

The United Nations has designated the first Monday of October each year as [World Habitat Day](#). The idea is to have us reflect on the basic right for each human being to have adequate shelter. As more and more people move into cities looking for work, shelter, food and health care and cities grow and spread into agricultural land and then into animal habitats, each of us needs to think about our own actions. Do your actions contribute to adequate habitats for all plants and animals (including humans) or do your actions contribute to the decimation of these habitats?

Today the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has published its [2008 Red List](#), which assesses the conservation status of animal species, subspecies, and varieties in order to bring our attention to those that are threatened with extinction and to promote their conservation. I have heard the argument in the past about how we should be thinking about the needs of people, not the needs of animals, but today with World Habitat Day and the publication of the most recent Red List, I invite you to consider the undeniable link between the two.

Without the variety of plant



ts and animals we have, we would not be able to survive on this planet. From plants and animals we derive our food and much of our medicine. One example is **pollination, without the birds, bees, butterflies and bats that pollinate our crops, one-third of our food sources would become extinct**

. That represents about \$10 billion in the United States alone. The

[Salmon Forest Project](#)

, out of the University of Victoria, has found a connection between the size of the salmon run and the growth of trees, which can be measured by the tree rings. We need the plants and animals.

I have heard the argument that species extinction and the evolution of new species is a natural phenomena. So true. And there have been mass extinctions in the past similar to the one we are facing now. The difference comes when we look at the reasons for the mass extinction and the consequences. In the past, mass extinctions were the result of non human behaviours since we weren't here yet. According to [Endangered Species International](#), **the mass extinction we face now is largely due to habitat destruction, human overpopulation, invasive species (usually brought by humans), pollution, and over-harvesting.**

We **need to reduce our population** through access to education, opportunity, health care, shelter, food and water. We need to take care of the water, land, animals and plants; not because they are ours to rule over but because we need them to survive and we have no God-like rights to destroy them.

So today, when you think about World Habitat Day, think about the Red list and the link between the two. Think about the link between your personal behaviour and how you can make a difference now that will be reflected for generations to come.

Here is a list of just a few animals those future generations may never know.

Wild Horse, Hawaiian Monk Seal, Bawean Deer, Mountain Pygmy, Possum, Dingiso, Tenkile, Northern Glider, Telefomin Cuscus, Black-spotted Cuscus, Woylie, Celebes Crested Macaque, Grey-shanked Douc Langur, Black Crested Gibbon, Cozumel Harvest Mouse, Alcorn's Pocket Gopher, Poncelet's Giant Rat, Vancouver Island Marmot, Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Reunion Cuckooshrike, Mariana Crow, Akekee, Floreana Mockingbird, Tristan Albatross, Cuban Crocodile, Madagascar Big-headed Turtle, Radiated Tortoise, Ploughshare Tortoise, Spider Tortoise, Flat-tailed Tortoise.

{linkr:related;keywords:animal;exclude:123,54,74,84,91,109,89,127,154;limit:5;title:If+you+like+t
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