

Species

Answer the questions on the following page.

What is a species?

The term "species" can have many different definitions. [Find out more about how to classify species.](#)

How many species are there?

The number of named species on Earth is constantly fluctuating. [Why don't we have a better count?](#)

"In the past, most extinctions were due to natural causes. Now, the leading cause of extinction is thought to stem from human activity."

-Environmental Literacy Council

The Endangered Species Act

In 1973, the U.S. Congress passed the [Endangered Species Act](#). Protected species include birds, insects, fish, reptiles, mammals, crustaceans, and plants. [See a list of protected species in your state.](#)



Species

What is a species?

1. What is the biological species concept?
2. What is the morphological species concept?
3. Name 2 problems that scientists have when classifying species.
4. Why hasn't gene sequencing solved the issues with categorizing species?
5. What are 2 other "species concepts" that can be used to identify species?
6. If identifying a species is so complicated, what is the point? What is the benefit of identifying an organism's species?

How many species are there?

7. Current estimates for the total number of species on Earth is around _____ million species, with an uncertainty of _____ million species.
8. How many of these species are estimated to live in the ocean?
9. Scientists agree most on species within groups such as mammals, birds, and reptiles. What groups have the most disagreement?

The Endangered Species Act

10. What is the difference between endangered and threatened species?

11. Name 5 causes for the extinction of some wildlife species.

12. Why is it important to protect endangered and threatened species?

13. Name 3 organisms that are endangered in your state/area.