

# ENDANGERED SPECIES DAY

## Faith Community Engagement Toolkit

May 17 is international Endangered Species Day, which offers faith communities an opportunity to pray and act to protect God's good creation. Each species has an important role to play in the whole of God's creation.



### BACKGROUND

First approved by the U.S. Senate in 2006, the purpose of Endangered Species Day is to expand awareness of the importance of protecting endangered species, to promote habitat conservation, to share success stories of species recovery, and to highlight the everyday actions people can take.

On May 17 and throughout May, churches, conservation organizations, schools, zoos and aquariums, parks, wildlife refuges, botanic gardens, and other groups throughout the country will participate in events and activities to celebrate this national day of recognition.

### HOW TO ENGAGE YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY

#### PRAY

\* Host an animal blessing or use a liturgy that makes us more mindful of God's threatened and endangered creatures. Find liturgy resources at [www.creationjustice.org/creatures](http://www.creationjustice.org/creatures)

\* Use our Endangered Species Day bulletin insert. Find it at [www.creationjustice.org/endangered](http://www.creationjustice.org/endangered)

#### DO HANDS-ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS

\* Garden: Plant a milkweed or pollinator garden on church grounds or nearby land. See [www.creationjustice.org/garden](http://www.creationjustice.org/garden) for ideas.

\* Install a bat house on your faith community's land. It helps threatened and endangered bats, and provides natural mosquito control. Learn how to build or buy one at [www.batconservation.org/help/bat-houses](http://www.batconservation.org/help/bat-houses)

\* Organize or assist with a habitat restoration project, which could include a beach, river or lake clean-up. You might team up with a local conservation or watershed group.

\* Organize a "Bio Blitz" to engage in citizen science projects counting plants and creatures in your area. Learn how at [www.nationalgeographic.org/media/do-it-yourself-bioblitz](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/do-it-yourself-bioblitz)

## HOST EDUCATION EVENTS

- \*Invite a local biologist, ecologist or other expert to make a presentation to your faith community.
- \*Show a film on an endangered species-related topic, such as DamNation, Racing Extinction, Chasing Coral (on Netflix), Humpback Whales (with Ewan McGregor; on Netflix), More than Honey, Extinction in Progress, Last Chance to See (by BBC; on Netflix), Virunga, or The Ivory Game (on Netflix).
- \*Organize an endangered species festival with children's programs and other activities.

## SPEND TIME WITH GOD'S CREATURES

- \*Attend an event at a zoo, aquarium, wildlife refuge or other location. Visit [www.endangeredspeciesday.org](http://www.endangeredspeciesday.org) to find nearby events.
- \* Plan a trip to a nearby park. Parks provide important habitat for God's endangered plants and creatures. Check [www.findyourpark.com](http://www.findyourpark.com) to identify parks near you.

## SPREAD THE WORD

- \* Invite your city or county to begin the practice of honoring Endangered Species Day.
- \* Make a pulpit announcement.

### SAMPLE REGULAR ANNOUNCEMENT

*May 17 is Endangered Species Day. Let us pray and act to support wholeness for God's threatened and endangered creation. Find resources at [www.endangeredspeciesday.org](http://www.endangeredspeciesday.org)*

### SAMPLE MOTHER'S DAY THEMED ANNOUNCEMENT:

*As we look forward to Endangered Species Day on May 17, we pray not only for human mothers, but also for mothers of all species. May we learn about and nurture safe habitats for God's plants and creatures -- which also seek to respond to our call in Genesis to be fruitful and multiply.*

- \* Let your public policy makers know why you are honoring Endangered Species Day.
- \*Send an e-mail note or postcard, or tweet about Endangered Species Day and add a Facebook post as well. Share at the hashtags #BlessTheAnimals and #EndangeredSpeciesDay

## ENDANGERED SPECIES DAY SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

Please post to Facebook and Twitter on **May 17** using the sample posts and tweets or your organization's own language. Please use the #EndangeredSpeciesDay hashtag, and consider tagging Creation Justice Ministries @CreationJustice so we can share your posts!

### Sample Tweets

Today is #EndangeredSpeciesDay! #BlessTheAnimals by sharing your support for the Endangered Species Act. #StopExtinction [photo or graphic]

#EndangeredSpeciesDay is TODAY. Find an event or other ways you can take action to #BlessTheAnimals. [www.endangeredspeciesday.org](http://www.endangeredspeciesday.org) [photo or graphic]

Without the Endangered Species Act, God's creatures such as the bald eagle may have disappeared forever. Celebrate God's creation and #BlessTheAnimals this #EndangeredSpeciesDay.

Dear [Member of Congress's Twitter handle] Please join this #EndangeredSpeciesDay event in [city/state] [link to event]

Dear [Member of Congress's Twitter handle], #EndangeredSpeciesDay is today! Join me and thousands of others in respecting and protecting God's good creation. May we #BlessTheAnimals with our words and deeds.

### Sample 2019 Facebook Posts

Today is the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Endangered Species Day. Each year, we celebrate ways our communities respond to God's call to be caretakers of creation: preventing extinction while also working together to help still-struggling species. Learn more at [www.creationjustice.org/endangered](http://www.creationjustice.org/endangered)

The Endangered Species Act and actions of faithful caretakers of God's creation saved from extinction the bald eagle, green sea turtle, American alligator, peregrine falcon, and many other species. Celebrate progress made to protect God's good creation this Endangered Species Day, while working to keep up momentum to stop extinction. [photo or graphic]

## MORE RESOURCES

The Endangered Species Day website ([www.endangeredspeciesday.org](http://www.endangeredspeciesday.org)) includes additional background information and a variety of resources, including event planning tips and materials that can be downloaded and printed. You'll also find a place to add your special activity.

## SUPPORTERS

The Endangered Species Coalition is the primary sponsor of Endangered Species Day. In addition to the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), numerous conservation, education, community and youth organizations have supported Endangered Species Day, including the Native Plant Conservation Campaign, Girl Scouts USA, American Library Association, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the North American Association for Environmental Education, Sierra Club, the National Association of Biology Teachers, the National Science Teachers Association, Center for Biological

Diversity, Jane Goodall Institute, National Wildlife Federation, National Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife, and Creation Justice Ministries.

## CONTACTS



### Creation Justice Ministries

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### Endangered Species Coalition Organizing Team

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