

## African giraffes are in danger of extinction

They are tall with long necks, elegant and graceful. When they want to eat, they pick leaves from high in the trees and when they run, it looks like they are running in slow motion. I once saw them walking towards the Kennedy Bridge in Niamey to drink the water from the river and the traffic stopped as they walked past. It was a beautiful sight you I never forgot. Giraffes are some of Africa's strangest and most beautiful animals – and they are in danger of extinction.

Not all of Africa's giraffes are in danger. There are nine recognised species of giraffe and three of them are in danger. Two of them are the Kordofan and Nubian giraffes. You can see the Kordofan giraffes in Chad, Cameroon, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and in South Sudan. You can also see Nubian giraffes in South Sudan.

Who says they are in danger? The International Union of Conservation and Nature (IUCN) issued a 'red list' to say that there are only 3,000 of these giraffes in the world. They are facing extinction.

Why are they facing extinction? War is one reason. Poaching is another. People kill giraffes and take their meat. They also take their tails. They give them as presents at weddings. Another reason is land. As the population gets bigger, farmers want new land for agriculture. So they kill or drive the giraffes off their traditional feeding grounds.

What can governments do to stop the extinction of the giraffe population? The Giraffe Conservation Foundation works with governments to protect giraffes. They have had success with two species of giraffe, the West African giraffe and the Rothschild giraffe and they hope they can save the Kordofan and Nubian giraffes as well.

West and Central Africa are not the only homes for giraffes. Angola, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe also have giraffe populations. These are not in danger.

### New words for this article

graceful	with grace
in slow motion	very slowly
face extinction, become extinct	stop existing
species	types of animals
issued a 'red list'	warned
poaching	stealing animals
feeding ground	a place where animals like to look for food
as well	also

### Comprehension Questions

- Which species of giraffe are in danger?
- How many species of giraffe live in Africa?
- Why can't giraffes eat in the traditional feeding grounds?
- Why do poachers take giraffe tails?
- The Giraffe Conservation Foundation has helped save two species of giraffe from extinction. What are their names?

### Comprehension questions

- The Kordofan and Nubian giraffes
- Nine species
- Farmers want the land for agriculture
- As marriage presents,
- The West African and the Rothschild giraffes

### Answers