



# Endangered Species

## 濒危物种

Joshua Ginsberg (美) 著  
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外语教学与研究出版社  
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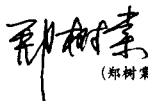
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# 序 言

英语学习，除了在课堂内下工夫外，课外的阅读也很重要。课外除了读文学类的文章，也要读一些非文学类的文章。这套“小书”就是非文学类的文章，涉及文学以外的许多领域和学科。每本书都由一两个相关的主题构成，图文并茂，融知识性和可读性于一体。这些“小书”谈到的很多东西都和我们的日常生活息息相关；更重要的是“小书”体现了人类要与自然和谐发展的思想，这与我们社会和时代的发展是吻合的。读一些这方面的书不仅有利于学生提高英语水平，拓宽自己的视野，也符合当今大学生要全面发展的要求。在“复合型”人才越来越受重视的今天，我很乐意向大学生朋友推荐这套“小书”。

  
(郑树棠)

《新视野大学英语》总主编  
首届“国家级教学名师奖”获得者

## Introduction

The extinction of some species and the emergence of new ones is a natural process. However, international organizations and governments are working together today through treaties and laws to protect species threatened by loss of habitat, overuse by humans, natural disasters, and other factors. The impact humans have on the biological resources of the Earth has been especially large, and many experts are eager to change human behavior so that the unique molecules and chemical compounds produced by particular plant and animal species will not be lost forever.

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# Endangered Species 濒危物种

**E**ndangered species are species that scientists have classified as likely to become extinct in the near future. Every year, although new species come into being, others die out, reducing the diversity of life on the planet. To a certain extent this is quite natural: it is an essential part of Darwin's theories that species develop and disappear. There have been periods of mass extinction in the past, in which vast



numbers of organisms died out. However, the activities of humans, especially over the past 250 years are leading to the extinction of species across the globe, a process that worries and frightens many observers.




“濒危物种”指的是被科学家们归类为在不久的将来可能灭绝的物种。虽然每年都有新的物种产生,但也有其他物种消亡,从而引起地球上生命多样性的减少。从某种程度上讲,这种现象非常自然:达尔文理论的核心就是物种的产生与消亡。历史上曾有过生物大灭绝时期,其间大量生物消亡。但人类活动,尤其是近 250 多年来的活动,正导致全球范围内众多物种的消亡,这个过程令许多观察家大为惊愕并为之忧虑。




The term *endangered species* has been used since the early 1900s, when scientists and policymakers began to realize that many once common species were either extinct or disappearing rapidly. However, it was not until the 1960s that scientists began to classify systematically species threatened with extinction. The IUCN (The World Conservation Union, known more fully as the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) began publishing its first Red Data Books. The Red Data Books, and their companion Red Lists, are catalogs of threatened species from around the world. Today many regional and national governments publish red lists of threatened species.






“濒危物种”这个术语自20世纪早期就已开始使用，当时科学家和决策者开始意识到许多曾经很常见的物种已不复存在或正在迅速消亡。但直到20世纪60年代科学家们才开始系统地对面临灭绝危险的物种进行分类。世界自然保护联盟(IUCN，其全称为“国际自然与自然资源保护联盟”)开始出版第一批“红皮书”。这些红皮书及其姊妹篇“红色名录”即全世界受生存威胁物种的目录册。今天许多地区和国家的政府也出版了受威胁物种的红色名录。

# Threatened Species 受威胁物种



**M**any people are confused by the terms *threatened* and *endangered*. However, these terms have very specific meanings when used by conservation organizations and governments. The category of threatened species includes endangered species as well as species that are under stress but not yet threatened with extinction. The IUCN Red Lists place threatened species in one of four major categories of threat;



*endangered species* are species in danger of extinction; *vulnerable species* are species that are likely to become endangered in the near future; *rare species* are species that have small populations but are not yet endangered or vulnerable; *indeterminate classification* is reserved for species that are thought to be rare, vulnerable, or endangered but that cannot be classified because of lack of information.

许多人弄不清“受威胁”和“濒危”这两个术语。但资源保护组织和政府在使用这两个术语时有其特定的含义。“受威胁物种”这一范畴包括濒危物种和有一定危险但还不至于有灭绝之虞的物种。世界自然保护联盟的红色名录中把受威胁物种列为其“四大威胁”中的一种：“濒危物种”系面临灭绝危险的


物种；“脆弱物种”指在不久的将来有可能濒危的物种；“稀有物种”指数量少但还未达到濒危或脆弱的境地的物种；“不定分类”专用来指那些人们认为处于稀有、脆弱或濒危境地但因缺乏资料而无法进行分类的物种。

Under this system of classification, endangered species are a minority of all threatened species. Of nearly 5,400 species placed in different categories of the IUCN 1994 Red List of Threatened Animals, fewer than 25 percent (approximately 1,200) of these are considered endangered.

根据这种分类体系，濒危物种只占有受威胁物种中很小的一部分。世界自然保护联盟1994年发布的受威胁动物红色



名录中列有近5,400个物种, 分属不同类别, 其中不到25% (接近 1,200 种) 被归为濒危动物。



Most endangered species have a declining population that is found over an area much smaller than its original range.

The population becomes broken up into small fragments, which become isolated from one another. These small isolated populations are more vulnerable than large ones. They tend to become inbred, losing their genetic diversity; any catastrophe, such as a disease, epidemic, or flash flood, is likely to kill a large proportion of the species; when a population falls to ten or twenty individuals, animals may have trouble finding mates and plants may have difficulty in becoming pollinated. When all the small population fragments


### **Bullet Points**

- *The ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT has brought about the repopulation of many once-threatened species in the United States, such as birds of prey.*
- *In contrast, international progress in protecting endangered species has been more uneven, particularly in poor and moderate-income communities that are wracked by hunger and famine or war and military activity.*

### **相关信息**

- 《濒危物种法案》使许多在美国曾一度受到生存威胁的物种（如猛禽等）再度兴旺。
- 相反，保护濒危物种在国际上所取得的进步较不均衡，特别是在一些贫穷和中等收入地区，其原因就在于这些地区饱受饥荒或战争之苦。

collapse, the species becomes extinct.



大多数濒危物种的数量逐渐减少,分布范围也比先前大为缩小。这些物种的种群被分隔成小块,彼此孤立。与大的种群相比,这些小而孤立的种群更为脆弱。它们常常近亲繁殖,因而丧失了基因的多样性。任何灾难,比如疾病、传染病、暴洪等,都可能招致这些物种的大量减少。当某种群最后只剩下10个或20个个体时,若是动物,就会难以找到交配对象;若是植物,则难以授粉。当所有小的种群都瓦解后,该物种也就彻底消亡了。

The factors that lead to extinction interact in a complex way, creating what biologists describe as an extinction



vortex. Like water spinning down a drain, numbers in a population spiral downward: population numbers decline because of overhunting or habitat loss; individuals get isolated in small populations of forty to fifty and begin to inbreed, which may lead to fewer births; a reduced number of individuals may make it more difficult to find a mate, leading to further inbreeding. The final blow may be caused by a random environmental event such as an epidemic, drought, or pollution.



导致物种消亡的因素盘根错节，彼此相互作用，形成了生物学家所谓的“消亡旋涡”。正如水沿着下水道旋转而下，种群的数量也是呈螺旋式下降的：由于过度捕猎或丧失栖息地，种群数量下降；当彼此隔