

Trafficking of baby gorillas poses new threat to endangered species

Level 1 • Elementary

1 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

trafficking	poacher	endangered	arrested	conservation area
injured	ranger	smugglers	orphan	surveillance

- _____ is when you buy and sell things illegally. (para 1)
- An _____ species is a type of animal that may soon become extinct. (para 1)
- A _____ is someone who illegally catches or kills animals. (para 1)
- A park _____ is someone who looks after a forest or an area of countryside. (para 1)
- A _____ is an area of land that is protected so it can't be damaged. (para 2)
- If someone is _____, they are taken to a police station because the police (or rangers) believe they have committed a crime. (para 4)
- _____ are people who secretly and illegally take things or people into or out of a country, especially as a way of earning money. (para 5)
- If you are _____, you are hurt. (para 5)
- An _____ is a child or animal whose parents have died. (para 5)
- _____ is when you carefully watch a person or place that may be involved in criminal activity. (para 8)

2 Find the information

Scan the article to find the information below.

- How many mountain gorillas are there in the world?
- How many live in the Virunga Volcanoes Conservation Area?
- Which three countries share the Virunga Volcanoes Conservation Area?
- How many mountain gorillas are there in Uganda?
- What is the price for a baby gorilla?
- According to Emmanuel de Mérode, what is the solution to ape trafficking?

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David Smith, Africa correspondent
17 October, 2011

- Gorillas are an endangered species. There has been an increase in the trafficking of baby gorillas, and this is putting gorillas in the Democratic Republic of Congo in danger. Poachers, who were asking for \$40,000 for one baby gorilla, were caught by park rangers in October. It was the fourth example since April, and more poachers have been caught with baby gorillas in 2011 than ever before.
- There are about 790 mountain gorillas in the world – about 480 in the Virunga Volcanoes Conservation Area (shared by DR Congo, Rwanda and Uganda) and just over 300 in Uganda. There are more eastern lowland gorillas but their numbers are also decreasing.
- Emmanuel de Mérode, Director of Virunga National Park, said: “We are very worried that more and more people want baby gorillas. This is creating dangerous trafficking activity in eastern Congo. We cannot control the international trade in baby gorillas, but our rangers are doing everything they can to stop it here.” He added: “There have been four baby gorillas caught in less than a year. This is a very high number. We can only catch a small number of poachers because the wildlife service in Congo doesn’t have enough money.”
- A young gorilla was rescued on 6 October. A team of park rangers contacted the poachers and agreed to buy an eastern lowland gorilla. When they had the gorilla, the rangers arrested the poachers. The leader of the operation, said: “The mother and other gorillas were probably killed because it’s very difficult to take a baby gorilla from its family. The poachers will never admit this, though.”
- Baby eastern lowland gorillas were taken from poachers in DR Congo in April and June, and Rwandan police rescued a baby mountain gorilla as smugglers were trying to take it over the border in August. The animals suffer pain during the smuggling. Dr Jan Ramer, a vet working in the Virunga National Park, said: “Many of these young animals are injured from ropes around their hands, feet or waist, and some are quite ill. This is not surprising because they are very stressed and they are not given enough food.” But the newest orphan gorilla seems to be in good health, Ramer added.
- The price for baby gorillas is up to \$40,000. But officials say they can’t find where the gorillas are taken or who organizes the trafficking. International experts said they believe the gorillas go east. Ian Redmond, of the conservation group the Ape Alliance, said: “We think the animals are taken to the Middle East, to rich animal collectors ... and maybe to rich Russians, but we don’t have a lot of evidence.
- “When a baby gorilla is caught in eastern Congo, it is usually smuggled east through Rwanda or Uganda.” A film on ape trafficking claimed that dozens of gorillas and hundreds of chimpanzees have been taken from Cameroon to Egypt.
- Emmanuel de Mérode added: “Surveillance is the solution to this problem – at the borders, in the towns, along the roads. The local community are the best surveillance system, if they support us. In countries where people want to buy baby gorillas, they must make laws and enforce them. Very little has been done to stop baby gorilla trafficking.”

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3 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings to make sentences about the text.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. More and more people want baby gorillas and ... | a. ... for up to \$40,000. |
| 2. Poachers can sell baby gorillas ... | b. ... buy the baby gorillas. |
| 3. There are only 790 mountain gorillas ... | c. ... this is creating dangerous trafficking activity in eastern Congo. |
| 4. Experts believe that the best solution to the problem ... | d. ... it doesn't have enough money. |
| 5. The wildlife service only catches a few poachers because ... | e. ... left in the world. |
| 6. Experts believe that rich animal collectors in the Middle East ... | f. ... is surveillance. |

4 Chunks

Rearrange the words to make phrases from the text.

- April example the fourth since
- a than year in less
- ropes their hands around
- not is surprising this
- the baby for gorillas price

5 Word-building

Complete the table.

	verb	noun (person)
1.	lead	
2.	poach	
3.	direct	
4.	collect	
5.	smuggle	

6 Discussion

Is it important to try to protect endangered species? Why? Why not?

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KEY

1 Key words

1. trafficking
2. endangered
3. poacher
4. ranger
5. conservation area
6. arrested
7. smugglers
8. injured
9. orphan
10. surveillance

2 Find the information

1. about 790
2. about 480
3. DR Congo, Rwanda and Uganda
4. just over 300
5. up to \$40,000
6. surveillance

3 Comprehension check

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

4 Chunks

1. the fourth example since April
2. in less than a year
3. ropes around their hands
4. this is not surprising
5. the price for baby gorillas

5 Word-building

1. leader
2. poacher
3. director
4. collector
5. smuggler