

‘I was thrilled and shocked’: images raise hopes of return of wild jaguars to the US

Level 2: Intermediate

1 Warmer

a. Sort these animals. Are they extinct or endangered? Which ones surprised you? Discuss.

<i>extinct</i>	a plant or animal that doesn't exist anymore
<i>endangered</i>	a plant or animal that may become extinct before long

- Arctic wolf
- blue whale
- crocodiles
- dodo
- golden toad
- koalas
- macaw
- Tasmanian tiger

Extinct	Endangered

2 Key words

a. Choose the correct words to match the definitions below. Then, find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

1. the protection of the natural environment and protecting it from harmful human activity
 - a. extinction
 - b. conservation
 - c. vital
2. walk or travel around an area without a clear direction
 - a. roam
 - b. obstacle
 - c. barrier
3. go after wild animals to catch or kill them for food, sport, or money
 - a. critical
 - b. extinction
 - c. hunt
4. a situation in which a plant or animal species stops existing
 - a. extinction
 - b. habitat
 - c. construction
5. something that makes it difficult to do or achieve something
 - a. obstacle
 - b. plentiful
 - c. roam
6. available in large amounts or numbers
 - a. freshwater
 - b. habitat
 - c. plentiful



'I was thrilled and shocked': images raise hopes of return of wild jaguars to the US

Level 2: Intermediate

7. water that does not come from the sea and does not contain salt
 - a. barrier
 - b. freshwater
 - c. conservation
8. where a type of animal or plant is normally found
 - a. extinction
 - b. barrier
 - c. habitat
9. necessary for something to succeed or exist
 - a. vital
 - b. construction
 - c. plentiful
10. the work of building or making something, especially buildings, homes, bridges, etc.
 - a. conservation
 - b. construction
 - c. barrier
11. an object, such as a fence, that prevents people or animals from moving from place to place
 - a. barrier
 - b. critical
 - c. habitat
12. extremely important because the future will be affected by it
 - a. extinction
 - b. obstacle
 - c. critical

b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity. You might have to change the form of the word.

1. Largemouth bass, catfish, and trout are _____ fish.
2. Animals want to live where food and water are _____.
3. That building has been under _____ for three years.
4. Clean air, water, and land are _____ for survival.
5. Examples of _____ on Earth are forests, grasslands, and deserts.
6. They're dealing with a complicated problem with many _____.
7. There are many organisations dedicated to _____ and improving the environment.
8. Oh no! My laptop's battery level is _____. I need to plug it in.

'I was thrilled and shocked': images raise hopes of return of wild jaguars to the US

