



The most endangered apes

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1. The forgotten apes

Gibbons or small apes are the least-known apes. Currently, 16 species and 4 genera of gibbons are recognized which represent 70% of all the apes. The Hainan crested gibbon is the most endangered primate, and several other gibbon species are threatened by extinction in the very near future. Yet, very little research and hardly any *in situ*-conservation projects focus on the small apes, and their plight is largely ignored by the media.

The three top priorities in ape conservation:

Hainan Crested Gibbon

(*Nomascus hainanus*):

- Endemic to the island of Hainan (South-Chinese sea)
- Known to occur only in the Bawangling National Nature Reserve
- Population: <20 individuals
- The rarest primate species of the world



Cao-Vit Crested Gibbon

(*N. nasutus*):

- Survives in only one forest area extending from NE Vietnam (Cao Bang province) to neighbouring China (Guangxi province)
- Population: <100 individuals
- Critically endangered



Black Crested Gibbon

(*N. concolor*):

- Only few relict populations in SW China, NW Laos and N Vietnam
- Population: c.1,300-2,000 individuals
- Critically endangered



2. Threats to gibbons

The main threats to gibbons are habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation as well as hunting and illegal trade. Preservation of the tropical forest is essential to the survival of gibbons. Yet, protected forest areas are often poorly managed and wildlife laws are not enforced effectively. Rural poverty and lack of awareness of the threats faced by the gibbons and their forests are additional causes for inadequate gibbon protection. In addition, gibbons are hunted for food and for use in local medicine. The illegal pet trade is thriving across the whole of Southeast Asia.



Habitat loss is a main threat to gibbon survival. Photo: Deforested historical distribution area of *N. concolor* in Yunnan province (China).

3. Saving the gibbons

The **Gibbon Conservation Alliance** is a non-profit organisation dedicated to gibbon conservation and research on gibbon biology. In addition, we work to increase the presence of gibbons in the media and to provide general information on gibbons, the threats to their survival and the importance of their conservation.

Help the gibbons and support our work by donating or becoming a member!

More information:

www.gibbonconservation.org



Recent GCA Projects

- Northern white-cheeked crested gibbon (*N. leucogenys*): Status survey in China, 2008
- Hainan crested gibbon (*N. hainanus*): Reforestation of forest gaps with gibbon food trees, 2006-ongoing
- Yunnan white-handed gibbon (*Hylobates lar yunnanensis*): Status survey in China, 2007
- Publication of the Gibbon Journal (downloadable from www.gibbonconservation.org): 2005-ongoing