GREAT APES

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SPECIES	**GORILLA** **Eastern Gorilla; Western Gorilla**	**CHIMPANZEE** (also called Common Chimpanzee)	**BONOBO** (also called Pygmy, Dwarf, or Gracile Chimpanzee)	**ORANGUTAN** **Bornean Orangutan; Sumatran Orangutan**	GIBBON **There are 16 species of Gibbons: Lar Gibbon; Bornean White-bearded Gibbon; Agile Gibbon; Müller's Bornean Gibbon; Silvery Gibbon; Pileated Gibbon; Kloss's Gibbon; Western Hoolock Gibbon; Eastern Hoolock Gibbon; Siamang; Northern Buffed-cheeked Gibbon; Black Crested Gibbon; Eastern Black Crested Gibbon; Northern White-cheeked Gibbon; Southern White-cheeked Gibbon; Yellow-cheeked Gibbon**
SCIENTIFIC NAME	*Gorilla beringei; Gorilla gorilla*	*Pan troglodytes*	*Pan paniscus*	*Pongo pygmaeus; Pongo abelii*	*Hylobates lar; Hylobates albibarbis; Hylobates agilis; Hylobates muelleri; Hylobates moloch; Hylobates pileatus; Hylobates klossii; Hoolock hoolock; Hoolock leuconedys; Symphalangus syndactylus; Nomascus annamensis; Nomascus concolor; Nomascus nasutus; Nomascus leucogenys; Nomascus siki; Nomascus gabriellae*
DISTRIBUTION	Angola, Burundi (possibly extinct), Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria (75-110 Cross River Gorillas remaining in the country), Rwanda, Uganda	Angola, Benin (extinct), Burkina Faso (possibly extinct), Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia (extinct, but re-introduced), Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau (possibly extinct), Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda (possibly extinct), Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Togo (extinct), Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania	Democratic Republic of Congo (their range does not overlap with that of chimpanzees)	Sumatra, Borneo	Bangladesh, Borneo, Cambodia, China, India, Java, Laos, Malaysia, the Mentawai Islands; the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Burma), Singapore, Sumatra, Thailand, Vietnam
POPULATION ESTIMATES* *With all species of apes, there is a general lack of reliable and comprehensive population data. Even the most reliable sources caution that population estimates are very difficult to develop due to the transient nature of some animals, political instability in home ranges, the remoteness of habitats, and a variety of other limiting factors. Therefore, these population estimates are just that, estimates, which are derived from recent population surveys by various international and non-governmental organizations.	Western Gorilla: Western lowland gorilla 94,500 Cross River gorilla 200 (Africa's most endangered Great Ape) Eastern Gorilla: Mountain gorilla 700 Eastern lowland gorilla 2,000 - 16,900	Eastern Chimpanzee: 76,400 – 119,600 Western Chimpanzee: 21,300 – 55,600 Central Chimpanzee: 70,000 – 116,500 Nigerian Chimpanzee: 5,000 – 8,000 Estimates for the total number of remaining chimpanzees range from 100,000 – 300,000 in the wild.	10,000 – 200,000	Sumatran Orangutan: 6,600 – 7,300 Bornean Orangutan: 45,000 – 69,000	Lar Gibbon: Unknown (due to lack of comprehensive surveys) Bornean White-bearded Gibbon: Unknown (due to lack of comprehensive surveys) Agile Gibbon: Unknown (due to lack of comprehensive surveys) Müller's Bornean Gibbon: 250,000 – 375,000 Silvery Gibbon: 4,000 – 4,500 Pileated Gibbon: Unknown (due to lack of comprehensive surveys) Kloss's Gibbon: 20,000 – 25,000 Western Hoolock Gibbon: Uncertain (due to unsurveyed habitats and uncertainty as to species identification in known habitats) Eastern Hoolock Gibbon: 10,000 – 50,000 (only about 170 individuals remain in India, and 50-300 individuals remain in China) Siamang: at least 22,000 Northern Buffed-cheeked Gibbon: Unknown (due to lack of comprehensive survey data) Black Crested Gibbon: 1,300 – 2,000 Eastern Black Crested Gibbon: 26 - 47 Northern White-cheeked Gibbon: Unknown Southern White-cheeked Gibbon: Unknown (due to lack of available population estimates from some range countries) Yellow-cheeked Gibbon: Uncertain (due to uncertainty as to species identification in known habitats)
POPULATION TRENDS* * Given the general lack of reliable and comprehensive population data on all species of apes, it follows that predictions and measurements concerning population trends may be skewed by inaccurate and incomplete baseline data. The information provided herein is a compilation of observations, estimated trends and predictions published by the United Nations Environment Program, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and other international and non-governmental organizations.	In general, all populations of gorillas are in decline. The eastern lowland gorilla population has faced the most extreme population reduction, with an estimated 70% decline since 1994. Although tremendously small, the mountain gorilla population may be on the rise, making this group one of the only known populations of apes that is increasing. A recent survey estimated that the Virunga mountain gorilla population has increased from 250 individuals to 380 individuals since 1989 (17% increase). Despite civil wars in this area, the animals have been protected by national park agencies in Rwanda, Congo, and Uganda. Despite that localized success, the United Nations Environment Program estimates that most gorilla populations could become extinct within the next 10 – 15 years.	In general, all populations of chimpanzees are in severe decline and according to IUCN, this decline is expected to continue for the next three to four decades. A recent study showed that the chimpanzee population in the Ivory Coast dropped 90% in the past twenty years. The largest remaining populations occur in central Africa (Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Cameroon). They are now extinct in four (possibly six) of their 25 original range countries. Meanwhile, their numbers are extremely depleted in many other countries and in some areas only small remnant populations remain.	Because of the vast range in the baseline population numbers, accurate calculations of population trends are unlikely. However, researchers can look to the tangible habitat loss and other factors affecting the species to determine that the population is likely at the lower end of the estimated population range and continuing to decline. According to IUCN, the remaining populations have experienced a significant decline over the past few decades and will continue to decline for the next five decades.	The populations of both Bornean and Sumatran orangutans have declined by 50% to 80% in the past 75 years. According to some estimates Sumatran orangutans are disappearing at a rate of 1,000 individuals per year. However, in 2003 a new population of Sumatran orangutans was established in the Bukit Tigapuluh National Park (Jambi and Riau Provinces). The population, which is made up of confiscated illegal pets who have been re-released into the wild, currently numbers at least 125 individuals, and is reproducing naturally. The Bornean Forestry Ministry announced plans in early 2011 to release 1,200 confiscated orangutans back into the wild. However, rampant habitat destruction and poaching may prevent the successful re-establishment of those animals in forest reserves.	According to IUCN, all species of gibbons are in decline, averaging a 50% population reduction in the past five decades. Some species, such as the Black Crested Gibbon and the Eastern Black Crested Gibbon, have experienced an 80% population reduction during that period.
