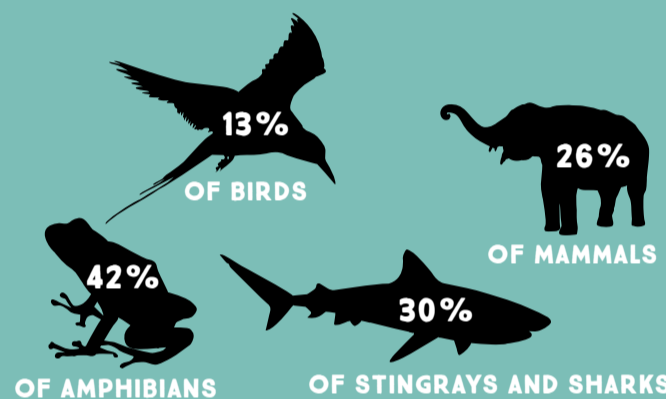


# THE ROOMMATES

## ANIMALS

24,307 SPECIES WORLDWIDE ARE AT RISK OF BECOMING EXTINCT.



2 MILLION: THE NUMBER OF KNOWN ANIMAL SPECIES ON EARTH.

THERE COULD BE BETWEEN 6 AND 28 MILLION SPECIES WE HAVEN'T DISCOVERED YET!

### Today

Nearly 50% of all animal species, including those in the ocean, could disappear by 2050. Hunting, fishing, pollution, the destruction of habitats, the spread of invasive species (which disrupt their new habitat), and global warming\* are to blame.



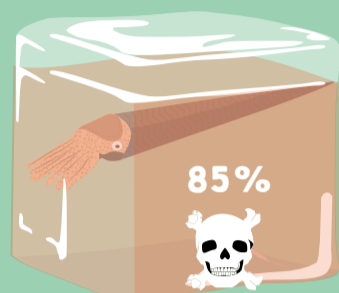
## AN UNCERTAIN LEASE

1

There have been five major extinction phases since life first appeared on Earth. They lasted hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of years. A sixth wave of extinction is happening right now. But this time, animals are dying off 100 to 1,000 times faster than before.

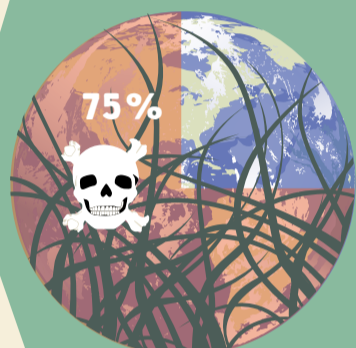
443 MILLION YEARS AGO

Nearly 85% of marine life became extinct. The possible cause: a major freeze that caused the ocean levels to go down.



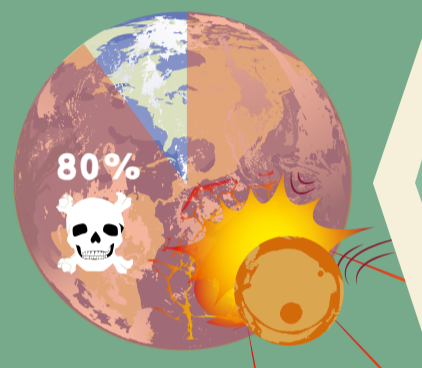
359 MILLION YEARS AGO

Almost 75% of animal species (especially marine) became extinct. The possible cause: either an ice age or a massive influx of terrestrial plant waste that led to a huge increase in algae and bacteria in the sea.



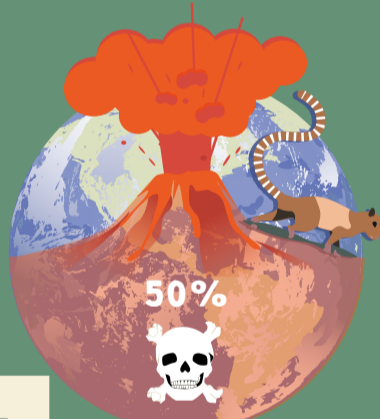
252 MILLION YEARS AGO

More than 90% of marine species and 70% of land species became extinct. The possible causes: A microorganism that suddenly began multiplying in huge numbers, releasing a huge amount of methane into the atmosphere. Or a meteorite that hit Earth, triggering a series of volcanic eruptions that emitted metals and toxic gases into the air.



