTLE

PANTHER

OCEAN

EAGLE

WOLF

FOREST

BEAR

DESERT

activity
3

BEGINNERS Word Scramble

1) WEHAL

2) ELEAG

3) TULTRE

4) BRAE

5) WLFO



activity
4

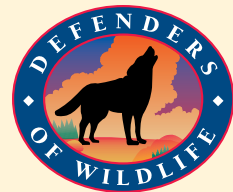
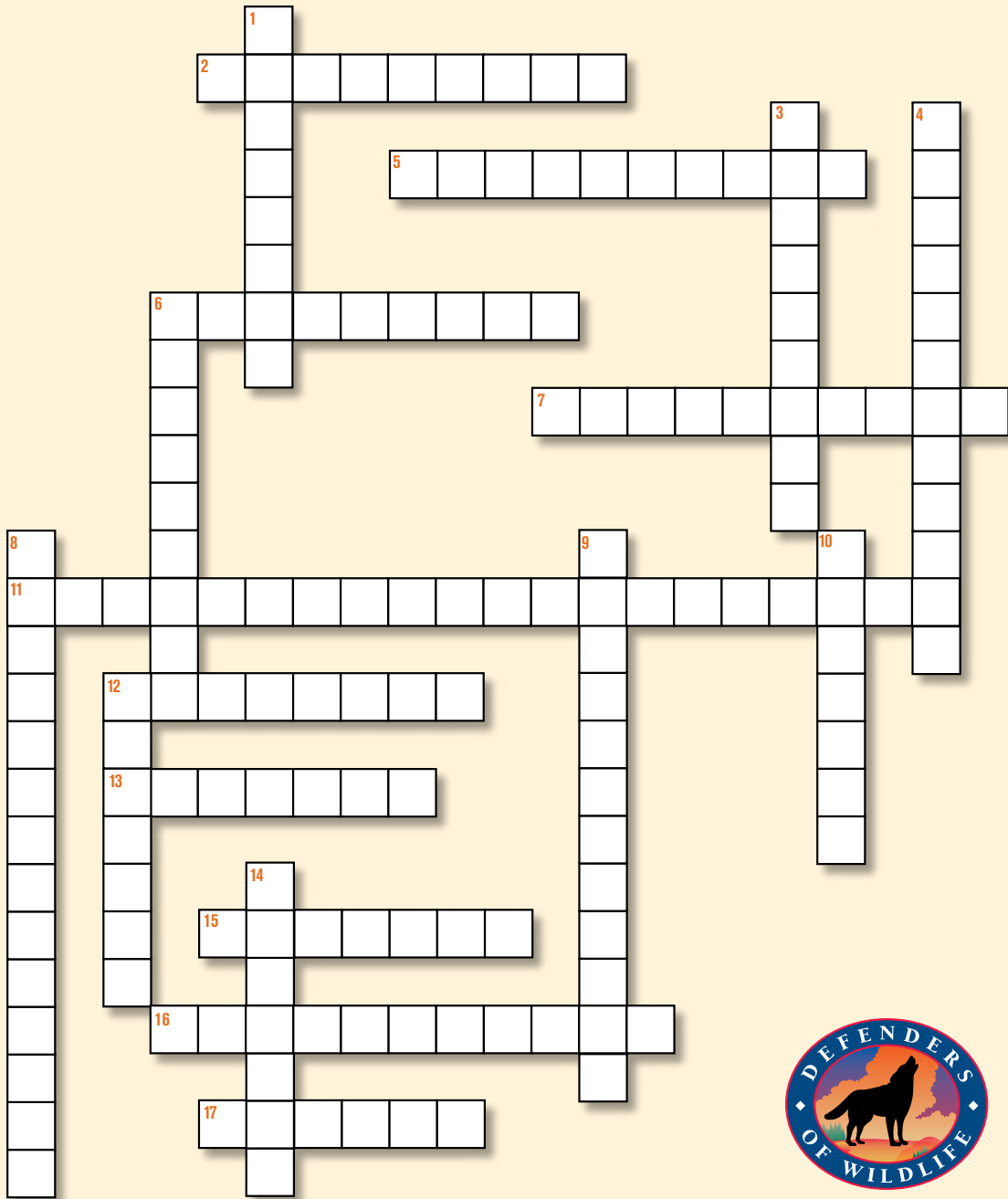
ADVANCED Crossword