HABITAT	All gorilla populations are increasingly being forced into fragmented and isolated habitats. Mountain gorillas live in a trans-national gorilla reserve on the slopes of extinct volcanoes in the Virunga Mountain Range. Eastern and western lowland gorillas inhabit dense rain forests and swamps.	Chimpanzees live in a wide variety of habitats, including tropical rain forests, forest edges and clearings, open woodlands, swamp forests, bamboo forests, and savannas.	Bonobos inhabit a relatively large range of tropical lowland rainforests of the Congo Basin, south of the Congo River. Despite the large range size (which is about the size of the United Kingdom), bonobos populations are scattered, disconnected, and often isolated from one another.	Orangutans, which once thrived throughout Southeast Asia, are now found only in the tropical rainforests of Borneo and Sumatra. Bornean orangutans do not occur throughout the entire island and their distribution is patchy throughout their remaining range. Likewise, Sumatran orangutans have disappeared from many parts Sumatra. Today, they are largely restricted to the northern part of the island and populations are becomingly increasingly fragmented. Recent scientific studies have determined that isolated local populations consisting of less than 50 individuals are not viable and will likely become extinct within 100 years. In general, all orangutans are arboreal, meaning that they spend most of their time in trees. (Sumatran orangutans spend more of their time in trees than their Bornean counterparts.) As a result, they are highly dependent on forested habitats for their survival. All orangutans tend to prefer low-lying flood-prone forests and swamplands because of the higher abundance of fruits in those areas.	All species of gibbons are completely arboreal (tree-dwelling) and occur exclusively in tropical and subtropical rainforests.
STATUS	**U.S. Endangered Species Act**: Endangered **CITES**: Appendix I **IUCN RedList**: Endangered (one of four sub-species) Critically Endangered (three of four sub-species) **African Convention**: Class A (hunting or capture of the species are prohibited unless in the national interest or for scientific purposes)	**U.S. Endangered Species Act**: Endangered (wild) Threatened (captive) **CITES**: Appendix I **IUCN RedList**: Endangered (i.e. facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future) **African Convention**: Class A (hunting or capture of the species are prohibited unless in the national interest or for scientific purposes)	**U.S. Endangered Species Act**: Endangered **CITES**: Appendix I **IUCN RedList**: Endangered (i.e. facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future) **African Convention**: Class A (hunting or capture of the species are prohibited unless in the national interest or for scientific purposes)	**U.S. Endangered Species Act**: Endangered **CITES**: Appendix I **IUCN RedList**: Endangered (Bornean Orangutan) Critically Endangered (Sumatran Orangutan)	**U.S. Endangered Species Act**: Endangered **CITES**: Appendix I **IUCN RedList**: All species except the Eastern Hoolock Gibbon are either Endangered or Critically Endangered

THREATS TO SURVIVAL	**Habitat Loss:** Many forests that gorillas occupy are being converted to farmland and livestock grazing ranges. In addition, many areas have been transformed by commercial logging petroleum exploration, and mineral extraction. Even areas that have been relatively unspoiled by human presence are susceptible to destruction by natural (or man-made) disasters. In 2009, a series of wildfires nearly destroyed a key mountain gorilla habitat along the Rwanda-Uganda border. **Bushmeat Trade:** In addition to the consumption of gorillas by the local communities that share or surround gorilla habitats, the hunting and sale of gorilla meat has been driven upward by a demand from the transient logging, petroleum and mineral company employees. Also, urban black-markets throughout the world continue to offer gorilla meat while new logging roads in formerly dense forests have opened those areas to increased hunting opportunities. **Human Conflict:** War and civil unrest has a negative impact on gorilla populations, not only because those animals can literally be caught in the cross-fire, but also because residents of nearby communities may be forced to abandon their villages and move into the forests. Not only do the refugees threaten gorilla survival by disturbing their behavioral patterns, but they often bring diseases, many of which are transmissible to gorillas, and may resort to hunting the animals for basic sustenance. **Human/Animal Conflict:** In some regions, gorillas face seasonal shortages of forgeable food and have raided crops. Competition with farmers is virtually always a losing proposition for the gorillas, who are generally shot by the farmers and then eaten or sold. Also, gorillas may be injured or killed by traps that are set for other animals. **Traditional Magic/Medicinal Products:** Although the international trade in gorilla parts has declined since the implementation of Conventional on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, gorilla products are still used in some regions for medicinal or traditional magic ("fetish") purposes. Fetish markets in Africa sell gorilla heads, hands, digits, and a variety of other parts, each of which is believed to have some magical power. **Diseases:** Gorillas are susceptible to many human diseases and any time they come into close proximity with residents of surrounding communities, poachers, soldiers, commercial logging and mining workers, conservationists, or tourists, the gorillas may be exposed to novel diseases that could destroy entire populations. Recent Ebola epidemics in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon have killed about one-third of the world's remaining gorillas, and outbreaks of the virus in Uganda and Rwanda may have a serious impact on the gorillas there. Other human diseases, including scabies, respiratory viruses, intestinal parasites, skin disorders, and measles have been observed in gorillas in recent years. In addition to diseases that are transmitted or spread by humans, other diseases like malaria and Anthrax continue to threaten the long-term viability of isolated populations.	