





Resources for Youth Groups

COME AND EXPLORE!

Welcome to Explore – a poster and magazine in one produced specially for youth groups.

In each issue, you'll find news from WWF, along with facts and activities or challenges for your group. And young people can earn special badges for their efforts.

This issue looks at the beautiful – but endangered – mountain gorillas found in the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

HOW TO ACHIEVE YOUR GORILLA BADGE

Complete 4 activities from this pack or from our online gorilla activities available at wwf.org.uk/ygresources. An order form can be downloaded from this site.



WWF NEEDS YOU!

Our new Green Ambassadors for Youth programme is under development and we're looking for youth group leaders who are interested in species, habitats, nature and the environment to trial this resource. We've worked with a pilot group of leaders from a mixture of organisations to make this a resource by leaders for leaders which we hope will appeal to a wide group of young people. If you're interested in trialing this pack please contact youth@wwf.org.uk.

DOWNLOAD, ORDER, SIGN UP!

Visit wwf.org.uk/ygresources for activities, links to other resources, badge-ordering, weblinks. You can also sign up to receive email updates and free resources.

ONE PLANET FUTURE PACK

Our popular virtual visit pack for youth groups introduces WWF, who we are and what we do. It features lots of activities to introduce children and young people to the concept of a one planet future – one where people and nature live in harmony, thriving within their fair share of the planet's natural resources.

Visit wwf.org.uk/ygresources or email your details to youth@wwf.org.uk to request your copy!

EXPLORE FACT FILE

Get the lowdown on mountain gorillas.

FILMS AND PHOTOS TO SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP

<http://wwf.org.uk/gorilla>

Download our free WWF App from iTunes for more gorilla information and images.

WHERE THEY LIVE

Mountain gorillas live in just two isolated populations in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda, and the Virunga Massif, a range of volcanic mountains spanning the borders of Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Some mountain gorillas live in high altitude cloud forests, 1,100-1,400 metres above sea level; others inhabit humid, tropical rainforest.

STATUS

Critically endangered. There are just 880 individuals left, including around half in the Virunga National Park, Africa's oldest and most species rich park, and a World Heritage site.

WHAT THEY EAT

Mainly vegetarian – around 85% of their diet comes from leaves, shoots and stems. They also eat small amounts of wood, roots, flowers and fruit, and sometimes larvae, snails and ants.

DID YOU KNOW?

Gorillas are our closest living relatives after chimpanzees.

WHY ARE MOUNTAIN GORILLAS UNDER THREAT?

Habitat loss

The two areas where the mountain gorillas survive are virtual islands in one of the most densely populated regions of Africa – a situation made worse by refugees fleeing from civil unrest.

This creates a huge demand for fuel wood, much of which is taken from the gorilla's forest home. Potential oil exploration also threatens Virunga National Park, where almost half of all mountain gorillas live.

Disease

Gorillas are also at risk of catching diseases from people entering the forest. As we share much of the same DNA, they can get the same illnesses as us, but don't have the immune system to fight them – so even a cold can kill a gorilla.

Poaching

Mountain gorillas can be the accidental victims of snares set to catch other animals, such as antelope and bush pigs. And whilst targeted poaching is extremely rare, baby gorillas are still in demand for the pet trade.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?

Support WWF

WWF is working to make the gorillas' habitat better-protected, and to stop the illegal trade in gorilla products. We also want to boost support for gorilla conservation among both local and international communities. This not only helps protect the gorillas themselves but also thousands of other species of animals and plants that are found in the same area.

You can also find out how to support WWF's campaigning work on the Virunga National Park by visiting wwf.org.uk/virunga

Buy sustainable wood

By buying FSC-certified forest products, we can all help protect gorilla habitat by encouraging sustainable forestry and limiting illegal logging. Without the FSC label, timber may well stem from illegal or controversial sources in central Africa.

MOUNTAIN GORILLA TIME-FILE

Infant: Birth to 3.5 years

Newborn gorillas have greyish-pink skin and rely on their mothers for everything. They start crawling at 9 weeks.

Juvenile: 3.5 to 6 years

Young animals spend most of the time playing with each other and adults.

