

# ENDANGERED SPECIES: MOUNTAIN GORILLA

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**The Mountain Gorilla is one of the many critically endangered species. There are about 800 left in the wild and 100 in zoos or wildlife protection services. They became endangered in 1902. (2019)**

## **THE EVENT:**

Mountain Gorillas are the dominant gorilla species. Being the biggest primates around (and the inspiration of King Kong) they are also rare for many reasons. They live in mountain areas in Africa, for example: Uganda. Mountain gorillas spend a lot of time on the ground rather than swinging in the trees. Alpha male Mountain Gorillas are called "Silverbacks". Silverbacks are usually the only adult male in a pack of Mountain Gorillas. They are called silverbacks because their hair darkens and they develop a large amount of grey fur on their back. They schedule feeding trips and resting to protect their pack.



**Silverback Gorilla (Alpha male Mountain Gorilla).**

## **THE CAUSE:**

Mountain Gorillas are sold for a high price on the black market (illegal market), dead or alive. Hunters are big fans, because of the mountain gorillas' amazing bushmeat. A lot of Mountain Gorilla habitats are taken down because of humans making new buildings or finding trees to chop down for wood. They are also very vulnerable to viruses or diseases. They are captured by zoos and/or poached as babies. Sometimes Mountain Gorillas will accidentally fall into a trap set for a different animal.



**Mountain Gorillas (especially silverbacks) bang their chest to warn predators that they are mighty and strong.**

## **THE EFFECTS:**

Sadly, there are no more wild areas with Mountain Gorillas that haven't been confirmed. That means that we now know where all of them are. There are less Mountain Gorilla habitats. There are now only 800 left in the wild. Mountain Gorillas are responsible for keeping plants from overgrowing, so it is easier for other animals to navigate. Without it, there will be plant overgrowth, leading to bike/hiking paths to be blocked, and will cause other animals to migrate from their original homes.



**Baby male Mountain Gorillas train their whole life to become a mighty silverback.**

## **SOCIAL ACTION - WHAT'S BEING DONE:**

Poaching/killing baby Gorillas is now extremely illegal. Poaching/killing baby Mountain Gorillas can lead to a 5.4 million dollar fine, life imprisonment and even death if you don't pay the fine. You are not allowed to go looking for Mountain Gorillas unless you have paid the wildlife reserve that will most likely be close to the habitat, and you need to have a professional with you at all times. All the money that is paid goes toward saving more mountain gorilla habitats.

## **MY OPINION:**

I strongly agree that people who do poach or kill Mountain Gorillas should get a large fine and get a lifetime sentence in prison. These are endangered species and they should not be hunted. If the Mountain Gorilla went extinct, most animals would become endangered considering what the Mountain Gorillas do for the environment. More action should be taken though. Maybe add extra security around the location of these gorillas so they don't get poached/killed. I'm certain that if we continue to raise awareness and stop poaching/killing, we should have at least 1,500 left in the wild by 2025.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

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