**Habitat Loss:** Deforestation is a major threat to the survival of chimpanzees. As their previously undisturbed habitats are converted into slash-and-burn farmland, or opened to logging or mining operations, chimpanzees are increasingly forced to retreat into small, disconnected patches of land. Recent reports estimate that approximately 80% of West and Central African forests have been lost already. **Bushmeat Trade:** Commercial logging and mining operations have created access routes into previously remote and impassable forests, making those areas accessible to chimpanzee poachers. Also, transient logging and mineral company workers have increased the local demand for chimpanzee meat, as they generally subsist on food that they can hunt or buy locally. Logging and mining roads have also increased access to urban markets, facilitating the movement and sale of illegal bushmeat. **Human Conflict:** War and civil unrest has a negative impact on chimpanzee populations, not only because those animals can literally be caught in the cross-fire, but also because residents of nearby communities may be forced to abandon their villages and move into chimpanzee habitats. Not only do the refugees threaten chimpanzee survival by disturbing their behavioral patterns, and exposing the animals to diseases, but without employment or access to farmland they may also resort to hunting the animals for survival. **Human/Animal Conflict**: One major challenge to peaceable co-existence for chimpanzees and humans is the intolerance by local farmers of crop-raiding by the apes. Understandably so when food is in short supply; however, with the ongoing depletion of chimpanzee habitats, the animals are increasingly forced into farmlands and orchards in search of food. The animals are known to pilfer sugar cane, bananas, guavas, papayas, pineapples, oranges, grapefruits, coconuts, rice, millet, sweet potatoes, and a variety of other cultivated foods. While some cultures respect the animals and employ non-lethal methods to deter crop-raiding, others are far less tolerant and kill the chimpanzees to protect their crops. **Traditional Magic/Medicinal Products:** Although the international trade in chimpanzee parts has declined since the implementation of Conventional on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, chimpanzee products are still used in some regions for medicinal or traditional magic purposes. In Cameroon, for example, some people believe that a rub made of oil and pulverized chimpanzee bones will cure a backache. **Diseases:** Chimpanzees are susceptible to many human diseases. As the human population density increases and people steadily encroach on previously undisturbed chimpanzee habitats, the spread of those diseases to chimpanzees is virtually inevitable. Recent and ongoing Ebola virus epidemics in the Ivory coast, Gabon, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have depleted chimpanzee populations in all three regions. Outbreaks in Uganda and Rwanda may have a similarly adverse impact on the chimpanzees in those countries. Other human diseases, including respiratory viruses, tuberculosis, chicken pox, influenza, parasites, and possibly polio can be spread by humans to chimpanzees. In addition to the diseases that are transmitted or spread by residents of surrounding communities, poachers, soldiers, commercial logging and mining workers, conservationists, and tourists, other diseases like simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV), malaria, and Anthrax continue to threaten the long-term viability of the remaining chimpanzee populations in Africa. **Live Animal Trade:** Despite their protection under national laws, the African Convention, and the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora, live chimpanzees continue to be extracted from the wild and sold locally or exported. Often, orphaned infant chimpanzees, who are by-products of the bushmeat trade, are sold throughout the world for use as pets or in the entertainment industry.	**Habitat Loss:** Bonobos only occupy one area on earth, and their finite habitat is rapidly being destroyed by conversion into cropland and commercial logging and mining in the region. This habitat loss forces small populations of bonobos to occupy isolated areas and limits genetic diversity among those animals. **Bushmeat Trade:** The commercial logging and mining operations roads throughout the Congo Basin have opened access for poachers into previously undisturbed areas. In some areas, there is a cultural taboo against eating bonobos; however, commercial hunting of the animals is on the rise and has been sanctioned by the military and government officials, even within protected areas like Salonga National Park, an important bonobo reserve. **Human Conflict:** Ongoing civil unrest in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has had a negative impact on bonobos. Currently, the territories of the opposing factions meet right in the middle of the bonobos' range. Not only do the animals risk getting caught in the cross-fire between humans, but many soldiers actually hunt the animals as well. Also, the human presence and conflict inevitably affects their behavior patterns and forces them out of their home ranges. **Diseases:** Bonobos are susceptible to many human diseases. As the human population density increases and people steadily encroach on previously undisturbed bonobo habitats, the spread of those diseases to bonobos is virtually inevitable. Human diseases, including the Ebola virus, respiratory viruses, tuberculosis, hepatitis, chicken pox, influenza, measles, parasites, and possibly polio can be spread by humans to chimpanzees. In addition to those diseases, other diseases like salmonella and malaria threaten the long-term viability of the remaining bonobo populations in Africa. Unlike chimpanzees, bonobos are not known to raid crops, so the instances of human/animal conflicts are low. Also, bonobos are not sold or used as pets, or for entertainment or scientific research at anywhere near the rate that chimpanzees are. In fact, according to recent estimates, there are only about 150 individual bonobos in captivity throughout the world.	