Across

2. The United States was the world's largest market for this reptile's skin before it was protected under the Endangered Species Act. **HINT: Many people think it is the same as an alligator...but it isn't!*
5. This word describes a species in danger of becoming extinct.
6. The national bird of the United States. Although still listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act, the recovery of this bird is one of the act's great successes. **HINT: It's two words.*
7. This word means that a species may become endangered in the near future.
11. A law passed in 1973 to prevent the extinction of endangered and threatened species.
12. This marine mammal is listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. It's the only mammal other than primates known to use tools (mainly to get food out of shells). **HINT: It's two words.*
13. This word means that a species no longer exists on Earth. **HINT: Dinosaurs are _____.*
15. This hooved animal travels in herds. The woodland or mountain kind that is found in Canada and northern parts of Washington and Idaho is endangered. **HINT: It's often mistaken for a reindeer.*
16. The hind tracks of this threatened animal can be more than a foot long! Although it's at the top of the food chain, it faces many human-related threats. **HINT: It's named for its "grizzled" fur.*
17. This is the largest cat in the Western Hemisphere. It's often confused with the leopard (both have spots). There are currently less than 100 left in the United States. **HINT: There's a car with the same name.*

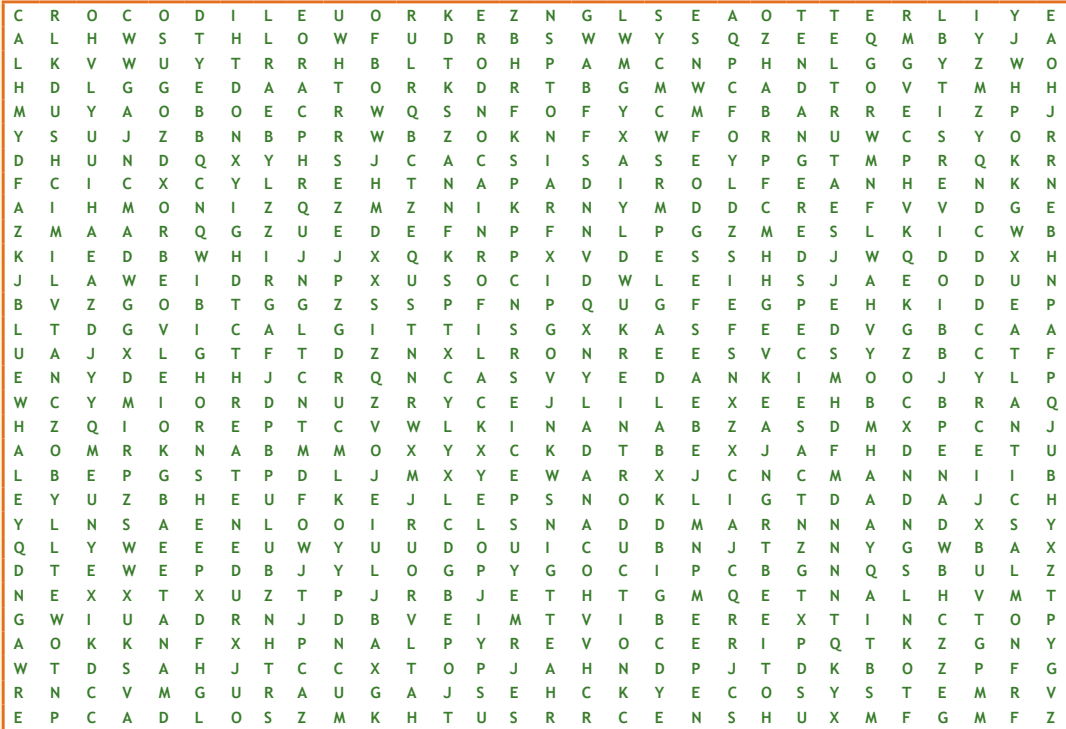
Down

1. This animal lives in a pack and is the largest member of the canine family. It's listed as "endangered" in some areas and "threatened" in others under the Endangered Species Act. **HINT: It has a color in its name.*
3. This animal is endangered because it often gets caught up in fishing nets in the ocean. All seven species of this ocean reptile are endangered. **HINT: It's two words and moves very slowly on land.*
4. The diverse variety of all life on Earth.
