

## Threats facing wildlife

### Assembly Resource Notes – October 2018

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To share knowledge of selected species</li> <li>• To understand the threats facing a range of wildlife species</li> </ul>	
About Born Free  <b>NB:</b> Animal welfare work includes both campaigning against the keeping of wild animals in captivity and individual animal rescue and care (pictured – Sinbad)	Slide 2	<p>History:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 1966, Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers starred in the classic wildlife film <i>Born Free</i>. The film told the true story of conservationists Joy and George Adamson who rescued a lioness cub called Elsa and successfully returned her to the wild.</li> <li>• Virginia and Bill went on to make a number of wildlife films together, including in 1969 <i>An Elephant Called Slowly</i> with an elephant calf called Pole Pole. When filming was over, Pole Pole was gifted to London Zoo by the Kenyan government.</li> <li>• Virginia and Bill did everything they could to prevent this, but Pole Pole was sent to London. In 1982, Virginia and Bill went to visit Pole Pole at the zoo. Pole Pole, in clear distress, remembered Virginia and Bill and stretched out her trunk to reach them.</li> <li>• Virginia and Bill launched a campaign to give Pole Pole a better life but in 1983, aged 16, Pole Pole died. Determined that her death would not be in vain, in 1984, Virginia, Bill and their eldest son Will launched Zoo Check – the charity that has evolved into Born Free.</li> </ul> <p>Present day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born Free works tirelessly to ensure all wild animals, whether living in captivity or in the wild, are treated with compassion and respect and are able to live their lives according to their needs.</li> <li>• As a leading wildlife charity, they oppose the exploitation of wild animals in captivity and campaign to keep them where they belong – in the wild.</li> <li>• They promote Compassionate Conservation to enhance the survival of threatened species in the wild and protect natural habitats, while respecting the needs and safeguarding the welfare of individual animals.</li> <li>• They seek to have a positive impact on animals in the wild and protect their ecosystems in perpetuity, for their own intrinsic value and for the critical roles they play within the natural world.</li> </ul>
African elephants	Slide 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African elephants, the largest land mammal on Earth, are the symbol of the continent. Known for their intelligence, complex communication and close family units, these powerful giants are also the engineers that maintain many of Africa's diverse habitats. Many forests in central Africa depend on elephants for seed dispersal and to create open spaces through which seedlings can grow, these are forests that sequester carbon and release water and oxygen, therefore playing a key role in global climate control.</li> <li>• Elephants are a keystone species on which many plants and animals depend. They are found both in forests and on savannahs, where they sometimes gather in their thousands to feed and drink.</li> <li>• Living alongside these animals has always been a challenge for humans, but in recent memory conflict has been increasingly rife. Man has long killed elephants for their ivory, persecuted them for raiding crops and removed them from the wild to work for us and perform for our entertainment. However, alongside this troubled</li> </ul>

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		<p>relationship, in recent years they have attracted tourists from around the world. Their highly developed social structure, behaviour and beauty make them a wonder to behold in their natural habitat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The understanding and protection of elephants is not only important for their continued survival, but also for the survival of their habitats, thereby directly affecting entire ecosystems and indirectly affecting the communities living around them, and indeed around the world.</li> <li>• But... elephants are in crisis. A century ago there were an estimated five million elephants in Africa. Today, there are less than half a million. On average, at least 55 elephants are killed by poachers every day for their tusks. That's about one every 25 minutes. Many experts have predicted that, unless poaching can be effectively addressed, elephants could all but disappear from many of Africa's wild places in the coming decades.</li> <li>• Born Free has been campaigning for a global ban on the trade in ivory since 1989.</li> </ul>
The Elephant Family - Amboseli Trust for Elephants (Kenya)  <b>NB:</b> The calf in the photo is Ewok, born in 2013, he is Echo's grandson	Slide 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Elephant Family, otherwise known as the EB family, lives in Amboseli National Park in Kenya.</li> <li>• The EBs are world-famous and won the hearts of audiences worldwide when they starred in the TV series: <i>BBC Natural World 1997 - Echo of the Elephants, Africa's Forgotten Elephants</i>. The family has been studied and monitored by elephant expert Cynthia Moss and her Amboseli Trust for Elephants team since 1973 and this work has been supported by Born Free since 1992.</li> <li>• The 393km<sup>2</sup> Amboseli National Park is one of Kenya's most well-loved and visited national parks. It is renowned for its elephant population, which numbers more than 1,300 individuals.</li> <li>• The park nestles at the foot of the snow-capped 5,895m (19,340ft) Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain.</li> </ul>
Green turtle	Slide 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are seven species of sea turtle. The largest is the leatherback which can grow up to three metres in length and weigh up to 900kg. The smallest species are the olive ridley and Kemp's ridley at just 65cm long and 40kg in weight.</li> <li>• Having been around for approximately 245 million years, sea turtles are some of the Earth's most ancient creatures and the seven species still found today are approximately half the size of their ancestors. Their hardened shells are streamlined, making them efficient swimmers in the continental shelves where they are generally found.</li> <li>• After taking to the water for the first time, males will not return to shore again, whereas females come ashore, often to the same beach, to lay their eggs in nests that they dig during the nesting season.</li> <li>• Over the last century sea turtle numbers have plummeted for a number of reasons, including: exploitation for their meat and other products, disturbance of nesting beaches associated with the tourism industry, light pollution, egg harvesting, by-catch in the fishing industry, rising sea levels and marine pollution.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combined, these threats have caused a rapid decline in global populations which take a long time to recover as turtles are slow to reproduce and do not mature for 30 years.</li> <li>Young turtles are highly vulnerable and even though females lay hundreds of eggs, a tiny proportion of these survive to become adults.</li> <li>Today an additional threat comes from the plastic pollution in our oceans – a plastic bag can easily be mistaken for a jelly fish.</li> </ul>
The Turtle Family – Sea Sense (Tanzania)	Slide 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over a quarter of the Tanzanian population live on the coast and rely solely on marine resources for their livelihoods. Due to this ongoing pressure, some marine species, particularly sea turtles and dugongs, are critically endangered in Tanzania.</li> <li>Seas off the Tanzanian coast are home to five species of sea turtle, two of which (the green and hawksbill) nest on Tanzania's beaches each year. Sadly, sea turtles frequently drown in fishing nets as by-catch and a targeted green turtle fishery exists at several locations along the Tanzanian coast. Poaching of sea turtle eggs is also commonplace which dramatically decreases the number of hatchlings successfully reaching adulthood.</li> <li>Sea Sense works closely with coastal communities to enhance the conservation status of these species as well as their habitats in Tanzania. Building capacity for marine resource management is an integral part of their work and is helping communities find alternatives to unsustainable activities.</li> </ul>
Tigers	Slide 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tigers are the largest cat on Earth.</li> <li>It is estimated that approximately 4,000 wild tigers remain in the world.</li> <li>In the wild, tigers continue to be persecuted and killed relentlessly due to demand for their skins as luxury rugs and home décor, and for their bones which are used to make medicines and 'health tonic' wine. The forests they live in are threatened by encroachment, mines, dams, palm oil plantations, roads and railways, turning tiger havens into ever diminishing forest islands, many of them devoid of wild prey. In addition, tigers are in increasing conflict with people living alongside them who encroach on their habitat, compete for their prey and persecute tigers in return for livestock deaths.</li> </ul>
Jasper (Cambodia)  <b>NB:</b> Jasper has never been a fan of cameras	Slide 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jasper is an Indo-Chinese tiger who lives at Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre in southern Cambodia, in south east Asia, just 25 miles from capital city Phnom Penh.</li> <li>Jasper was born in October 1998 and has known terrible suffering. He was just a newborn cub when he was found with poachers. It is highly likely that the poachers were after, and killed, his mother. Jasper was then probably destined for life in a tiger farm or zoo, but fortunately an official from the Wildlife Protection Office confiscated him from a wildlife trader in east Cambodia.</li> </ul>
Orca  <b>NB:</b> This first slide shows	Slide 9 and 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The distinctive black and white orca, or 'killer whale', is the largest member of the dolphin family – an adult male can grow to nine metres long and weigh 10 tonnes.</li> </ul>

