

CHIMPANZEE

The chimpanzee is one of the four great apes, the others are: bonobos, gorillas and orangutans.

LATIN NAME: *Pan troglodytes*

SUBSPECIES: The western chimpanzee, central chimpanzee, long-haired chimpanzee and the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee.

POPULATION: 170,000-300,000

WHERE TO FIND THEM: 21 countries in Equatorial Africa, including Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guinea and Tanzania.

HABITATS: Woodland savanna and tropical forest.

IUCN STATUS: Endangered

The IUCN Red List is a critical indicator of the health of the world's biodiversity.

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EXTINCT	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED	ENDANGERED	VULNERABLE	NEAR THREATENED	LEAST CONCERNED

LIFESPAN: Up to 50 years in the wild (up to 60 years in captivity)

SIZE: Height: 1-1.7m Weight: 26-70kg (male chimpanzees are larger than females)

DIET: They are *omnivores*,* although 98% of their diet is fruit and plants, they also eat insects, eggs and honey. They will sometimes hunt and eat monkeys or other small mammals.

PREDATORS: Leopards and African rock python.

COMMUNICATION:



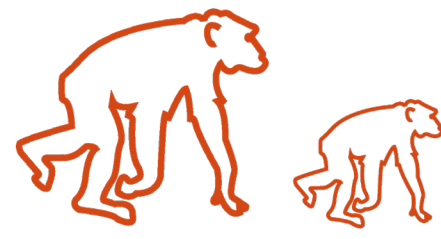
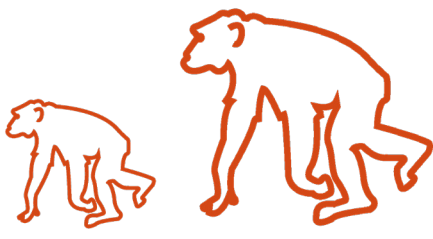
FOR YOUNG READERS: Just as people talk to one another using words, chimpanzees pull lots of different faces and make lots of sounds to talk to one another.

They will also hug one another and can laugh just like us!

Chimpanzees communicate with many different facial expressions and an estimated 30 different calls. One of these calls is known as the 'Pant-Hoot' and each chimp has its own unique version, it is a long call and is useful for communicating over long distances. They will also hug to show affection, touch one another, and laugh.

Biologically, chimpanzees are more closely related to humans than they are to gorillas, sharing between 95-98% of our genes.*





CHIMPANZEE



FOR YOUNG READERS:

Chimpanzees live together in groups called communities. They are very smart animals and use tools to help them to do things. Chimpanzees use sticks to catch insects in their nest so they can eat them. Chimps can also use rocks to crush hard nuts and sometimes, when it's raining they will use big leaves as umbrellas.

Chimpanzees like to live where there are lots of trees, they use their long arms to help them to swing through the branches.

At night they make a nest of leaves up in a tree to sleep in.

Chimpanzees are very strong, much stronger than a person.

BEHAVIOUR

Communities: chimpanzees live in groups known as communities, which are led by one *dominant** male, there is a strict *hierarchy** of male chimpanzees, there is also an *alpha** (top) female chimpanzee, but the alpha male is the one in charge.

These communities can sometimes be very large, up to 150 animals; however, when they look for food, sleep or move to new places, it tends to be in smaller groups of around 10 chimpanzees, known as parties.

Grooming: chimpanzees use grooming to strengthen relationships within their troop, as well as to get rid of irritating insects, dirt and dead skin. Grooming can help to calm tense situations between chimps.

