The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has made the “Red List” of animal species based on how concerned we need to be about their survival. Animals on the “Red List” can be listed as:

- Lower risk
- Threatened (Going, Going)
  - Vulnerable-high risk in medium-term future
  - Endangered-high risk in near future
- Extinct (Gone!)
  - Extinct in the wild
  - Extinct everywhere

The MSU Museum has examples of many of these animals. The animal specimens you will see were acquired by the Museum in accordance with law and museum requirements.

Unfold this paper and try the activity in the middle. See if you can find all the animals in the Museum!

Not all species exist forever.

Throughout Earth’s history, species have come and gone. Species evolve, and species become extinct. In fact, the fossil record shows us that nearly 100% of all species that have ever lived on the planet are now extinct.

The extinction rate we are seeing today is much higher than the normal rate of one to five species per year, and species are becoming extinct each day! Unlike earlier periods of mass extinction in Earth’s history, this one is not caused by natural events. This time it’s almost all due to human activities.

As species become extinct, we lose diversity, which is important for environmental stability.

Learn more at:
biologicaldiversity.org/programs/biodiversity/elements_of_biodiversity/extinction_crisis

Going, Going, Back!

Good news! The Endangered Species Act is an important federal law that protects wildlife and plants. This Act, along with other human efforts, has helped bring some species back from near extinction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>LOWEST POPULATION</th>
<th>TAKEN OFF RED LIST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gray Wolf</td>
<td>1960: 300 individuals</td>
<td>2013: 5,443 in lower 48 states</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Directions: Find each of the animals in the galleries. Write the name of each animal as you find it. The answers are on the back of this sheet.

1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________
6. __________________________
7. __________________________
8. __________________________

FACTOID: Passenger pigeons became extinct due to excess hunting and deforestation in the 19th century. The last one, Martha, died at the Cincinnati Zoo in 1914.

FACTOID: Farming (for food, building materials, and many other things) threatens habitats. Know the source of what you’re buying.

FACTOID: Since 1986, the Asian elephant population has declined by at least 50%.

FACTOID: The whooping crane population was 16 in 1941, but now is 200 thanks to reintroduction.