WWF SPECIES UK

MOUNTAIN GORILLA

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The mountain gorilla, a subspecies of the eastern gorilla species. The other subspecies, the eastern lowland gorilla, is on average bigger but they're still powerful and strong.

Read on to discover more interesting facts about them.

WHERE THEY LIVE

They live in tropical forests, in high altitudes between 2,500 metres and 4,000 metres in central Africa. Here there are just two isolated populations: one in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda, and one in the Virunga volcanoes – which span the borders of Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) **wwf.org.uk/how_you_can_help/campaign_with_us/virunga/**



CHARACTERISTICS

- They have a heavy body shape and dark coat.
- Male mountain gorillas can weigh up to 180kg and females up to 90kg.
- They also have a broad chest and long arms.
- They mainly move around on the ground and walk on all fours using clench fists and flat feet. They can climb trees if they need to.



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MY FAMILY

Mountain gorillas generally live in groups with several females and their young, and one dominant male. They usually live in a group of about 10 gorillas – but groups of 65 have been seen.

Dominant males are known as 'silverbacks' because they have a patch of silver hair on their back and hips.



VIDEO

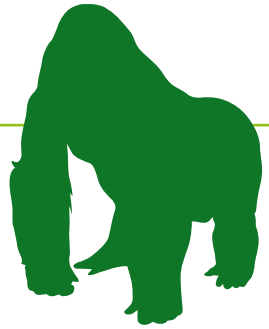
Watch footage of mountain gorillas:

- arkive.org/eastern-gorilla/gorilla-beringei/video-be00.html
- arkive.org/eastern-gorilla/gorilla-beringei/video-be08a.html

FEEDING

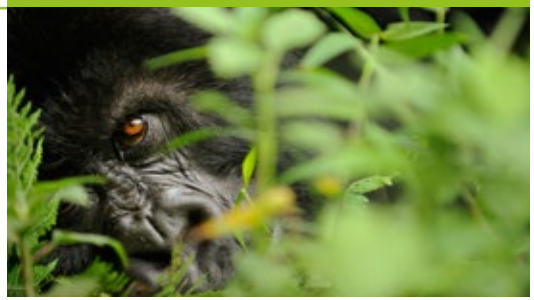
They are omnivores.

Mountain gorillas mainly eat leaves, shoots and stems, and because of their size they must eat a lot during the day to survive.



DID YOU KNOW

Mountain gorillas eat lots of different leaves, shoots and stems over a wide area, the natural balance in the food chain would be disrupted without them.



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CLASSIFICATION

Mountain gorillas are classified as **Critically Endangered** on the IUCN Red List, but conservation efforts are taking place to protect my population and increase our number and make sure the environment remains healthy for the people and other wildlife that depend on it. In fact, mountain gorillas are the only great ape whose numbers are increasing.

NOT EVALUATED	DATA DEFICIENT	LEAST CONCERN	NEAR THREATENED	VULNERABLE	ENDANGERED	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	EXTINCT
NE	DD	LC	NT	VU	EN	CR	EW	EX

RED LIST





STATUS

The main threat to the species is people. The area where the gorillas live has been affected by years of conflict, which has left many people living in poverty around their habitat. They have no choice but to enter gorilla habitats looking for food and wood for fuel, and this makes efforts to conserve mountain gorillas even more difficult.

Gorillas can catch human diseases from the people that enter their habitat, and the traps that are set in the wild to catch other wildlife may accidentally injure and even kill mountain gorillas too.

It is estimated there are around 880 mountain gorillas left in the wild.

wwf.org.uk/wildlife/mountain_gorilla/