Tool use: chimpanzees are very smart and will use tools to help them with different activities, for example opening seeds by crushing them with a rock, using sticks to 'fish' for ants or

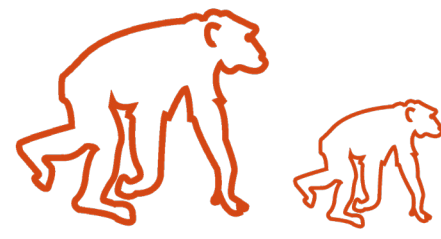
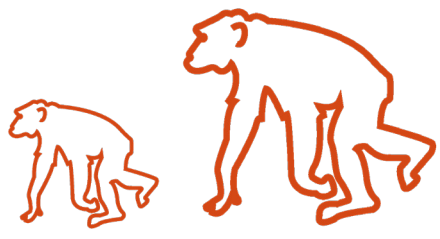
termites or using large leaves as umbrellas to shelter from the rain.

Knuckle walking: when they are not up in the trees, chimpanzees spend much of their time on the ground walking on all four limbs, known as 'knuckle walking'. They can also walk on their hind legs like humans do.

Nests: chimps are diurnal, meaning they are active in the day. To avoid nocturnal predators at night, chimpanzees make a fresh nest of leaves high up in the trees to sleep in.

Aggression: chimpanzees can be aggressive, groups of males will attack other chimps, sometimes these fights can result in death. A fully-grown chimp is stronger than an adult human and can run at around 40 kmph. Male chimpanzees will put on displays to show their power, with their hair standing on end (to make them look bigger), they will drag branches, throw rocks and scream to show off to other chimpanzees.





CHIMPANZEE

LIFECYCLE:



FOR YOUNG READERS: For the first few months of its life a baby chimpanzee clings onto the fur on its mother's stomach while she moves around. When they are a little older, they ride around on her back instead!

Young: chimpanzee females can reproduce from the age of 13 years, they mostly give birth to a single baby every 5-6 years, occasionally they may have twins. There is no breeding season and they can give birth at any time of year. For the first few months of its life, the baby chimp hangs onto the fur on its mother's stomach, then they switch to riding on her back until they are around two years old. Baby chimpanzees stay with their mothers for around 7-10 years, during that time they will learn lots of useful information about being an adult chimp, such as how to use tools, build nests and look for safe food to eat.

Tail tuft: baby chimps are born with a white tail tuft which gets darker as they age.

Growing up: male chimpanzees will stay with the family group that they are born into for their whole lives, females are more likely to leave the group and join a new one.



ADAPTATIONS:



FOR YOUNG READERS: Chimps have long arms which help them to swing through the trees. They are good at holding things with their hands and their feet!

Opposable thumbs and big toes: enable chimps to grip things with their hands and feet.

At home in the trees: mobile shoulder joints, long arms and fingers mean that chimpanzees are at home up in the trees, looking for food and resting. Chimpanzees have longer arms than legs - their long arms help them to swing through the trees, known as brachiation.

Community living: there is safety in numbers. Living in large groups means there are more chimps to keep a lookout for danger as there are more eyes to spot predators and more mouths to sound the alarm when a threat is detected. The troop can then band together and drive the predator away.

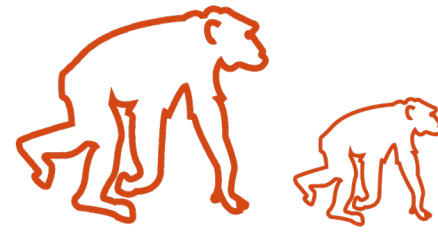
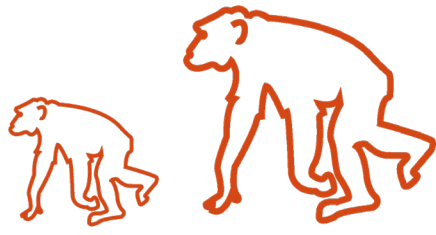
Tools: using tools means that chimps can access food that they wouldn't be able to without tools.

Senses: good eyesight, hearing and sense of smell enables chimps to avoid predators and find food.

No tail: unlike monkeys, apes do not have tails.

Clever: a large brain relative to body size means that chimps are very intelligent animals. They can make and use tools and, unlike many animals, they are able to recognise their own reflection in a mirror; this is a sign of intelligence.