**Habitat Loss:** Because orangutans spend up to 90% of their time in trees (and subsist primarily on fruit), their long-term survival is inexorably linked to the fate of the rainforests themselves. The rainforests of Borneo and Sumatra are disappearing at a profound rate and most orangutans (particularly Bornean) live outside of protected areas. Extensive tracts of those forests have been harvested by legal and illegal commercial logging operations (which have increased dramatically since the 2004 tsunami) and the stripped forests are converted to crop land and oil palm plantations. As new roads are developed through the remaining orangutan habitats, the animals are increasingly forced to occupy isolated pockets of land. This threatens the animals by reducing the genetic diversity of offspring and cutting off access to vital foraging grounds. In addition to the deliberate destruction of orangutan habitats, droughts and fires have ravaged several key areas in recent decades. Tens of thousands of orangutans have been lost as a result of those fires. **Poaching:** Although it is illegal under a 1931 Sumatran law to own, kill, capture, or trade in live orangutans, they are still hunted for meat and taken alive for the commercial pet trade. Because mothers and infants share such a strong physical bond, it is nearly always necessary to kill a mother in order to obtain a baby orangutan for the pet trade. Often times, mothers are killed for reasons not related to the pet trade, and the orphaned juveniles present an easy opportunity for the killers to make a profit in the live animal market. Despite national and international laws which ostensibly protect orangutans, a 2009 TRAFFIC report found that there was no indication that the illegal trade in the animals has been abated. **Human Conflict:** The last decade of the twentieth century marked a period of tremendous civil unrest in Indonesia. Government officials were dealing with tremendous political upheaval while illegal deforestation and uncontrolled development marred many orangutan-occupied forests in that country. Furthermore, during that period civil war broke out in the heart of Sumatran orangutan habitat. The deleterious effects of warfare on orangutans are many. First, the animals are often either caught in the cross-fire or forced to flee areas of armed conflict. Second, the introduction of soldiers into orangutan habitats often leads to increased hunting of the animals and disease transmission from the soldiers to orangutans. Also, many civilians may be forced from their communities into the forests where they may hunt the orangutans for survival, spread diseases to the animals, or force the orangutans out of their ranges. **Human/Animal Conflict:** The continuing loss of habitat has reduced the availability of food for orangutans, who naturally turn to cultivated plantations when food is scarce. Plantation owners kill adult orangutans and sell juveniles into the illegal pet trade. **Diseases:** Orangutans are susceptible to many human diseases and within the past century, the population of Indonesia has exploded from around 10 million people to more than 200 million people. As the human population density increases and people steadily encroach on previously undisturbed habitats, transmission of many potentially fatal human diseases to orangutans is virtually inevitable. Human diseases such as respiratory viruses, Ebstein-Barr virus, mumps, dengue, Japanese encephalitis, tuberculosis, and hepatitis have been transmitted to orangutans. Other diseases and ailments like cholera, malaria, intestinal parasites, and scabies threaten the long-term survival of the remaining orangutan populations.	**Habitat Loss:** Because of their disparate ranges and distribution, the different species of gibbons may face slightly different threats to survival. However, because all species are arboreal (meaning that they live in trees) the ongoing deforestation throughout their range countries represents one of the largest threats to their overall survival. With deforestation, gibbons are forced into fragmented sections of the forest remnants. As a result, the genetic diversity of the animals suffer, and many small isolated populations risk imminent extinction. **Poaching:** Like all other apes, gibbons are threatened by illegal poaching. In fact, gibbons are perhaps more susceptible to illegal poaching than other apes because of their distinctive songs, which alert poachers to their presence and locations. Many species of gibbons are captured and sold as pets or for entertainment purposes. It is relatively common for gibbons to be kept as pets or tourist attractions in their home range countries. In many countries, like China, gibbons are also hunted for their meat or used for medicinal purposes. **Human Conflict:** Many species of gibbons live in areas that have experienced civil unrest and wars. For example, Indonesia, a country with seven species of gibbons, has recently suffered a period of tremendous civil unrest resulting in a civil war. The deleterious effects of warfare on gibbons are many. First, the animals are often either caught in the cross-fire or forced to flee areas of armed conflict. Second, the introduction of soldiers into the gibbons' habitats often leads to increased hunting of the animals and disease transmission from the soldiers to gibbons. Also, many civilians may be forced from their communities into the forests where they may hunt the gibbons for survival, spread diseases to the animals, or force the gibbons out of their already fragmented ranges. **Diseases:** Gibbons are susceptible to many human viruses. As the human population density increases in many of their range countries, the animals are increasingly exposed to novel diseases, and they tend to lack the immune response to effectively combat even seemingly innocuous diseases like the flu.