Subadult: between 6 and 8 years

Young females typically leave the group into which they are born at 8 years old and usually transfer to an established group.

Blackback: 8 to 12 years

Young males leave the group at around 11 years old and may travel alone or with another male for 2-5 years before they can attract females to join them and form a new group.

Adult female: from 8 years onwards

Females grow up to 150cm, weighing in at 90kg. They breed at 10-12 years old and will give birth about once every 3-5 years. Pregnancy lasts 9 months and usually results in a single baby.

Silverback: from 12 years onwards

Adult males develop a silvery white patch of hair on their backs and hips. An average adult male is around 170cm tall and weighs between 140-180kg.



EXPLORE GET UP AND GO!



Complete 4 of the 6 activities to achieve your gorilla badge

1 TALK LIKE A GORILLA

Mountain gorillas communicate in lots of different ways, but they also use their voices, using a few special “grunts”. When they’re out foraging for food, they can’t always see each other, so these “grunts” – there are about 12 of them – help them keep in touch. Can you and your friends make your own language? Come up with sounds to use in place of 12 different phrases – how about, “I’m hungry!” – and see how long you can keep a conversation going! Is it easy? What type of noises can everyone hear best?

2 MOUNTAIN GORILLA TRACKING TRIP

Rangers from the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) spend many days tracking and watching the mountain gorillas in the Virunga National Park.

Imagine you and your friends are going on an expedition to find a family of gorillas. What kit would you take? How would you behave around the gorillas once you’ve found them? Practise talking and moving quietly so you don’t disturb them. Take it in turns to split into two groups, rangers and gorillas, with the rangers recording what the gorillas do. Who would be the silverback, or the other adults and young? Can the rangers work out which gorilla is which, based on their behaviour? Remember not to make direct eye contact with the silverback, as he might see this as a threat!

3 MAKE YOUR BED AND LIE IN IT!

After all that activity, you deserve a rest! Mountain gorillas sleep in special nests on the ground made of branches, leaves and other vegetation. Can you make something similar out in your local park or woods? You could also do this inside using stuff from the paper recycling bin – old newspapers, cereal boxes, kitchen-roll inners etc. How much material do you need to make a comfortable bed? Don’t forget to tidy it up afterwards, just like a real mountain gorilla.

4 GORILLAS ARE SPECIAL - TELL SOMEONE

In small groups create a play, poster, rap, song, film or giant frieze for your meeting place – to highlight why gorillas are special and what we can all do to look after them. Share your creative work with parents and friends – spread the word for a brighter future for gorillas.

5 HAVE A DEBATE

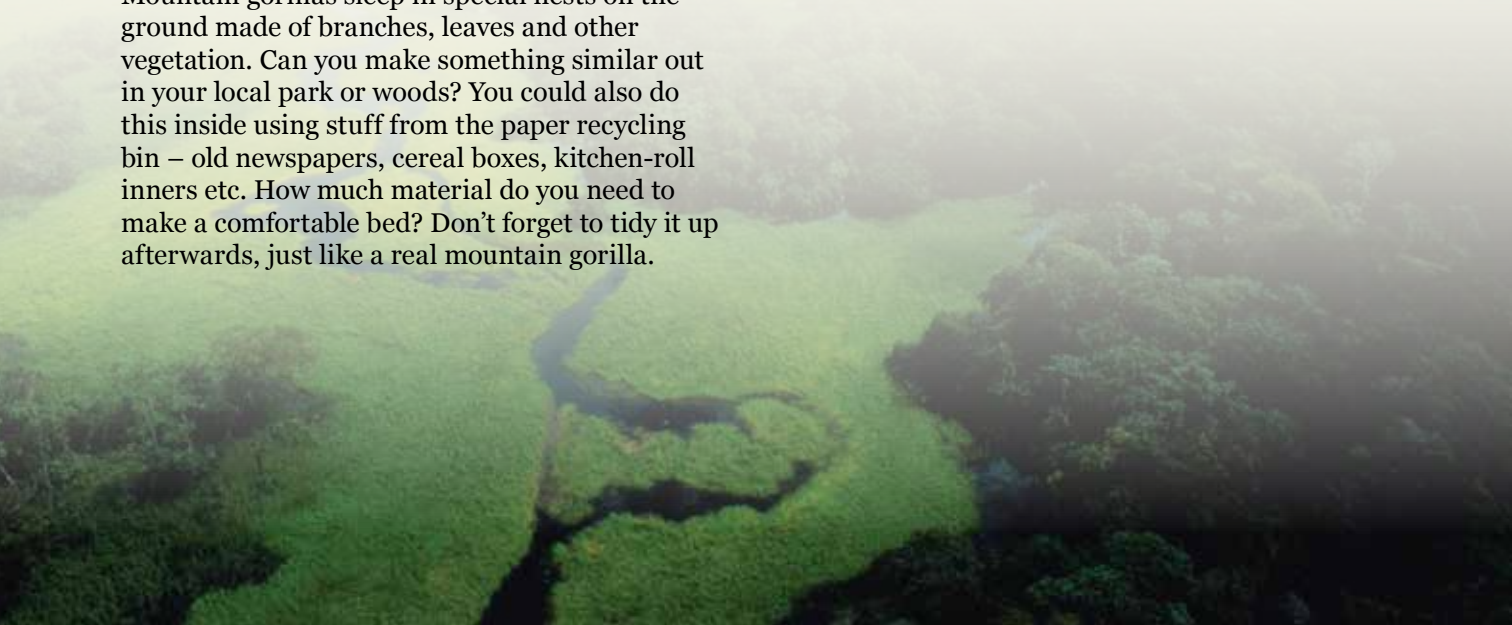
Download debate suggestions and questions from wwf.org.uk/ygresources