CHIMPANZEE



WHY CHIMPANZEES ARE IMPORTANT:



FOR YOUNG READERS:

Chimpanzees help to keep the forests healthy by eating lots of plants and seeds. When they go to the toilet the seeds come out in their dung and the plants can start growing in new places.

Seed dispersal: 98% of a chimp's diet is made up of plant matter. They particularly like seeds. The seeds make their way through the chimp's digestive system and come out ready packed in fertilizer, the chimp's poo!

As the chimps move around they poo, spreading the seeds far from the parent plant, helping to ensure that there are lots of different species of plants in the forests, and keeping the ecosystem healthy.

WHY DO CHIMPANZEES NEED OUR HELP?



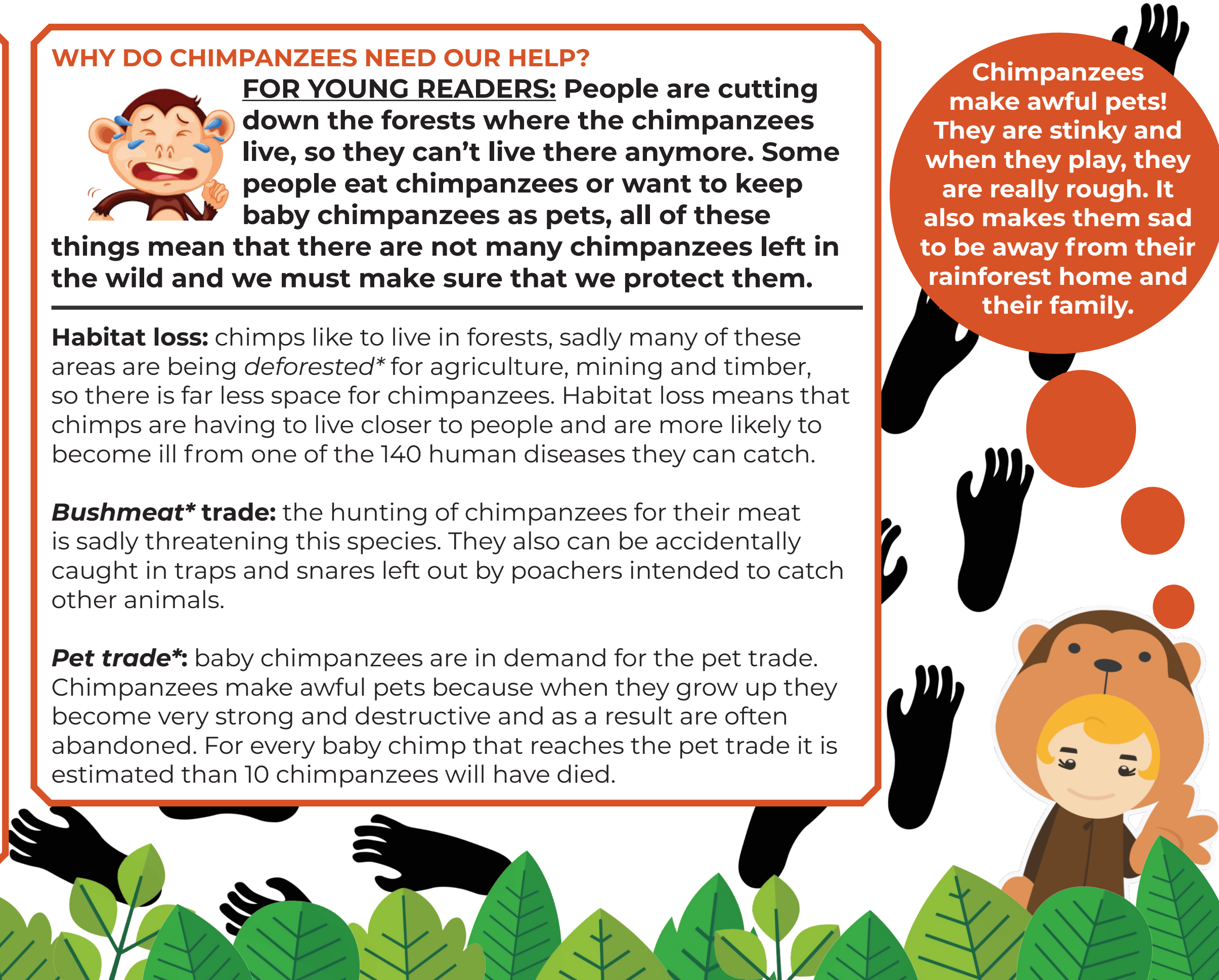
FOR YOUNG READERS: People are cutting down the forests where the chimpanzees live, so they can't live there anymore. Some people eat chimpanzees or want to keep baby chimpanzees as pets, all of these things mean that there are not many chimpanzees left in the wild and we must make sure that we protect them.

