



Worksheet 1. Reading: *Lowland Gorillas*

Read the article about the recently found Lowland gorillas. Then review the glossary and complete the exercises that follow it.

1 Deep inside the forests of the Republic of Congo, scientists have made a surprising
2 discovery: they found that more than 125,000 western lowland gorillas were living in an
3 area that had not been surveyed before, an area in the north of the county. This large
4 number of primates at least doubles what had been previously estimated. Before the census
5 was conducted, scientists believed that fewer than 100,000 of the gorillas still existed.

6 The new survey covered an area of 47,000 square kilometers (18,147 square miles). Using
7 global positioning systems and compasses, U.S. and Congolese researchers carefully
8 combed the dense swamp forest to find out where the gorillas lived and how many there
9 were. The researchers were able to estimate the number of gorillas by counting their nests.
10 The nests, made of leaves and other parts of trees, are beds that the gorillas build to sleep
11 in at night.

12 The director at the Africa Wildlife Conservation Society said that the number of gorillas had
13 not actually expanded in recent decades; researchers had instead explored previously
14 unknown areas. This was the first time anyone had gained access to one of the most remote
15 regions of northern Congo.

16 "The reason these populations are doing well is that this is one of only two large remaining
17 blocks of rainforest in the whole world," he said. "Of course, most gorillas, most
18 chimpanzees, most primates aren't so lucky to live in areas with such a huge, unbroken
19 expanse of habitat left for them." Where these gorillas live is in an area far away from
20 people, and their habitat provides plenty of food for them. The scientists say the higher
21 number of gorillas is due to the Congo's efforts to take care of its protected areas.

22 Scientists know that large numbers of the world's gorillas have been reduced by hunting
23 and by outbreaks of the Ebola virus. They believe, however, that the loss of habitat is the
24 greatest threat to the survival of all primates, including gorillas.

25 A scientist from Harvard University said this about the loss of habitat: "That's partly from
26 people just cutting down forest in order to be able to plant their crops, but a lot of it [is]
27 from logging, a lot of it from mining, so a lot of it from industrial actions as well."



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Glossary

Line 23 *Ebola virus* — a disease that is usually fatal. It is named after the Ebola River in northwest Congo, where it was first observed.

Comprehension practice

Decide whether each sentence is true or false, according to the reading. Circle T if the sentence is true and F if the sentence is false.

1. A large number of gorillas has been found in the Republic of Congo. T / F
2. Scientists expected to find this large number of gorillas. T / F
3. The gorillas were found in the southern part of Congo. T / F
4. The gorillas have been living in national parks which are visited by tourists. T / F
5. Scientists used global positioning systems to locate the gorillas. T / F
6. The gorillas are living in a rainforest. T / F
7. There are many blocks of rainforest throughout the world. T / F
8. The gorillas are doing well because people feed them. T / F
9. One thing that has caused the gorilla population to shrink is the Ebola virus. T / F
10. Planting new crops where the gorillas live is good for their environment. T / F
11. Taking logs and minerals from the forests has shrunk the gorillas' habitat. T / F
12. The most important factor in the shrinking gorilla population is the loss of their habitat. T / F