

On World Wildlife Day, 3 March, people all around the world hold events to celebrate the natural world and to raise awareness of the importance of protecting wildlife. Read the article to find out more.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. wildlife
2. diversity
3. sustainable
4. a species
5. to become extinct
6. a habitat
7. the biosphere
8. to raise awareness

Definition

- a. all the places where life exists
- b. to stop existing
- c. animals and plants in natural conditions
- d. to make people think about a situation
- e. a number of things that are all different
- f. a group of animals or plants that are very similar
- g. the natural home of a plant or animal
- h. causing little or no harm or damage over a period of time

World Wildlife Day

Every year, people all over the world hold all kinds of events to celebrate World Wildlife Day. Their aim is to raise awareness of the beauty and the importance of our natural world and to look for ways to protect and conserve it.

How it first started

In December 2013, 40 years after it had signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the United Nations General Assembly decided to create a day to raise awareness of the world's wild animals and plants and the importance of protecting them. They decided to call it World Wildlife Day and chose 3 March as the date to celebrate it.

Why is it so important?

Earth is home to many, many different species of plants and animals, more than we can possibly count. It is this rich diversity, and the delicate balance between all the different forms of life, that makes life possible on our planet. We depend on all the elements of the biosphere for all our basic needs: the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat and the energy

and materials we use to make the things we need to live our lives. Each and every species is important. One of the aims of World Wildlife Day is to raise awareness of these facts.

What are the problems facing wildlife today?

Sadly, many human activities such as mining, farming and construction are constantly putting wildlife in danger. We are cutting down too many trees, clearing too much ground and building so many roads that we are destroying the natural habitats of millions of species and putting the world's biodiversity at risk. Nearly a quarter of all species are at risk of becoming extinct, and their disappearance is putting us, humans, in danger as well.

What are the solutions?

We need to live more sustainable lives and to learn to respect nature and defend its diversity. We need to push our governments to conserve and protect the natural habitats of all the species that are in danger of becoming extinct. We all need to work together to protect our planet – and ourselves.

What can you do to help on World Wildlife Day?

You can join local events and find out more about wildlife in your local area. You can donate time or money to organisations that are protecting wildlife locally or internationally. You can sign petitions and write to your government. You can share films, photos and articles with friends and your family. Post them on your social media channel and spread the message wherever you can. You can use the hashtags #WorldWildlifeDay and #DoOneThingToday to join in with the global conversation. Whatever you do, you won't be alone. Millions of people all around the world will be joining the celebrations and fighting for a better future for our planet.

Tasks

Task 1

Match the information (a–e) to the paragraph headings (1–5).

Paragraph headings

1. ____ How it first started
2. ____ Why is it so important?
3. ____ What are the problems facing wildlife today?
4. ____ What are the solutions?
5. ____ What can you do to help on World Wildlife Day?

Information

- a. The changes we need to make
- b. The human activities that put wildlife in danger
- c. Examples of the kinds of actions people can take
- d. When the date for this special day was decided
- e. The role of wildlife and diversity in our lives

Task 2

Complete the sentences (1–6) with the words (a–h).

Sentences

1. Earth is home to many different ____ of plants and animals, more than we can possibly count.
2. It is this rich ____ that makes life possible on our planet.
3. We depend on all the elements of the ____ for all our basic needs.
4. Each and ____ species is important.
5. One of the aims of World Wildlife Day is to ____ ____ of these facts.
6. Sadly, many human activities such as mining, farming and construction are constantly ____ wildlife ____.

Words

- a) awareness
- b) biosphere
- c) diversity
- d) every
- e) in danger
- f) putting
- g) raise
- h) species

Discussion

What are the main problems facing wildlife in your part of the world? What can we do to help?

Answers

Preparation task

1. c
2. e
3. h
4. f
5. b
6. g
7. a
8. d

Task 1

1. d
2. e
3. b
4. a
5. c

Task 2

1. h
2. c
3. b
4. d
5. g, a
6. f, e