

IN THE WILD (IN-THE-WILD)

People Want To Find These Hidden Species – And Help Keep Them Safe

"The hope that we can preserve as much of Earth's beauty and wonder as possible will drive the adventurers to overcome the elements, logistical mishaps and the race against time."

JESSI STAFFORD (/COMMUNITY/JESSISTAFFORD) APR 21, 2017

Attempting to find an exact answer to the question, "How many species are becoming extinct?" may prove futile.

While some experts estimate that between 0.01 and 0.1 percent of all species on Earth (http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/biodiversity/biodiversity/) will become extinct each year, the truth is we just *don't know* how many species are out there to begin with.

But one group is hoping to find out. And then they want to help keep those lost species safe, according to a recent article on Seeker.com (<https://www.seeker.com/earth/animals/these-are-the-worlds-top-25-most-wanted-animals-for-conservationists>).

The Global Wildlife Conservation (<https://www.globalwildlife.org/>) (GWC) is commissioning an expedition comprised of scientists and local partners to journey to the far corners of the Earth and locate hidden or lost species in the wild.

"Expeditions for lost species are going to take scientists across the planet from the dark depths of the ocean to the bottom of rushing freshwater rivers, from the lush jungles of the tropics, to the seemingly barren wastelands of the desert," Don Church, GWC president and director of conservation, said in a statement posted on Seeker.com (<https://www.seeker.com/earth/animals/these-are-the-worlds-top-25-most-wanted-animals-for-conservationists>).

The organization has identified 25 species to focus on first — dubbing them the "25 Most Wanted" — out of potentially hundreds of missing species, many of whom have not been seen in the wild for some time.

Six of the "25 Most Wanted" animals identified by GWC Credit: Alexis Rockman

To help put a face on these elusive creatures, the GWC enlisted artist Alexis Rockman, of the Turtle Conservancy (<https://www.turtleconservancy.org/>), to illustrate what the animals may look like now.

Among the unaccounted-for animals are the critically endangered Namdapha flying squirrel, not seen since 1981; the De Winton's golden mole, who is possibly extinct; and the endangered Omiltemi cottontail rabbit, who has been lost for 100 years.

Namdapha flying squirrel Credit: Wikimedia Commons
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Namdapha_flying_squirrel.jpg)

"The hope that we can preserve as much of Earth's beauty and wonder as possible will drive the adventurers to overcome the elements, logistical mishaps and the race against time," continued Church in a statement.

To see more of the "25 Most Wanted" species, head to Seeker.com (<https://www.seeker.com/earth/animals/these-are-the-worlds-top-25-most-wanted-animals-for-conservationists>).

Stay up to date with The Search for Lost Species (<https://www.facebook.com/SearchforLostSpecies/>) and the Global Wildlife Conservation (<https://www.facebook.com/globalwildlife/>) on Facebook or at lostspecies.org (<https://lostspecies.org/>).