# This session is all about caring for endangered animals. Most toddlers love animals and learn to care for them early on through role play and encountering pets and farm animals. The activities in this session should help families think about the dangers many wild animals are facing and how humans can help to look after them.

## Bible story

‘Then God said, “Let the earth be filled with animals. And let each produce more of its own kind. Let there be tame animals, small crawling animals and wild animals. And let each produce more of its kind.” And it happened. So God made the wild animals, the tame animals and all the small crawling animals to produce more of their own kind. God saw that this was good.’ **(Genesis 1:24-25, *ICB*)**

## Activities

Why not choose from the activity suggestions below? You can find the details of these and other activities on [The Salvation Army Family Ministries Pinterest page.](https://uk.pinterest.com/familyministriesukit/)

As a guide, the suggested activities have asterisks to show how easy they are to prepare and set up, from simple (\*) to more complicated (\*\*\*).

**Animal trail \***

Search for endangered animals on today’s printable trail. You could have animal stickers ready for children when they’ve completed the trail.

**Animal washing station \***

Toddlers can care for animals by giving them a good bath! Fill a bowl or tray with bubbly water, and use small brushes or sponges to wash toy animals clean.

**Elephant stomp \***

Lay down a long roll of giant bubble wrap – you could paint or stick elephant footprints on it. Invite children to stomp along it and pop the bubbles.

**Animal headband/mask \*\***

Make an endangered animal headband or mask to wear during the session. Orang-utans, gorillas, tigers, elephants and leopards are all at risk and translate easily into a headband or mask! Find ideas on the Pinterest page or think up your own.

**Animal tape rescue \*\***

Fill a tray with models or pictures of lots of different wild animals and then tape them to the tray with strips of masking tape. Challenge toddlers to rescue them. Have plenty of trays prepared, or be ready to re-tape the animals back down afterwards.

**Animal care station \*\***

Have a collection of soft toy wild animals and some animal care / first-aid toys, bandages, blankets, a doll’s bed, baby bottles, feeding bowls etc.

**Jungle play-dough \*\***

Provide small trays with green play-dough and some toy jungle animals, as well as lots of different nature materials for families to make their own jungle habitat, eg leaves, small logs, sticks, bamboo pieces, broccoli trees and wooden blocks.

**Animal habitat \*\***

Fill a Tuff Tray with sand and some nature items, eg large pebbles, logs, branches and some different animal toys. Sand is a great sensory material for toddlers, but also a good reminder of how hard it can be for animals to find water when there has been little rain.

**Ocean clean-up \*\***

Plastic waste is a huge problem for sea creatures and something we see every day. Create an ocean of water with toy sea creatures and then add plastic lids and other small plastic packaging. Have fishing nets to scoop out the plastic and make the oceans clean.

**Ice melting activity \*\*\***

Set up a Tuff Tray with different-sized blocks and slabs of ice and some model Arctic/Antarctic animals. Have small pots of warm water and pipettes for children to gradually melt the ice. Add more ice throughout the session to help save the animals’ home! Ice should just about last the session stored in cool bags with freezer blocks.

## Story ideas

Suggested books for story time or a story mat:

* *Look After Us* (Rod Campbell)
* *Hello, World! Rainforest Animals* (Jill McDonald)
* *Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What Do You See?* (Eric Carle and Bill Martin Jr)
* *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You See?* (Eric Carle and Bill Martin Jr)
* *The Play-Along Bible* (Bob Hartman), ‘Splishy, Splashy’, page 10
* *God’s Big Promises Bible Story Book* (Carl Laferton), ‘In the Beginning’, pages 16-20
* *The Lion Easy Read Bible* (Christina Goodings), ‘In the Beginning’, pages 6-11

## Questions

* I wonder which animal you like best?
* I wonder how we can look after animals?
* Have you ever been to a farm or a zoo? What animals did you see? I wonder how many different animals God created?
* Some animals are now very rare and may disappear. How does that make you feel? I wonder how that makes God feel?

## Song suggestions

See first session of this series for more songs:

* ‘The Lion’s Roar’ by Sarah Pickering, Vineyard Kids:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dzk42FtUR_g>
* ‘If I Were a Butterfly’, CJ and Friends:
<https://youtu.be/KaLzudhlxxk>
* ‘I Can Wriggle’, Stephen Gwilt:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lA045hFAI5Y>
* ‘I am Wonderfully Made’, Kids on the Move:
<https://youtu.be/7603oH33Ghs>
* ‘He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands’, Hi Heaven:
<https://youtu.be/rAPNUVHLh1Q>
* ‘What a Wonderful World’, Louis Armstrong:
<https://youtu.be/rBrd_3VMC3c>
* ‘King of the Jungle’, CJ and Friends:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pCirKZr8QY>

## Prayer

*Invite the families to do some actions for the animals and to shout ‘Thank you, God!’ after each line.*

Thank you, God, for the wonderful world you have made and for all the amazing animals.

For dogs that bark and cats that purr. **Thank you, God!**

For mice that squeak and rabbits with twitchy noses. **Thank you, God!**

For lions and tigers that roar. **Thank you, God!**

For monkeys that chatter and crocodiles with snappy teeth. **Thank you, God!**

Thank you, God, that you made our wonderful world. Please help us to look after your world and each other.

Amen.