



SAVING THE RIVER GIANT: THE SOFTSHELL TURTLE COMEBACK STORY – LESSON VOCABULARY

Critically Endangered — the highest threat level on the IUCN Red List, meaning a species faces an extremely high risk of extinction

Breeding Population — a group of individuals of a species that successfully reproduces in a specific location

Local Ecological Knowledge (LEK) — information about the natural environment held by people who live and work closely with it over time

Bycatch — the accidental capture of a non-target species in fishing gear

Dam Inundation — the flooding of land caused by water backed up behind a dam, which can destroy nesting and habitat areas

Nesting Habitat — the specific environmental conditions a species needs to lay eggs and reproduce successfully

Community-Based Conservation — an approach to protecting species and ecosystems that centers the involvement and leadership of local communities

EDGE Species — stands for Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered; species that have few close relatives and represent a unique branch of the tree of life

Apex Predator — an animal at the top of its food chain with no natural predators as an adult

Biodiversity — the variety of life in a particular habitat or ecosystem, including species, genes, and ecosystems



Taxa — plural of taxon, a scientifically classified group or entity: a taxonomic unit (such as a genus or order) of any rank

Estuary — a water passage where the tide meets a river current, especially an arm of the sea at the lower end of a river

Stakeholder — one who is involved in or affected by a course of action

Incubate — to maintain (something, such as an embryo or a chemically active system) under conditions favorable for hatching, development, or reaction

Participatory workshops — Structured community meetings where local residents, scientists, and other stakeholders work together to share knowledge, raise concerns, and develop solutions — giving community members an active voice in decisions that affect them.

Scavengers — Animals that feed on dead or decaying organisms rather than hunting live prey. Scavengers play a critical role in ecosystems by recycling nutrients and keeping the environment clean.

Extinction — The permanent disappearance of a species from Earth. Once a species is extinct, it and its unique role in the ecosystem are gone forever.

River infrastructure — Human-built structures that alter or manage the flow of a river, such as dams, weirs, and irrigation channels. River infrastructure can provide essential resources for communities but often changes the natural habitat that wildlife depends on.

We hope you enjoyed this lesson!

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