

## **Endangered Video script**

If an animal or plant is “endangered” it means the whole species is in danger of extinction. There are so few of them left they may disappear forever.

You probably haven’t heard about Australia’s endangered tropical animals and plants. They’re not famous like the panda bear or the white rhino. But they’re Aussies like us, and they’re part of the amazing web of life in north Queensland.

Our most famous endangered animal is the Cassowary.

But did you know there are many more endangered animals trying to survive in the World Heritage Area? Tropical rainforests grow in just a tiny part of Australia, but the greatest concentration of our endangered plants and animals live here. That’s one of the reasons the rainforests were put on the World Heritage list.

Not many people have even heard of Australia’s largest carnivore, the ferocious Spotted-tailed Quoll. Or the endangered Northern Bettong, which is shy and doesn’t like too much attention.

Even less well known are small animals like frogs and insects.

People often forget that plants can also be endangered. There are over 2,800 different plant species growing in the World Heritage Area. Over 700 are found nowhere else in the world and half of them are rare or threatened.

One of the main reasons that animals and plants become endangered is because humans alter their natural habitat. It often happens by accident, and people don’t even realise until it’s too late. Feral animals and weeds push out native animals and plants. New diseases come into Australia. Habitat is cleared for houses and farms. Powerlines and roads divide the forest into smaller patches where animals can’t survive. Gardeners steal ferns, cycads and orchids. Forests that need regular bushfires don’t get burned, and other parts get burned too much.

**It’s true that humans cause some of the problems, but we’re also helping to fix them.**

Farmers plant trees to make wildlife corridors between patches of forest. Nurseries grow rare plants for gardeners to buy, not steal from the forest. Wildlife carers look after injured endangered animals. Community groups are tackling weeds and feral animals.

The rainforest, its plants and animals need our help to survive. What can you do to help our endangered tropical animals and plants?