

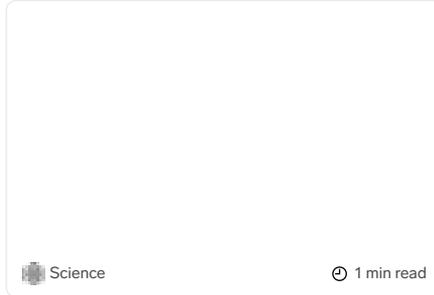
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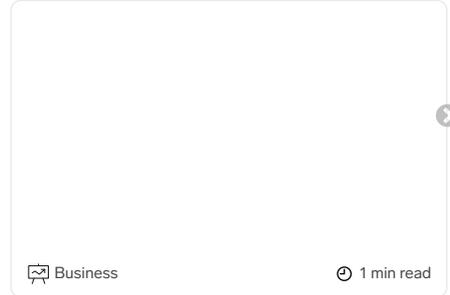
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Mexico has a shockingly high number of threatened and endangered species

Ellie Kincaid Apr 16 2015 02:42 IST



Around a quarter of the world's mammal species are threatened, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, which updates its Red List of Threatened Species yearly.

A map of the countries with the most threatened mammal species (courtesy of the Eco Experts) shows that Mexico, with 101 threatened mammals, is one of the countries with the most. Calling a species "threatened" means scientists have classified it as either critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable.

The Eco Experts, data from the World Bank So why is Mexico one of the worst offenders?

One factor contributing to Mexico's high number of threatened mammal species is the country's high biodiversity. According to the IUCN, Mexico has the 4th highest number of mammal species of any country in the world, at 523. Too bad nearly a fifth are in trouble.



in many flavors. In Mexico, IUCN data names agriculture as a key threat for 46 of the 101 threatened species, and logging is a problem for 42 of them. The next biggest factor that eats away at animal habitats is developing land for residential or commercial use, which is having a big impact on 17 mammal species in the country.

### Who's in trouble?



[Flickr/Dave Johnson](#)

A black howling monkey.

Deforestation, hunting, and disease are the biggest threats for the endangered **Black Howling Monkey**, which lives in the Yucatan Peninsula. The monkey named for its unique vocalization, achieved through a resonating chamber in its voice box, is both hunted for food and captured to be a pet. Groups as large as 10 monkeys hold "howling sessions" in the early morning, and can be heard farther than a mile away, giving hunters an easy target.

The pet trade is also a problem for the other endangered primate that makes its home in Mexico, **Geoffroy's Spider Monkey**, though habitat loss is its greatest threat. Since 83% of the spider monkey's diet is fruit, it plays a major role dispersing plant seeds in the rainforest. The seeds of a whopping 138 plant species pass through the spider monkey's digestive system en route to their final resting place.



[Wikimedia Commons/US Fish and Wildlife](#)

A kangaroo rat.

The majority of Mexico's endangered mammals (60) are rodents, like the [San Quintin Kangaroo Rat](#). This rodent species is critically endangered, and hasn't been seen since 1986, so it may even be extinct. Everywhere suitable for the kangaroo rat to live has been converted to agriculture, according to the IUCN.

The rest of the list includes several species of bats, shrews, a handful of carnivores, whales, rabbits, a couple hoofed mammals, the Baird's tapir, and the West Indian Manatee, besides the two monkeys.

81 of the 101 threatened mammals in Mexico are [endemic species](#), meaning they're found nowhere else in the world. So if they go extinct in Mexico, they're gone for good.

Here's hoping the San Quintin Kangaroo Rat, for one, is still out there somewhere.

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