

Ecotourism a danger to wildlife

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Ecotourism is a booming business that many tour operators cite as being helpful to nature. Every year, millions of people descend

on protected and pristine natural areas to observe rare species. However, a new report casts doubt on the value of this form of tourism. In fact, it suggests that ecotourism is more damaging than helpful to nature. A report published in the journal 'Trends in Ecology and Evolution'. Researchers believe tourists are disrupting animals in their natural habitat. They pointed to a recent event where sea turtles in Costa Rica had problems laying their eggs because of the hordes of tourists who had congregated to watch the turtles nesting habits.

The report says that ecotourism is making animals bolder and that this could endanger the animals. A regular human presence might make animals tamer and less cautious about other animals around them, and this could put them at risk of being attacked by their natural threats. "Then they will suffer higher mortality when they encounter real predators," the report says. It added: "When animals interact in 'benign' ways with humans, they may let down their guard." The report said it was essential, "to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how different species and species in different situations respond to human visitation and under what precise conditions human exposure might put them at risk."

Sources: *NatureWorldNews / Independent / WashingtonTimes*

Writing

Ecotourism is a bad idea with no benefits for animals. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

ecotourism / booming / helpful / natural areas / rare species / journal / habitat / endanger / human presence / cautious / at risk / mortality / essential / situations

True / False

- The article says the ecotourism business is booming. T / F
- A new report describes the benefits of ecotourism for nature. T / F
- The report said that ecotourism helps nature more than it harms it. T / F
- The report wrote about how tourists totally stopped turtles laying eggs. T / F
- The report says animals are becoming bolder because of humans. T / F
- Animals are more at risk from predators because of humans. T / F
- The report says animals become more guarded when they see humans. T / F
- The report called for research into how humans put animals at risk. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. cite | a. interfering with |
| 2. pristine | b. thorough |
| 3. disrupting | c. gathered |
| 4. problems | d. more confident |
| 5. congregated | e. imperil |
| 6. bolder | f. refer to |
| 7. endanger | g. exact |
| 8. cautious | h. difficulties |
| 9. comprehensive | i. unspoilt |
| 10. precise | j. wary |

Discussion – Student A

- What are the problems of ecotourism?
- What do you think about what you read?
- Should we leave animals alone in their natural habitat?
- Where would you like to go as an ecotourist, and why?
- What rules should ecotourism tour operators have to follow?
- Should people be fined if they interrupt animals in the wild?
- What animals would you most like to see in the wild?
- Should parts of the world be off limits to humans?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Ecotourism is a booming | a. understanding |
| 2. protected and | b. species |
| 3. rare | c. habitat |
| 4. animals in their natural | d. habits |
| 5. watch the turtles' nesting | e. at risk |
| 6. ecotourism is making animals | f. business |
| 7. they may let down their | g. conditions |
| 8. develop a more comprehensive | h. bolder |
| 9. precise | i. pristine natural areas |
| 10. human exposure might put them | j. guard |

Discussion – Student B

- What are the benefits of ecotourism?
- What problems are there if animals become tamer?
- Why do people feel they must visit animals in the wild?
- How can we best help animals in the wild?
- What will ecotourism look like in the future?
- How can we respect animals more?
- What will be the state of animals' natural habitat in the future?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- Ecotourism is a bginomo business
- tour eopaorstr
- protected and petisrni natural areas
- animals in their natural itbaath
- ehodsr of tourists
- aorgecngted to watch the turtles
- reedgann the animals
- A regular human rcepeense
- encounter real tedsrraop
- interact in gebinn ways
- a more oenrceihmsvep understanding
- human urseeexp

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. a	4. h	5. c
6. d	7. e	8. j	9. b	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Leopard

You think the leopard is the best creature to see in the wild. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't so interesting to look at. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): whale, python or polar bear.

Role B – Whale

You think the whale is the best creature to see in the wild. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't so interesting to look at. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): leopard, python or polar bear.

Role C – Python

You think the python is the best creature to see in the wild. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't so interesting to look at. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): whale, leopard or polar bear.

Role D – Polar bear

You think the polar bear is the best creature to see in the wild. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't so interesting to look at. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): whale, python or leopard.

Speaking – Animals

Rank these with your partner. Put the best animals to see in the wild at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| • koala | • elephant |
| • panda | • python |
| • whale | • Galapagos turtle |
| • leopard | • polar bear |

Answers – True False

a T	b F	c F	d F	e T	f T	g F	h T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.