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<p>orca in the wild while the second slide shows two orca in captivity, performing as entertainment – to highlight the difference</p> <p>Stats from:  <a href="#">WDC / the fate of captive orcas</a></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamlined and powerful, the orca is perfectly adapted for marine life and one of the ocean's fastest mammals (reaching 56 km/hour).</li> <li>• Orca live up to 80 years or more, are highly intelligent and lead complex social lives. Permanent mother-led groups form extended families called 'pods' which hunt, rest, play and travel together. Though mothers are the primary caregivers, everyone plays a part in caring for the young.</li> <li>• Orca all belong to a single species which is then divided into nine distinct ecotypes – three in the north Pacific, two in the north Atlantic and four in the southern hemisphere – each of these ecotypes has its own distinctive culture (hunting technique and prey) and distinguishable language.</li> </ul>
<p>Springer – Orca Lab (Canada)</p> <p><b>NB:</b> Photo is of Springer and her two babies</p>	Slide 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagine living in a bathtub for 49 years.</li> <li>• In 2013 the film <i>Blackfish</i> made people sit up and listen – it highlighted the intelligence of these animals, their emotional bonds and the many issues they face in captivity at the hands of humans.</li> <li>• Born Free believes that wildlife belongs in the wild.</li> <li>• For the past 23 years we have supported the work of OrcaLab. Based in British Columbia, Canada, they monitor the northern resident community of orcas (a group of orca within the 'Resident' ecotype of the North Pacific).</li> <li>• Springer is a member of this community. After her mother's death in 2002, she was found alone near Seattle in the USA. Just a few years old she was far too young to fend for herself.</li> <li>• At the time, captive facilities offered to 'rescue' her but thanks to the work of OrcaLab and other partners (including Born Free) she was taken by boat, back up to Canada where her extended family still lived. Two days after arriving she was reunited with her family.</li> <li>• 16 years later she now has two babies of her own! The second one was born in 2017.</li> <li>• However, while safe from life in captivity, she still faces threats in the wild – the current greatest challenge to Springer and her babies is lack of food caused by declining salmon populations.</li> </ul>
<p>Additional information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Remembering Pole Pole:</b> <a href="https://vimeo.com/291953363">https://vimeo.com/291953363</a></li> <li>• <b>Species information:</b> <a href="https://www.bornfree.org.uk/animals">https://www.bornfree.org.uk/animals</a></li> <li>• <b>Plastic Watch:</b> <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/11CnCQR0GJfkDgJs57sR5Ps/plastics-action">www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/11CnCQR0GJfkDgJs57sR5Ps/plastics-action</a></li> <li>• <b>Inside the Tanks:</b> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hy9gt-f3I6Q">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hy9gt-f3I6Q</a></li> </ul>		
Key Words	Elephants; Conflict; Ivory; Turtles; Pollution; Tigers; Poaching; Orca; Captivity	