ANATOMY OF AN APE	**Size:** Gorillas are the largest primate. Adult male gorillas (called silverbacks) can reach 400 pounds and can be up to 5 ½ feet tall when standing upright. Mature females can reach about 200 pounds, only about half the size of adult males. A newborn gorilla weighs approximately 4-5 pounds. **Physical Features:** Gorillas and humans have similar builds; however, gorillas have arms that are longer than their legs with bulkier bodies and large chests. Gorillas do not tend to walk on their hind-legs like humans, instead they walk using both their arms and legs for support. Adult male gorillas have a pronounced crest on the top of their skulls; females do not. While their color ranges from brown to black, male gorillas also have silver hair along their backs. Gorillas that live in mountainous regions have longer hair than gorillas that inhabit warmer areas. **Reproduction:** Female gorillas reach sexual maturity when they are 7 - 10 years old; males become sexually mature when they are 10 - 15. The gestation period for gorillas is similar to that of humans, 8 ½ months. Infants are weaned when they are about three years old, and mother gorillas generally care for a single infant for four years before they will have another child.	**Size:** Adult male chimpanzees are about 4 feet tall and weigh from 90 to 130 pounds. Females are generally smaller, averaging about 3 feet tall and usually weighing less than 100 pounds. Baby chimpanzees weigh about 4 pounds at birth. **Physical Features:** One of the most notable physical features of chimpanzees is their long arms, which when outstretched are about 1 ½ times the height of the animals. This enables the animals to walk on their arms and legs while retaining a somewhat upright posture. They are rather stout, but not bulky like gorillas. Chimpanzees have opposable thumbs and opposable big toes. Their large, agile, lips protrude from their faces and can be used to accomplish a variety of tasks. They are covered with brown or black hair over most of their bodies and as infants, they have pale faces that become mottled or black as they age. Infant chimpanzees are easily identified by a tuft of white hair on their back-sides, which disappear as they age. Older chimps may develop grey hair, and like humans some become bald. **Reproduction:** Female chimpanzees reach sexual maturity at about 10 to 13 years of age, and males become sexually mature at about 12 to 16. Both males and females mate with multiple partners, and when faced with a choice between two females, males often pick the older of the two. The gestation period for chimpanzees is the same as that of humans, 9 months, and they typically give birth to one baby at a time. Infant chimpanzees are not weaned from their mothers until they are between 3 and 6 years old. As a result of their long-term dependency, the mortality rate for orphaned infants can be fairly high. Occasionally though, older siblings have been known to adopt orphaned babies and provide the necessary sustenance for those babies. Chimpanzee babies spend a great deal of time with their mothers long after they are weaned and may remain with them throughout adulthood. Female chimpanzees will not have another child until the first is weaned, so even at their most fertile, they will only have one child every 4-5 years, or so. Chimpanzee fathers do not take part in raising the children; the group mating patterns make it virtually impossible to know which chimpanzee sired which child. However, older males in a social group are often quite playful and protective of all the infants in the community.	**Size:** Bonobos are somewhat similar in size to chimpanzees, but have slightly different builds. Adult males average about 100 pounds and females average about 75 pounds. Infants weigh approximately 3 pounds at birth. **Physical Features:** Bonobos have a similar appearance to chimpanzees with a few notable differences. Unlike chimpanzees, bonobos are born with black faces (and retain that facial color throughout their lives). Whereas chimpanzee infants have a white tuft of hair on their rumps that disappear as they mature, bonobos do not lose that white tuft of hair. Bonobos have a more slender build than chimpanzees and the bone ridges above their eyes are less prominent. Also their ears are smaller and their lips are lighter in color than chimpanzees. They also have shorter arms and longer legs than chimpanzees, which is more akin to the leg length of humans. As a result, bonobos tend to walk upright (on two feet) much more often than chimpanzees. Bonobos have black hair on their bodies and have black sideburns on their faces. As with humans, bonobos may develop grey hair as they age. **Reproduction:** Female bonobos reach sexual maturity at about 8 to 11 years of age, but do not usually have their first child until they are 12 or 13 years old. Researchers have had difficulty pinpointing sexual maturity for males, though they believe it may be around nine years of age. When females become sexually mature, they leave their natal groups and join new groups. The animals are very sexual by nature and intercourse with multiple partners of both sexes is very common. Not only does sex serve a reproductive function for bonobos, but it also serves as a psychological and social function. Both male and female bonobos use sex as a way to reduce tension, resolve conflicts, and to strengthen group bonds. According to researchers, females tend to exhibit stronger control over their choice of sexual partners than chimpanzees. As a result, the more dominant male bonobos are not necessarily the ones fathering the majority of a group's offspring. The gestation period for bonobos is similar to that of gorillas, about 8 months. Females typically give birth to one infant every 4-6 years, and male infants remain bonded to their mothers for life. Because of their liberal sexual behavior, it is virtually impossible for bonobos to know which male fathered which infant; however, male bonobos have been observed caring for infants within their groups.	