

Wild animals capture children’s curiosity and imagination. The struggles faced by endangered animals will be helped by educating children and enabling them to become their advocates from a young age. This set consists of 12 double-sided wooden animal figures divided in to six families. One side of each piece shows a male/female adult, with each reverse showing a baby in a different pose.



### Conservation concerns

African elephant and calf	Africa	Poaching and habitat loss due to human intervention
Orangutan and infant or baby	Borneo, Sumatra	Poaching and habitat loss through deforestation
Black Rhinoceros and calf	Africa	Poaching
Snow leopard and cub	Central Asia	Poaching and habitat loss due to human intervention
Continental tiger and cub	Central Asia	Hunting, habitat loss and decline in prey
Giant panda and cub	China	Habitat loss due to human intervention

### Key vocabulary

- Endangered
- Habitat
- Conservation
- Climate (change)
- Deforestation
- Poaching
- Predator, prey
- Care, caring, cared
- Tall/taller/tallest
- Big/bigger/biggest
- Small/smaller/smallest
- Trunk, horn, claws, teeth, paws
- Jungle, savannah, mountain, plain, forest
- Sort
- Compare
- Similarities
- Differences
- Different from / similar to

### Activity ideas

#### Using the animal characters



- Create habitats for the animals using natural materials. Try bark chippings, twigs, pieces of bamboo, soil, pebbles, fabric for sand, mirror for a watering hole, and so on.
- The beautiful details of the artwork will enable children to develop their comparing and sorting skills as they spot similarities/differences within and across families. Tell me about how you sorted the animals? What’s in each group?
- Different members of each family face towards each other for extra play value. This also works across families, increasing opportunities for imaginary play and the development of storytelling skills.
- Play a barrier game during which one child describes a hidden animal to a partner. Use the [online poster](#) as a reference point.

- Use magnifiers to explore the details of the pieces: markings, type of skin/fur, how the babies look the same as / different from their parents. Point out the animals that have camouflage.
  - Who can tell me what camouflage means?
  - Which of these animals are camouflaged?
  - Why do you think that is?
  - What other animals are camouflaged?
  - The tiger and snow leopard are predators and do not want to be seen by their prey. How does their colouring help with this?
- The artwork of the wooden animals also gives clues to each animal's habitat. The pandas show bamboo, the elephants show grassland, and so on. Prompt the children to look for these details and discuss what they might tell them.



## Create and make

- Provide some paper templates of an orangutan's face. Add orange hand prints round its edge, with the fingers pointing outwards to create fur.
- Use an orange handprint to create a tiger, with the thumb as the head and the fingers as legs. Add a tail, features and stripes.
- Create tiger templates out of strong orange card. Punch holes so that wool can be threaded through them to create the tiger's stripes. A good activity for developing fine motor control.
- Use panda outlines with different numbers of patches of black fur. Sort the pandas into ascending/descending numerical order.
- Use a white paper plate as the basis for adding the features of a panda to using black paper and pen.



- Provide some paper snow leopard templates on which the children can create the markings by applying paint fingerprints. This activity provides good sensory feedback.
  - Research the footprints of the animals in the set, some of which can be found in Yellow Door's Let's Investigate Safari Footprints (YD1098). Print out a series of footprints of one of the animals. Lay them out on the floor and put the animal at the end of the trail. Ask the children what they think the footprints belong to before they follow the trail to find out.
  - Use this research as inspiration for making your own footprints. Choose one of the animals and cut two of their footprints out of a piece of cardboard. Attach cardboard handles to them. Hold the feet by the handles and dip the cut outs in a tray of paint. Make footprints on a long piece of paper.
- A similar effect can be achieved by printing with footprints cut out of washing-up sponges. This and the previous activity will help to enhance the careful and effective use of scissors.

## Learning more

- Encourage the children to refer to books, pictures and video to learn more about the animals in the set. Pose specific questions for the children to answer, with the detail tailored to the children's level of understanding.
- *Elmer* by David McKee is a good introduction to sequencing and pattern making. Create Elmer templates that the children can fill in with their own regular/irregular coloured patterns. Ask them to explain to you the thinking behind their designs.

- Convert your outdoor area into a safari park with soft toys. Provide props for the children to be park rangers: binoculars, representations of walkie talkies, trikes and pedal cars.
- Arrange for parents/carers/staff to visit the park so that the rangers can take them on a safari, sharing their knowledge and understanding.

## Games you can play

- Elephant trunks: Ask a group of children to stand in line. The child at the front of the line picks up a quoit in one hand and raises their arm (trunk) so that it slides down to their shoulder. They then turn to the next person and holds their hand. They work together to get the quoit on to the arm of the second person, and so on down the line. Each person must get the quoit to the top of their arm before passing it on.
- Kim's Game: Show the children a selection of the animals before placing a cloth over them. Remove one of the animals in secret, take off the cloth, and ask the children to identify and describe which animal is no longer there. Swap roles so that a child leads the game. The difficulty level of the game can be increased by using animals from the same family in the selection.



## Extending the learning

- There are many charities that support the conservation of endangered animals. Work with the children to choose a charity to support and discuss how they might do so: adopting an animal, publicising the plight of animals, raising money.
- Use the information sheets [here](#) to learn more about the animals. Watch some online examples of wildlife presenters talking about animals: Sir David Attenborough, Chris Backshall, Chris Packham, Kate Humble, Michaela Strachan. Challenge the children to present what they have learned in a style that can be recorded and shared with others.



## Children's books featuring endangered animals

*Snow Leopard* by Justin Anderson and Patrick Benson

*Red Alert!* by Catherine Barr and Anne Wilson

*A-Z Endangered Animals* by Jennifer Cossins

*Save Our Species* by Dominic Couzens

*A Wild Child's Guide to Endangered Animals* by Millie Marotta

*Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What do you See?* by Bill Martin Jr and Eric Carle