201 MILLION YEARS AGO

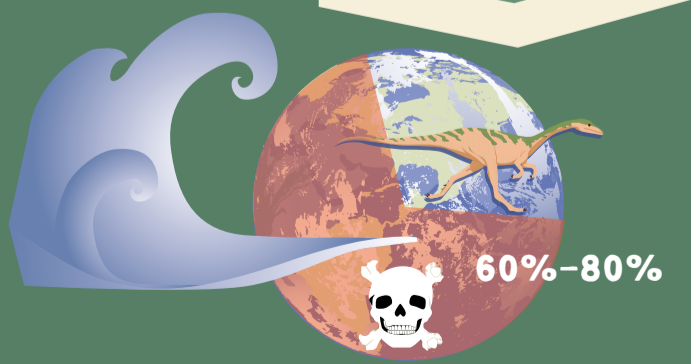
50% of animal species became extinct.



66 MILLION YEARS AGO

60 to 80% of animal species (including the dinosaurs) became extinct. The possible cause: a meteorite hit Earth, causing tsunamis, toxic rains, and a period of global cooling.

The possible cause: a meteorite fell and/or volcanoes erupted, releasing toxic gases that led to global warming\*.



## DIVIDING UP CHORES

2

The term biodiversity\* applies to all animals, plants, bacteria, or fungi on Earth. These organisms are all adapted to their natural habitat (desert, forest, sea, etc.) and interact with each other: this is known as an ecosystem\*.

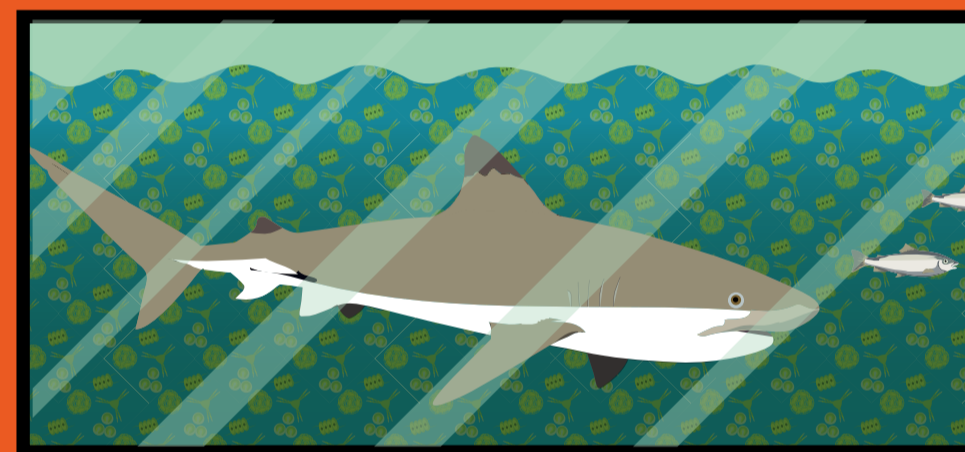
Earthworms enrich the soil we grow our food in. Without them, the soil is depleted.



Honeybees, bumblebees, and butterflies pollinate many flowering plants, which produce much of the fruit and vegetables we eat. Their extinction threatens plants' ability to reproduce, and therefore our ability to eat.



Sharks eat fish, and some of those fish eat tiny algae (phytoplankton). This algae isn't just fish food, though—phytoplankton produce much of the oxygen needed to maintain a balance in the ocean and everywhere on Earth. Over time, a loss of phytoplankton could lead to a mass extinction of marine life and turn the ocean into a dead zone.



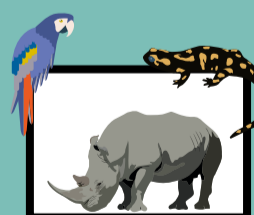
This is just one of many examples. As biodiversity\* declines, it could cause whole ecosystems\* to collapse. The health of our planet depends greatly on the creatures that inhabit it.

## LIVING IN HARMONY

4

### How?

Faced with the staggering number of endangered species, scientists sometimes have to consider which ones to save first: this is called "conservation triage." The species that receive the most protection are often the most endangered, or the most unique, or they are "umbrella species"—animals whose protection leads to that of other animals.



There are many ways to protect animals:

- By preserving their habitats by creating natural reserves.
- By banning poaching and overfishing.
- By introducing endangered species back into their natural environment.

## SHARING THE LIVING SPACE

3

Global warming\*, hunting, large-scale fishing and, more generally, the overexploitation of resources and over-hunting of animals are just a few of the dangers faced by animals. But the destruction of natural habitats is by far the biggest cause of species extinction. Every time humans destroy a meadow or forest to plant crops, or build factories, roads, and houses, the animals that were living there tend to die.



And on top of that, everyone can play their part by not using chemicals in their gardens, so as to protect insects, and by not littering.



### Why?

Not only do animals contribute to the well-being of our planet, they are also the source of much of our food and medicine. Many of our technological inventions and innovations are also inspired by plants and animals in the wild. Plus, there are lots of species we haven't discovered yet—species that could be of great benefit to us some day.