**Size:** Orangutans are the largest arboreal (tree dwelling) mammals on earth. Adult female orangutans weigh about 80 pounds and are approximately 2 ½ - 3 ½ feet tall. Adult males come in two sizes. Unflanged males, which are sexually mature but not yet fully physically developed, are about the same size as females. Flanged males, which are completely physically developed, weigh up to 200 pounds and are approximately 3 ½ to 4 ½ feet tall. Baby orangutans weigh approximately 3 – 4 pounds at birth. **Physical Features:** Orangutans have a large, bulky body that is well-suited to their arboreal lifestyle. Their arms are very long (the arm span of some adult males extends up to 7 feet) and strong. While they are physically capable of walking on two legs, they prefer not to. Because their legs are comparatively much shorter than their arms, when they do walk upright, their arms touch the ground. Orangutans have long reddish-brown hair covering their bodies and a large head with a protruding mouth. Babies are born with pink faces which darken significantly with age. Adult "flanged" males have large cheek pads that continue to grow as they age. **Reproduction:** Females reach sexual maturity by about 10 years of age, but do not tend to give birth until they are about 15. Males become sexually mature when they are approximately 12 years old. However, there are two types of sexually mature males ("flanged" and "unflanged" males), and it can take several years beyond puberty for unflanged males to develop the physical characteristics that are present in flanged males. As they transition from one stage to the other, males grow in size (becoming twice as large as females) and develop long hair on their backs, large cheek pads, and a throat sac which allows them to make the distinguishable long-calls. Both unflanged and flanged males are capable of producing offspring, however they copulate very differently. Unflanged males go out in search of females and force themselves onto females, whether they are receptive or not. Flanged males, on the other hand, use long-calls to notify surrounding females of their presence and then they sit and wait for females to come to them. Like humans, the period of gestation for orangutans is about 9 months, after which females usually give birth to one infant. Baby orangutans are usually weaned by about 4 years of age, but they have been observed intermittently nursing until they are about 7 years old. Of all Great Apes, orangutans have the longest intervals between births, about 8 - 9 years. Males play no part in the rearing of infant and juvenile orangutans.	**Size:** Gibbons are overall quite a bit smaller than the other species of apes. The sizes of both male and female gibbons vary slightly depending on the species. In general, adult males and females are between 1 ½ and 3 feet tall and weigh 12 – 17 pounds. Siamangs, which are the largest species of gibbons weigh between 23 and 28 pounds. **Physical Features**: Like orangutans, the bodies of gibbons are well-suited to their arboreal (tree-dwelling) lifestyle. Their arms are longer than their legs and their wrists have a ball and socket joint which facilitates a large range of movement. Gibbons have opposable thumbs and opposable big toes, which means that they can grasp and carry things with their feet while they swing through trees. Gibbons have thick hair on most of their bodies that ranges in color from light to very dark depending on the species. In some species hair color also varies among the sexes or varies by the age of the animals. Some species of gibbons can be identified by a large white ring of fur surrounding their faces (Lar Gibbons; Bornean White-bearded Gibbon; Agile Gibbon; Müller's Bornean Gibbon; Silvery Gibbon; Pileated Gibbon; Kloss's Gibbon); others are noted for their extremely large throat sacs (siamangs). Some species of gibbons are so alike in appearance that it is extremely difficult (even for biologists) to tell them apart based upon their physical characteristics. Gibbons do tend to have unique songs, which may aid in distinguishing among species. However, to complicate the matter, several species of gibbons interbreed in the wild and in captivity creating hybrids, which are not only difficult to identify, but are also difficult to classify. **Reproduction:** Scientists estimate that gibbons reach sexual maturity between 6 and 8 years of age, though some species may become sexually mature earlier or later, and the age may vary among males and females. To date the individual species of gibbons have not been sufficiently studied, so accurate data is unavailable. The gestation period for gibbons appears to be about 7 months, and females generally give birth to one infant at a time. With intervals of 2 ½ to 3 ½ years between births.
SOCIAL STRUCTURE	Gorillas tend to live in groups that contain one or two adult males (silverbacks), and several adult females, younger males, juveniles and infants. Group sizes vary; the largest known group had 65 members. Females always stay in this social group while young adult males may spend time travelling alone or may temporarily join a bachelor group. The dominant silverback gorilla leads group activities such as foraging for food, mediates intergroup conflicts, and protects the group members from outside threats. He also forms tight bonds with the adult females and fathers many of their children.	Chimpanzees are very social animals, living in mixed-sex groups of a few dozen up to 100 individuals, or more. Typically, they break off into smaller subgroups to eat, travel, and rest, and then rejoin the larger group for occasional community gatherings. The subgroups, which usually have less than 10 members, are not fixed in composition; rather, members come and go, joining other subgroups and meeting up again later. Although the group does have alpha males, the status of an alpha male is not permanent, or necessarily secure. Chimpanzees occupy a fixed territory, ranging from a few	Bonobos, like chimpanzees, live in large groups of 50 to 100 individuals and break off into smaller subgroups (of about 10 or fewer individuals) for feeding, resting, playing and traveling. Unlike chimpanzee communities which are male-dominated, bonobos live in egalitarian communities with dominant female members. Males, even the most dominant in a group, will not strike back if they are attacked by a female. Also unlike chimpanzees, bonobos do not tend to be territorially aggressive. Different groups can peaceably co-exist within overlapping ranges. In fact, bonobos do not tend to	Orangutans are somewhat solitary animals. Males spend over 90% of their time alone, and females tend to stay in small groups which include their own dependant offspring. Although they are solitary by nature, orangutans are not necessarily anti-social. Members of the community enjoy casual relationships with each other, but they do not maintain tight social and physical cohesion like chimpanzees, bonobos, and gorillas. Instead, resident and transient orangutans may casually gather to feed in areas of abundant fruit availability. Small groups may also form travel parties to forage for food	Unlike all other apes, gibbons are almost all monogamous and live in small families rather than in groups and subgroups. With the exception of the Black-crested Gibbon, all species of gibbons mate for life and live in small nuclear families consisting of the parents and their dependant offspring. Each family unit has a defined territory which they defend with their notable songs. While mated pairs sing a duet to alert outsiders of their territory, single gibbons also sing to attract mates.

