

Wild and Rare

Grades 3 – 5

Educational Program Guide

OAS

5-PS1-3 | Science Practices 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8

Program Overview

Everyone hears about endangered species, but of the many plants and animals around us, which ones are endangered? Which ones are threatened? Which ones are surviving? Students will learn what makes a species vulnerable to extinction, then use museum specimens and hands-on materials to gather information and predict the futures of several species.

Objectives

After participating in this program, students will be able to:

- Be able to identify several species of animals that are threatened or endangered;
- Understand the main reasons plants and animals become endangered;
- Understand what can be done to help protect species and ensure their long-term survival.

Background

An endangered species is a group of organisms which is facing a high risk of becoming extinct due to environmental pressures, overhunting, or predation. In many areas of the world, state and national laws offer some protection to endangered species. However, only a few of the many species at risk actually obtain legal protection. Many more species become extinct, or will become extinct, without gaining public notice or protection.

At the Museum

Hall of Ancient Life

Discover some of Oklahoma's extinct animals like Saurophaganax and Smilodon.

Hall of Natural Wonders

Learn about some of Oklahoma's endangered species such as the Ozark Big-eared Bat, Burying Beetle and the Oklahoma Cave Crayfish.

Vocabulary

<i>Conservation</i>	the act of protecting a species and its environment or habitat
<i>Endangered</i>	a species that is vulnerable to extinction
<i>Exploitation</i>	using plants or animals for profit or commercial gain
<i>Extinct</i>	a species that has no more living members
<i>Habitat</i>	the physical place where an animal lives; it provides all of the resources needed for life
<i>Predation</i>	a natural interaction where predators feed on prey
<i>Species</i>	a group of closely related organisms, which are capable of producing fertile offspring
<i>Threatened</i>	a species that is vulnerable to endangerment