6. This is the largest animal that has ever lived! Although often thought of as a giant fish, it's actually a mammal. At one time, there were nearly 230,000, but it was hunted almost to extinction. Today, there are less than 15,000. **HINT: It has a color in its name.*
8. The process of placing a plant or animal back into its natural habitat.
9. A written document that lays out how to protect and increase the population of an endangered or threatened species.
10. Nicknamed the "sea cow," this endangered marine mammal can weigh up to 1,800 pounds! It's often hurt in boating accidents.
12. Individual plants or animals that have the most in common and share a common name are placed in this scientific category. **HINT: The Endangered _____ Act.*
14. The place where a plant or animal lives that provides what it needs to survive.



activity
5

ADVANCED Word Search



- | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------|
| BIODIVERSITY | ECOSYSTEM | ENDANGERED | CARIBOU | SEA TURTLE |
| GRAY WOLF | BLUE WHALE | RECOVERY PLAN | GRIZZLY BEAR | |
| THREATENED | SPECIES | FLORIDA PANTHER | ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT | |
| CROCODILE | EXTINCT | REINTRODUCTION | BALD EAGLE | |
| ATLANTIC SALMON | CANADA LYNX | JAGUAR | BIGHORN SHEEP | |
| CALIFORNIA CONDOR | SEA OTTER | MANATEE | HABITAT | |

* Words can be forward, backward or diagonal up or down.

activity
6

ADVANCED Word Scramble

ORICCELD

CXINETT

ESPEICS

YRAG FOWL

DNAERGEDNE EEISSPC TAC

SAE TRTOE

IIYERBVSIODT

IROABUC

ETAHNRDETE

DABL ELGAE

TAENMEA

REEADEDNNG

ARUJAG

BAITHAT

LEBU ELWHA

ESA ELURTT

GLZRYIZ AREB



ANSWERS

Activity 1: Beginner Crossword Puzzle

Down

- EAGLE
- OTTER
- WOLF

Across

- HABITAT
- BEAR
- WHALE

Activity 2: Beginner Word Search

R	V	I	B	F	O	R	E	S	T
M	D	F	D	H	E	Y	K	L	E
P	O	C	E	A	N	V	X	X	B
A	U	O	R	B	C	D	P	V	T
N	W	T	R	I	C	E	D	I	U
T	O	T	Z	T	B	S	B	L	R
H	L	E	U	A	M	E	E	P	T
E	F	R	A	T	V	R	A	E	L
R	W	H	A	L	E	T	R	M	E
F	E	A	G	L	E	T	H	A	T

Activity 3: Beginner Word Scramble

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| 1. WHALE | 3. TURTLE | 5. WOLF |
| 2. EAGLE | 4. BEAR | |

