



## What Do Zoos Do?



photo courtesy the Cincinnati Zoo

### Mini Fact:

The Cincinnati Zoo sells T-shirts to raise money to help care for a baby hippo named Fiona.



photo © Thomas A. Jefferson/VNA Vaquita, courtesy AZA

The vaquita is a small porpoise that lives in the Gulf of California. Experts believe there are fewer than 30 vaquitas left in the wild. Zoos have raised \$1 million to try to save the species from extinction.

Do you enjoy visiting the zoo? It's always fun to see all the different kinds of animals there. But you may not realize that every time you buy a ticket, a T-shirt or a treat at the zoo, you could be helping animals.

The Mini Page celebrates National Zoos and Aquariums Month by finding out how zoos are helping animals all over the world.

### How zoos help

In the United States, more than 200 zoos, aquariums and other animal facilities are members of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). As members, zoos are required to participate in animal conservation programs. (Conservation is the careful maintenance and protection of something valuable, especially in its natural or original state.) They do this in three different ways:

- Zoos contribute about \$186 million to conservation efforts going on in the wild each year. For instance, a zoo might raise money to fund researchers studying endangered animals in Asia.
- Zoos and aquariums may work with local organizations to help with species survival or restoring habitats. For example, Adventure Aquarium in New Jersey is helping monitor bald eagles' nests and record observations about their eggs and fledglings, or baby birds.
- Zoos and other animal facilities also participate in educating children and adults

about preserving species. They do this through visits in schools, field trips to the zoo, and camps where kids can learn more about animals.

### SSP programs

The AZA helps ensure that animals are around for future generations by working with zoos on almost 500 Species Survival Plan programs, or SSP programs. Through these programs, zoos care for endangered or threatened species in their facilities and support them in the wild. They also make plans for breeding and transferring animals between zoos.

### Look around

When you visit your local zoo or aquarium, keep an eye out for signs that tell you more about an animal. For instance, a sign might tell you that an animal looks great here in the zoo, but in the wild, it's not doing so well. Think about supporting the zoo by buying products that support specific animals.



Photo courtesy Rob Vernon

### SAFE

The AZA created a program called SAFE, or Saving Animals From Extinction. Through SAFE, zoos work together to come up with action plans, raise money and educate visitors about species that are in trouble.

The species SAFE focuses on are:

- African penguin
- Asian elephant
- Black rhinoceros
- Cheetah
- Gorilla
- Sea turtle
- Sharks and rays
- Vaquita
- Western pond turtle
- Whooping crane

Individual zoos can also identify species for SAFE programs.

## Resources



### On the Web:

- [tailsupapp.com](http://tailsupapp.com)
- [bit.ly/MPBabyFiona](http://bit.ly/MPBabyFiona)

### At the library:

- "Endangered Animals" by Ben Hoare
- "10 Things You Can Do to Protect Animals" by Elizabeth Weitzman

## Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of zoos are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

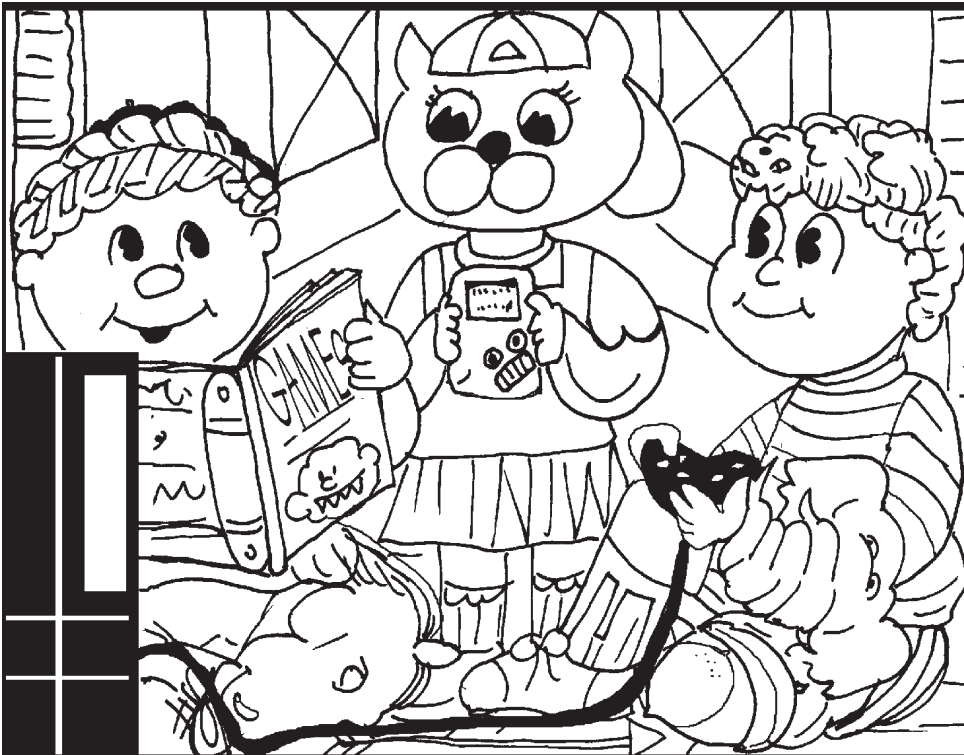


ANIMALS, AQUARIUM,  
BREED, CONSERVATION,  
EDUCATE, EXTINCTION,  
FLEDGLING, HABITAT,  
HELP, PROGRAMS,  
PROTECT, RESTORE,  
SPECIES, STUDY,  
SURVIVAL, TRANSFER,  
WILD, VISIT, ZOO.

H P H R E F S N A R T E B H B  
S R E V G N I L G D E L F A O  
P O L I U E X T I N C T I O N  
E G P T P T G A Q U A R I U M  
C R S U R V I V A L T I S I V  
I A O M T A T I B A H W I L D  
E M Z T Y D U T S E D E E R B  
S S O P S Z E S L A M I N A K  
M C O N S E R V A T I O N J R  
L T C E T O R P E T A C U D E

## Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and her friends are playing video games. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



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- heart
- elephant head
- word MINI
- lemon
- letter E
- cat
- number 8
- banana
- feather
- horse head
- jackknife
- kite
- brush
- arrow
- letter D

## Mini Jokes



- Zoe: What's as big as an elephant but weighs nothing?  
Zane: Its shadow!

## Eco Note



The Endangered Species Act became law in 1973. It has protected hundreds of species from extinction, including the bald eagle, grizzly bear and gray whale. Protecting one species helps other species, too. They depend on each other for food, shelter and support. Find endangered species in your area: [bit.ly/MPspecies](http://bit.ly/MPspecies).

adapted with permission from "The New 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth" by The Earthworks Group, Andrews McMeel Publishing (andrewsmcmeel.com)

## Thank You



The Mini Page thanks Rob Vernon of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums for help with this issue.

### Teachers:

For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: [bbs.amuniversal.com/Everyone\\_content/Teaching\\_Guides/The\\_Mini\\_Page/](http://bbs.amuniversal.com/Everyone_content/Teaching_Guides/The_Mini_Page/)

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