Level 2: Intermediate

Samuel Gilbert

6 February, 2024

- 1 The young, muscular male was seen at about 4 am. He paused briefly in front of the camera, like he was posing for the photo.
- 2 "I was both thrilled and shocked that there was a jaguar here," says Emily Burns, programme director at the Sky Island Alliance conservation group in Arizona.
- 3 Jaguars once roamed the American southwest but were hunted to local extinction by the 1960s. In the 1990s, the cat began to occasionally reappear in New Mexico and Arizona. Over the past year, they have been seen multiple times in the region.
- 4 But obstacles remain to re-establishing a jaguar population in the US. The cat faces growing climate extremes, habitat loss – and the continued impact of the Trump administration's border wall.
- 5 In November 2023, Sky Island Alliance captured an image of a large jaguar walking along the Whetstone Mountains of southern Arizona. The photo represents the fifth recorded jaguar sighting in the US last year. In December, a wildlife camera captured a video of the same jaguar in the Huachuca Mountains to the south.
- 6 The Whetstone and Huachuca Mountains are part of the Sky Islands in northern Mexico and the US southwest. They have some of the highest biodiversity in the US – and are a plentiful habitat for jaguars.
- 7 "You can just imagine a jaguar stopping somewhere like this for a drink," says Burns as we walk to where the underground river surfaces, creating freshwater pools. Jaguars like to eat the pig-like javelina, which lives here, and springs provide year-round water.
- 8 "If these mountains can support jaguar, it means it is a great habitat for so many other species," says Burns.
- 9 Louise Misztal, Executive Director at Sky Island Alliance, says that the Huachuca Mountains and the San Rafael Valley allow jaguars to move between the US and Mexico. To recover these cats in the US, it's vital that we protect this pathway.
- 10 But that is threatened by the construction of the border wall, begun under Donald Trump's presidency and continued under Joe Biden's, despite the current President's opposition to the policy.
- 11 There are many endangered species, such as the sub-tropical ocelot, Mexican grey wolves, and Sonoran pronghorns, as well as jaguars. These animals, and many others, have been negatively affected by the wall that extends nearly 364km along the Arizona border.
- 12 The barrier forces jaguars to use more energy to reach habitat, food and water.
- 13 "A jaguar is accustomed to going to certain water sources known throughout its life," says Traphagen, who co-authored a study on the border wall's impact on jaguars. "With the border wall, they must travel much greater distances to find that water."
- 14 Krista Schlyer, a photographer and author who has spent 15 years documenting the human and environmental impacts of the border wall, has seen dead or stranded animals along the barrier. In 2007, Schlyer was walking along a new section near the San Pedro River when she noticed javelinas sniffing and pacing back and forth.
- 15 "They were smelling for their family on the other side," Schlyer says. The javelinas finally gave up and left.
- 16 That wall section now extends 70 miles from the border with New Mexico, ending near the San Rafael Valley.
- 17 McSpadden says: "It is critical that we actively protect jaguars' habitat and habitat connectivity in the south-west."
- 18 Traphagen says resuming construction could mean the end of jaguars in the US. "The drum beat to finish the wall is here," he says of the growing support for it. "If they walled off the San Rafael Valley, jaguar recovery would come to a standstill."

© Guardian News and Media 2024

First published in *The Guardian*, 06/02/2024

'I was thrilled and shocked': images raise hopes of return of wild jaguars to the US

Level 2: Intermediate

3 Comprehension check

a. Answer the questions using information from the article.

1. What is the name of the conservation group in Arizona?
2. When were wild jaguars hunted to local extinction?
3. When did the jaguars start to reappear?
4. What are the three obstacles to re-establishing the jaguar population mentioned in the article?
5. When did a wildlife camera capture video of a jaguar in the Huachuca Mountains?
6. Where are the Whetstone and Huachuca Mountains located?
7. What is the jaguars' primary prey, and what other animal is that prey compared to?
8. What are other endangered animals besides jaguars in the region?
9. Why is the border wall problematic for jaguars and other animals?
10. What does Krista Schlyer document in her work?

4 Key language

a. Put the articles, nouns, and adjectives in the correct order: *determiner, opinion, size, age, shape, colour, origin, material, and purpose.*

1. wolf (grey, a, powerful, old)
2. author (Norwegian, award-winning, the)
3. mountain (rocky, tallest, the)
4. food (delicious, Moroccan, some)
5. male (muscular, young)
6. sighting (the, jaguar, recorded, fifth)
7. corridors (last, the, open)
8. species (many, endangered)

'I was thrilled and shocked': images raise hopes of return of wild jaguars to the US

Level 2: Intermediate

b. Choose a noun to describe. Write one adjective from each category.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
determiner	opinion	size	æ ^	shape
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
colour	origin	material	purpose	NOUN

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- "Humans are very dangerous for animals."
- "Laws for people should not affect animals in a negative way."
- "Most people care about protecting endangered species."

6 In your own words

a. Do some research about wild jaguars or another endangered species.

- Where is the animal's habitat?
- Why is it an endangered species?
- What is being done to protect it?
- What obstacles are in the way?

b. Report your findings to the class and share your opinions. Here are some phrases to help you when you discuss facts.

According to my research, ...

One example is ...

Some ways to do this are ...

One change is ...

Another thing people/governments can do is ...

'I was thrilled and shocked': images raise hopes of return of wild jaguars to the US

Level 2: Intermediate

Here are some phrases to use when stating your opinion.

I think (that) ...

From what I learned/have read, ...

From my perspective, ...

In my understanding/opinion, ...

I (dis)agree with ...