Activity 5: Advanced Word Search

C	R	O	C	O	D	I	L	E	U	O	R	K	E	Z	N	G	L	S	E	A	O	T	T	E	R	L	I	Y	E	
A	L	H	W	S	T	H	L	O	W	F	U	D	R	B	S	W	Y	S	Q	Z	E	E	Q	M	B	Y	J	A		
L	K	V	W	U	Y	T	R	R	H	B	L	T	O	H	P	A	M	C	N	P	C	A	N	L	G	G	Y	Z	W	O
H	D	L	G	G	E	D	A	A	T	O	R	K	D	R	T	B	G	M	W	C	A	D	T	O	V	T	M	H	H	O
M	U	Y	A	O	B	O	E	C	R	W	Q	S	N	F	O	F	Y	C	M	F	B	A	R	R	E	I	Z	P	J	
Y	S	U	J	Z	B	N	B	P	R	W	B	Z	O	K	N	F	X	W	F	O	R	N	U	W	C	S	Y	O	R	
D	H	U	N	D	Q	X	Y	H	S	J	C	A	C	S	I	S	A	S	E	Y	P	G	T	M	P	R	Q	K	R	
F	C	I	C	X	C	Y	L	R	E	H	T	N	A	P	A	D	I	R	O	L	F	E	A	N	H	E	N	K	N	E
A	I	H	M	O	N	I	Z	Q	Z	M	Z	N	I	K	R	N	Y	M	D	D	C	R	E	F	V	Y	D	G	E	
Z	M	A	A	R	Q	G	Z	U	E	D	E	F	N	P	F	N	L	P	G	Z	M	E	S	L	K	I	C	W	B	
K	I	E	D	B	W	H	I	J	X	Q	K	R	P	X	V	D	E	S	S	H	D	J	W	Q	D	D	X	H		
J	L	A	W	E	I	D	R	N	P	X	U	S	O	C	I	D	W	L	E	I	H	S	J	A	E	O	D	U	N	
B	V	Z	G	O	B	T	G	G	Z	S	S	P	F	N	P	Q	U	G	F	E	G	P	E	H	K	I	D	E	P	
L	T	D	G	V	I	C	A	L	G	I	T	T	I	S	G	X	K	A	S	F	E	D	V	G	B	C	A	A		
U	A	J	X	L	G	T	F	T	D	Z	N	X	L	R	O	N	R	E	E	S	V	C	S	Y	Z	B	C	T	F	
E	N	Y	D	E	H	H	J	C	R	Q	N	C	A	S	V	Y	E	D	A	N	K	I	M	O	O	J	Y	L	P	
W	C	Y	M	I	O	R	E	P	T	U	Z	R	Y	C	E	J	L	I	L	E	X	E	H	B	C	B	R	A	J	
H	Z	Q	I	O	R	E	P	T	C	V	W	L	K	I	N	A	N	A	B	Z	A	S	D	M	X	P	C	N	Q	
A	O	M	R	K	N	A	B	M	M	O	X	Y	X	C	K	D	T	B	E	X	J	A	F	H	D	E	E	T	U	
L	B	E	P	G	S	T	P	D	L	J	M	X	Y	E	W	A	R	X	J	C	N	C	M	A	N	I	I	B		
E	Y	U	Z	B	H	E	U	F	K	E	J	L	E	P	S	A	O	K	L	I	G	T	D	A	N	A	J	C	H	
Y	L	N	S	A	E	N	L	O	O	I	R	C	L	S	N	A	D	D	M	A	R	T	N	A	N	D	X	S	Y	
Q	L	Y	W	E	E	E	U	W	Y	U	D	O	U	I	C	U	B	N	J	T	Z	N	Y	G	W	B	A	X		
D	T	E	W	E	P	D	B	J	Y	L	O	G	P	Y	G	O	C	I	P	C	B	G	N	Q	S	B	U	L	Z	
N	E	X	X	T	X	U	Z	T	P	J	R	B	J	E	T	H	T	G	M	Q	E	T	N	A	L	H	V	M	T	
G	W	I	U	A	D	R	N	J	D	B	V	E	I	M	T	V	I	B	E	R	E	X	T	I	N	C	T	O	P	
A	O	K	K	N	F	X	H	P	N	A	L	P	Y	R	E	V	O	C	E	R	I	P	Q	T	K	Z	G	N	Y	
W	T	D	S	A	H	J	T	C	C	X	T	O	P	J	A	H	N	D	P	J	T	D	K	B	O	Z	P	F	G	
R	N	C	V	M	G	U	R	A	U	G	A	J	S	E	H	C	K	Y	E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	R	V	
E	P	C	A	D	L	O	S	Z	M	K	H	T	U	S	R	C	E	N	S	H	U	X	M	F	G	M	F	Z		

Activity 4: Advanced Crossword Puzzle

Across

- Crocodile
- Endangered
- Bald eagle
- Threatened
- Endangered Species Act
- Sea otter
- Extinct
- Caribou
- Grizzly bear
- Jaguar

Down

- Gray wolf
- Sea turtle
- Biodiversity
- Blue whale
- Reintroduction
- Recovery plan
- Manatee
- Species
- Habitat

Activity 6: Advanced Word Scramble

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1) CROCODILE | 9) THREATENED |
| 2) EXTINCT | 10) BALD EAGLE |
| 3) SPECIES | 11) MANATEE |
| 4) GRAY WOLF | 12) ENDANGERED |
| 5) ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT | 13) JAGUAR |
| 6) SEA OTTER | 14) HABITAT |
| 7) BIODIVERSITY | 15) BLUE WHALE |
| 8) CARIBOU | 16) SEA TURTLE |
| | 17) GRIZZLY BEAR |



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