Although it’s a protected site, some oil companies are lobbying to start oil exploration work in the Virunga National Park. Even though this probably won’t be in the area where the mountain gorillas live, the work could affect their safety. Do you think oil exploration in this area is a good idea if it means putting animals and habitats at risk? How would you try to make the oil companies and the government think carefully about whether this activity should be allowed? Find out what WWF is doing at wwf.org.uk/virunga

6 ADOPT A MOUNTAIN GORILLA

Discuss whether your group would like to adopt a mountain gorilla. How would this help? Talk about how you could raise money for the adoption and how you would tell others about it. Visit org.uk/adoption/mcflygorilla or see over the page.

Additional online Gorilla activities are available from wwf.org.uk/ygresources



EXPLORE

GO WILD WITH DOUGIE – ADOPT A MOUNTAIN GORILLA

“I had an amazing time. It’s been completely life-changing,” he said. “I’ll never forget being on top of a volcano, looking out at the beautiful surroundings where the mountain gorillas live.”



When McFly’s Dougie Poynter swapped his guitar for a walking stick and set off into the Rwandan forest, he was unprepared by how much he would love seeing mountain gorillas in the wild. He says tracking and meeting the animals in Virunga National Park turned out to be one of the best things he’s ever done.

Dougie is supporting our latest adoption pack, and saw exactly how your donations can help protect these critically endangered animals.

WWF works with the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) to help to pay for training and equipment for anti-poaching teams who remove snares and protect the apes.

Adoptions also fund a wide range of projects to reduce the difficulties that can arise when gorillas and people live close by – such as gorillas raiding crop fields. One of the ways we do this is to train teams of villagers, known as HuGo groups, to herd the apes back into the forests before any damage is done.

We’re also working with local people, helping them find more sustainable ways of making a living that rely less heavily on the forest, such as ecotourism.


This generates income for the national parks and creates much needed local employment.

When you ‘adopt’ Ihoho, a male baby mountain gorilla, we’ll send you a cuddly toy

gorilla, a 25 minute DVD video diary of Dougie’s gorilla trip and a photograph of Dougie in the jungle as well as a Factbook, certificate, bookmarks and stickers, along with our exclusive adopter magazines three times a year. An adoption makes a great birthday or Christmas present too.

Dougie says, “I think the biggest thing I’ve learnt is that although these creatures are massive and strong, they’re also incredibly fragile.”

Check out wwf.org.uk/adoption/mcflygorilla for a video of Dougie in the jungle meeting the mountaingorillas.

	<p>Why we are here To stop the degradation of the planet’s natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.</p> <p>wwf.org.uk</p>
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