	If a silverback is killed, the entire group suffers. Rather than having the next male in line take his place in the existing group, females may join an entirely new group and their dependent children may be killed by the new group members.	square miles to a few hundred square miles. Male chimpanzees are territorial and will actually patrol their territory and defend it in battles against other chimpanzee groups.	be aggressive for any reason (although attacks can occur occasionally). If an aggressive incident occurs, it is usually immediately followed by hugging, friendly touching and sexual contact. Bonobo females maintain very tight social bonds, as do mothers and their sons.	or to cohabitate temporarily for mating purposes. Females and younger males are the most social, whereas "flanged" (fully physically mature) males are less tolerant of social interactions with other "flanged" males. Individuals, rather than groups, have defined (but overlapping) territories. Females tend to remain in their home ranges permanently whereas males may disperse and become transient, in search of areas without other adult males. Females and young adult males are not territorially aggressive. In fact, orangutans are generally not aggressive towards humans or each other. Occasionally, older adult males quarrel over females and control of territory.	Black-crested Gibbons are not monogamous; rather, they live in small groups (averaging 5-8 members) which generally consist of one adult male, and a few adult females and their dependant offspring.
DIET	Each species of gorilla eats a slightly different diet, based on the variety of foods available in their habitats. Generally, their diets consist of vegetation (such as wild celery, nettles, bamboo, flowers, and thistles), berries, and fruit. Western and eastern lowland gorillas, who primarily occupy rain-forests, tend to include more fruit in their diets than the mountain gorillas who don't have access to as much fruit. Occasionally, gorillas eat ants, worms, grubs, or other insects, but they do not hunt or eat meat. An adult gorilla can consume 40-60 pounds of vegetation a day.	Chimpanzees are omnivorous and their diets vary based upon seasonal food availability. Fruit comprises the bulk of their diets; however they also eat leaves, seeds, bark, flowers, nuts, eggs, insects, and occasionally other mammals like monkeys. According to researchers, meat comprises only about 3% of the chimpanzees' diet, and hunting is usually done by the males. Although they spend a good part of each day looking for food, they do remember and revisit preferred food locations and even know what time of year to return for ripe fruits. Chimpanzees drink water, often by using a chewed leaf as a sponge.	Bonobos are omnivorous, though according to researchers, about 99 percent of their diets come from plant sources. Fruit is their primary dietary staple, followed by leaves, flowers, aquatic vegetation, seeds, honey, eggs, mushrooms, insects, worms, and occasionally fish and small animals. They have also been observed eating clay and soil which are key sources of essential minerals.	Orangutans are omnivorous, though the bulk of their diet (about 60% – 90%) consists of fruit. One of their main staples are figs, which are available year-round in Sumatra. Other preferred fruits include mangoes, lychees, jackfruit, and durians. They have been observed eating more than 400 different types of plants, as well as bark, sap, nuts, bird eggs, honey, insects, and occasionally small animals. Like other apes, they also eat soil, which provides the animals with essential minerals and facilitates absorption of certain plant metabolites.	Gibbons are omnivores and their diets vary based upon the species and local availability of foods. Generally, fruit constitutes about 50% to 75% of their diet, though they also eat plants and leaves, berries, flowers, seeds, tree bark, insects, spiders, bird eggs, and small birds.
LIFESPAN	30 - 50 years in the wild; up to 53 years in captivity	35-40 years in the wild; up to 60 years in captivity	Unknown in the wild (they have not been continuously studied in the wild quite long enough to gather statistically significant data on their average lifespan); up to 60 years in captivity	30-58 years in the wild; up to 56 years in captivity	Average lifespan varies among species, but is generally 20 to 40 years (depending on the species and whether they are captive or in the wild). The lifespan of some species of gibbons in the wild is not known due to a lack of wild population studies.
INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE APES	• Although gorillas have historically been portrayed as vicious animals, this is inaccurate; they tend to be shy and peaceful unless they are threatened. Even when they are threatened and appear aggressive, such displays are intended to scare off the threat, rather than instigate a fight. • Captive gorillas have been taught to use American Sign Language to communicate with humans and other signing apes, and some gorillas can understand spoken English. • In the wild, gorillas communicate with each other using vocalizations, physical gestures, facial expressions, and odors. So far, researchers have been able to isolate at least 25 unique gorilla sounds and identify what they mean. • Like humans, gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, and orangutans laugh. • Gorillas cannot swim. • Although gorillas can climb trees, they spend most of their time on the ground. • Gorillas build nests to sleep in each night and sleep about 12 hours total each day. • Like chimpanzees, gorillas have been observed using tools in the wild. Scientists have observed gorillas using sticks to gage the depth of water that they were trying to wade through. Other gorillas have used tree stumps as bridges. • Like chimpanzees and bonobos, gorillas utilize medicinal plants to treat physical ailments like intestinal parasites.	• Chimpanzees and bonobos are the animals that are most closely related to humans (they share 98.6% of their DNA with humans). In fact, they are more closely related to humans than to gorillas or orangutans. • Like gorillas and bonobos, chimpanzees make and use tools. For example, they use sticks to fish for termites or to get honey from beehives, rocks to crack open nuts, spears to hunt with, and leaves as napkins and sponges to soak up water. Different communities make and use tools differently and pass those techniques down from one generation to the next. There is archeological evidence of tool use by chimpanzees from 4,000 years ago. • Chimpanzees consume medicinal plants to treat ailments such as intestinal parasites, skin diseases, abscesses, digestive upsets. Many of those medicinal plants are also used by humans to treat the same ailments. Scientists have been observing and recording the consumption of plants by chimpanzees to perhaps discover additional medicinal uses of some plants for humans. Like tool-use, the medicinal use of plants varies among different communities and is passed down from one generation to the next. • Captive chimpanzees have been taught to use American Sign Language to communicate with humans and other signing apes. They even combine words to invent novel compound words. For example, one chimpanzee named Washoe, called a swan a "water bird." Another chimpanzee, Moja, invented the label "listen drink" for Alka Seltzer. • Like humans, gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, and orangutans laugh. • Chimpanzees cannot swim. • Adult chimpanzees are much stronger than adult humans. In fact, according to current estimates, they are anywhere from 2 to 7 times stronger than humans. • Like gorillas, chimpanzees build nests to sleep in every night.	• Bonobos are the least understood of the Great Apes. This is due in large part to the fact that they were not identified as a separate species from chimpanzees until 1926. Field studies of the animals began in 1973 and have been limited, first because of the remoteness of their habitat, and more recently because of ongoing civil wars in the area. • Bonobos and chimpanzees are the animals that are most closely related to humans (they share 98.6% of their DNA with humans). In fact, they are more closely related to humans than to gorillas or orangutans. • Like gorillas and chimpanzees, bonobos make and use tools. Unlike chimpanzees, bonobos also use tools while they are playing. • Captive bonobos have made fires on their own (without being taught) when given matches (and they roasted marshmallows on the fires). • Bonobos can play musical instruments (like the piano and synthesizer) and have demonstrated rhythmic sophistication and improvisational skills in making music. • Scientists have recently discovered that bonobos and humans have a similar brain cell organizational structure and distribution (called VENS, spindle cells, or Von Economo Neurons).These brain cells are responsible for the ability to understand, and empathize with, another's mental state. • Like humans, gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, and orangutans laugh. • Bonobos cannot swim; however, they have been observed wading through water and fishing with their hands. • Like chimpanzees and gorillas, bonobos utilize medicinal plants to treat various ailments like intestinal parasites. • Bonobos have been taught to use American Sign Language to communicate with humans and other signing apes. Also, they can understand spoken English. • Researchers have discovered that bonobos have highly developed language skills. Individuals that were taught to communicate with humans utilized advanced conversational techniques like turn-taking, pauses, repetition, and negotiation. • Bonobos are extremely playful. They have been observed playing a game where one bonobo stands on top of a rock while the others try to force him (or her) off the rock. Another game involves several animals covering their eyes while they chase each other. Some captive bonobos have been observed making silly faces for their own entertainment and dancing for fun. Game-playing is one of many cultural differences among bonobos. Group members pass down their games from one generation to the next and as a result, different groups each have their own unique types of games. • Like chimpanzees and gorillas, bonobos build nests to sleep in every night. Unlike the other apes adult bonobos occasionally share nests.	• Humans and orangutans share 96.4% of our DNA. • Like humans, gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, and orangutans laugh. • Although wild orangutans are generally not aggressive towards humans, researchers have found that captive apes that are re-released into the wild do tend to be aggressive towards humans. In an unrelated 2003 study of diseases among confiscated orangutans, scientists found that most of the confiscated apes in the study had physical injuries caused by knives, ropes, or chains and/or fractured bones. Perhaps there is a correlation. • Until a few years ago, scientists maintained that like other apes, orangutans cannot swim. However, in 2009 a group of 12 orangutans were filmed swimming in the Rungan River in Borneo. According to observers, the animals appeared to be splashing around and swimming for fun. This was not an isolated incident; the animals are known among local residents for their fondness of swimming. • Captive orangutans have been taught to use American Sign Language (ASL), though there have been fewer ASL studies involving orangutans than those involving chimpanzees or bonobos. • Like gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos, orangutans make and use tools. For example, they have been observed using leaves as napkins or toilet paper, large leaves as umbrellas, and sticks to collect insects. Captive chimpanzees have built a long pole by connecting several small sticks to reach an object, stacked boxes to make ladders, dug holes with sticks, and made swings. • Like gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos, orangutans use medicinal plants to treat their physical ailments. According to some sources they use over 100 different medicinal plants with various healing properties. While some plants are taken internally, others (like the anti-inflammatory plant Commelina) are chewed into a paste and rubbed onto their skin. • Like gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos, orangutans build nests to sleep in every night. • In the 1980's, a captive orangutan spontaneously began to whistle after hearing a human caretaker make the sound. This was significant as no orangutan has ever been observed making such a sound before. That orangutan subsequently taught other orangutans to whistle as well.	• According to some estimates, 70% of all apes are gibbons. • Gibbons can swing up to 50 feet in a single leap, at speeds of up to 35 mph. As a result of their acrobatic maneuvers, researchers suggest that most gibbons suffer one or more bone fractures throughout their lives. • Scientists have observed mirror self-recognition in gibbons. • Like other apes, gibbons use tools. • At least one captive gibbon has been taught some American Sign Language. • When they walk on the ground (which is quite rare), gibbons walk bipedally (on two legs, like humans) • In 2010, scientists discovered the most recent species of gibbon, the Northern Buffed-cheeked Gibbon, which occurs in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. • Like other apes, gibbons cannot swim. • Unlike other apes, gibbons do not make nests to sleep in; rather, they tend to sleep alone or in their small groups in tree branches.