



# MOUNTAIN GORILLA

The mountain gorilla is a subspecies of the eastern gorilla species. The other subspecies, the eastern lowland gorilla is on average bigger, but they are still powerful and strong.

Read on to discover more interesting facts about them.

## DID YOU KNOW

Males defend their females and offspring using their large size in intimidating displays involving charging and chest-beating.

## Where they live

Mountain gorillas live in tropical forests, in high altitudes between 2,500 metres and 4,000 metres in central Africa. Here there are just two isolated populations: one in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda, and one in the Virunga volcanoes – which span the borders of Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

[wwf.org.uk/where\\_we\\_work/africa/virunga\\_national\\_park/](http://wwf.org.uk/where_we_work/africa/virunga_national_park/)



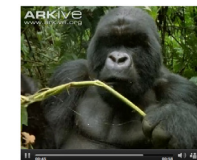
## CHARACTERISTICS

- They have a heavy body shape and dark coat.
- Male mountain gorillas can weigh up to 180kg and females up to 90kg.
- They have a broad chest and long arms.
- They mainly move around on the ground. They walk on all fours using clenched fists and flat feet. They can climb trees if they need to.

## FAMILY

Mountain gorillas generally live in groups with several females and their young, and one dominant male. They usually live in a group of about 10 gorillas – but groups of 65 have been seen.

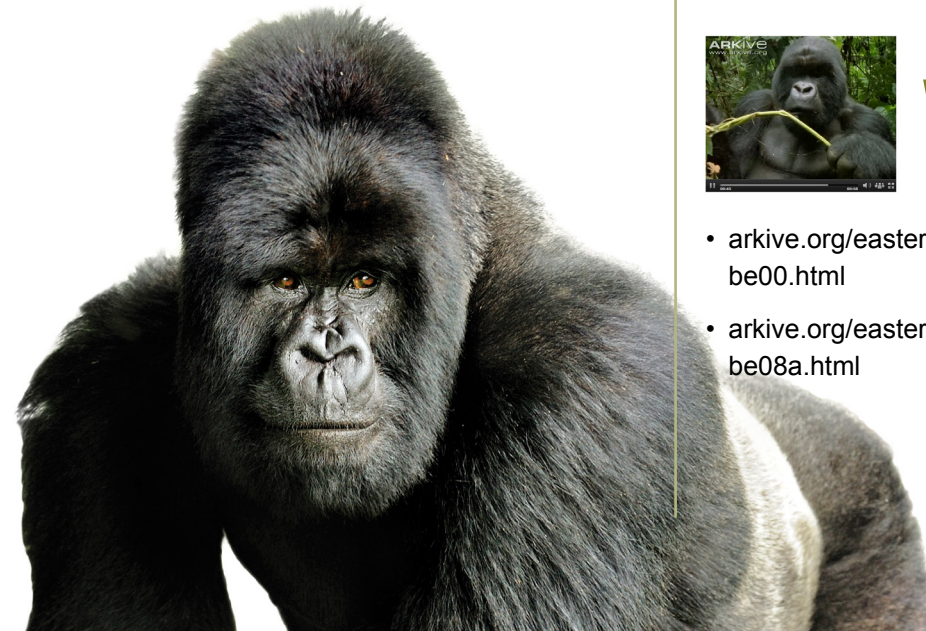
Dominant males are known as 'silverbacks' because they have a patch of silver hair on their back and hips.



## VIDEO

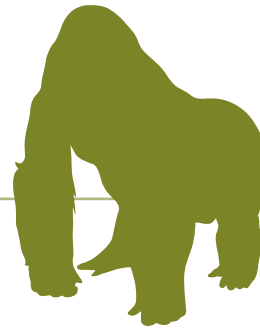
Watch footage:

- [arkive.org/eastern-gorilla/gorilla-beringei/video-be00.html](http://arkive.org/eastern-gorilla/gorilla-beringei/video-be00.html)
- [arkive.org/eastern-gorilla/gorilla-beringei/video-be08a.html](http://arkive.org/eastern-gorilla/gorilla-beringei/video-be08a.html)



# FEEDING

- They are omnivores.
- They mainly eat leaves, shoots and stems, and because of their size they must eat a lot during the day to survive.

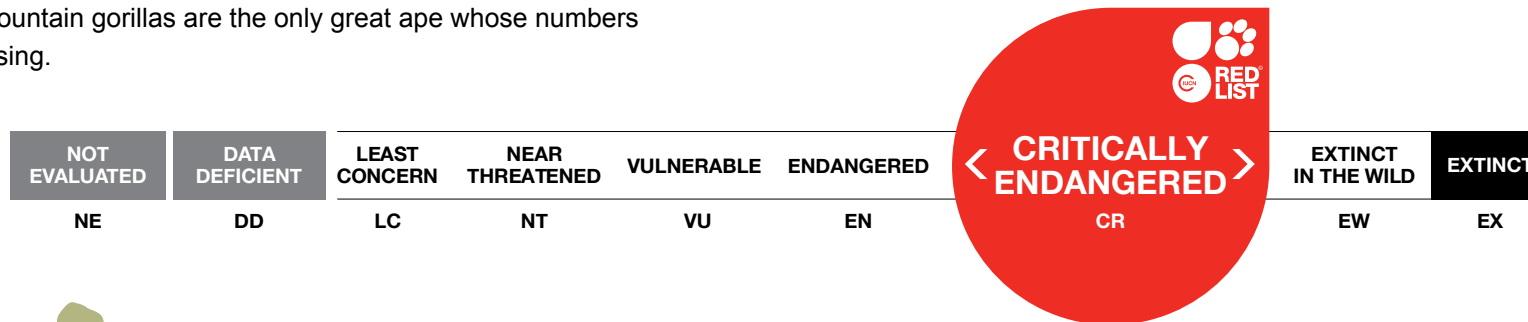


## DID YOU KNOW

As mountain gorillas eat lots of different leaves, shoots and stems over a wide area, the natural balance in the food chain would be disrupted without them.

# CLASSIFICATION

Classified as **Critically Endangered** on the IUCN Red List, but conservation efforts are taking place to protect the population and increase their number and to make sure the environment remains healthy for the people and wildlife that depend on it. In fact, mountain gorillas are the only great ape whose numbers are known to be increasing.



# STATUS



Mountain gorillas live in places where there are a lot of people who are often living in extreme poverty and struggling to survive. This pressure means that habitat loss threatens the species. Humans also use the natural resources found in their habitat such as wood for fuel, or water for drinking. Mountain gorillas are at risk from catching human diseases from the people that enter their habitat.

The area where they live has been affected by years of conflict between people and this can make efforts to conserve the species even more difficult.

Traps that are set in the wild to catch other wildlife may accidentally injure and even kill their species too.

It is estimated there are around 880 mountain gorillas left in the wild.

[www.wwf.org.uk/wildlife/mountain\\_gorilla/](http://www.wwf.org.uk/wildlife/mountain_gorilla/)