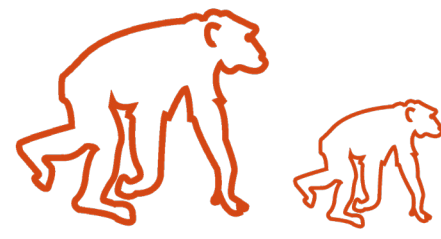
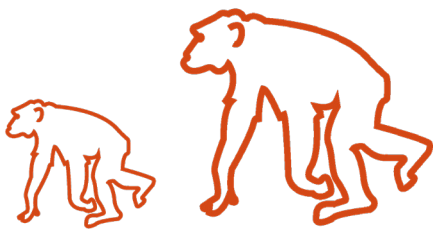
Habitat loss: chimps like to live in forests, sadly many of these areas are being *deforested** for agriculture, mining and timber, so there is far less space for chimpanzees. Habitat loss means that chimps are having to live closer to people and are more likely to become ill from one of the 140 human diseases they can catch.

***Bushmeat** trade:** the hunting of chimpanzees for their meat is sadly threatening this species. They also can be accidentally caught in traps and snares left out by poachers intended to catch other animals.

***Pet trade**:** baby chimpanzees are in demand for the pet trade. Chimpanzees make awful pets because when they grow up they become very strong and destructive and as a result are often abandoned. For every baby chimp that reaches the pet trade it is estimated that 10 chimpanzees will have died.

Chimpanzees make awful pets! They are stinky and when they play, they are really rough. It also makes them sad to be away from their rainforest home and their family.





CHIMPANZEE

HOW DOES DSWF HELP?

DSWF supports the Chimpanzee Conservation Centre (known as CCC) in Guinea, Africa, with their **education** work, which aims to **reduce local demand** for chimpanzees, and to **raise awareness** about the illegal wildlife trade. Educators help people to understand that wildlife crime is against the law, and how important it is to protect chimpanzees.

CCC also provide a rehabilitation and release programme for chimpanzees that are rescued from the illegal wildlife trade.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

ADOPT - by adopting a chimpanzee you will directly fund DSWF's ground-based work protecting chimpanzees.

USE YOUR VOICE - to let others know about the problems chimpanzees are facing and how you can help protect them.

BE MORE GREEN - there are lots of things that we can all do to help the planet and it's incredible wildlife, [click this link](#) to find out what you can do!

*GLOSSARY:

- *Alpha*: the top chimpanzee, the one which is the most dominant.
- *Bushmeat*: the meat of wild animals used as food.
- *Deforested*: the cutting down of trees and forests.
- *Dominant*: most powerful.
- *Ecosystem*: living things interacting with one another and their environment.
- *Genes*: a part of a chromosome. Genes give a particular characteristic for eye colour, which can be passed to offspring from a parent.
- *Hierarchy*: ranked according to how dominant each chimp is.
- *Omnivore*: eats a diet including both plant and animal food.
- *Pet trade*: people buying and selling animals as pets.

World
Chimpanzee
Day is
celebrated
annually on 14
July.

