

northernmost representative of an otherwise mostly tropical species, and once ranged from southern South Carolina to the tip of Florida, and in southern Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Today the snake is found only in Florida and Georgia. Population levels have dropped so dramatically over the past two decades, that in 1971 Florida offered complete protection against the "taking, selling, or possession" of the snake as a threatened species.

What has happened to this harmless creature? Like so many native wild species, it is taking a back seat to man. Massive development and intensive agricultural practices have destroyed much of the snake's habitat. More important, the snake is a common victim of commercial exploitation and indiscriminate killing. Because of its high value on the pet market (mail order dealers often list the snake at well over \$100), over-collection and black market operations have contributed significantly to the population's decline. In addition, the snake is often killed or disabled by participants in rattlesnake rodeos who gas gopher tortoise burrows during their annual winter round-ups. The eastern diamondback rattlesnake as well as the eastern indigo use the burrows as over-wintering dens. Thus, when the snake hunters dump from one to several ounces of gasoline down these holes in an attempt to "gas" out rattlesnakes, the eastern indigo is an unfortunate co-victim.

Zebras Proposed for Endangered List

Two species of zebras, the victims of excessive killing both for their hides and because they compete with livestock for available food supplies, have been proposed for the endangered list by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The proposal would place the Grevy's zebra of Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia and the Hartmann's mountain zebra of southwest Africa and Angola on the endangered species list.

Grevy's zebra numbers appear to have plummeted in the last decade. The only sizable populations are in northern Kenya where it has been estimated that about 1,500 animals survive. This is down from more than 10,000 in 1971. In the last 2 or 3 years uncontrolled shooting has wiped out entire

populations. On the Leroghi range, part of the Samburu Grazing Scheme, where 1,500 animals were counted in 1975, they are virtually non-existent today.

Although Kenya law protects zebras, poachers are still a major factor in the species' decline, with 8,000 Grevy's zebras estimated to have been poached in the last 3 years. The price of zebra skins, used to adorn walls and floors of homes, has recently skyrocketed from \$150 to as much as \$2,000.

The Hartmann's mountain zebra is also killed for its hide, but to a much lesser degree. The main concentration of the species is now restricted to Namibia where numbers total less than 2,000 individuals. In the 1950s, between 50,000 and 75,000 occurred in this general area. In 1960, the estimate was 15,000 and in 1970, 7,000 animals. The decline was brought about when man altered the environment by introducing livestock. The competition between zebras and cattle, sheep, and other livestock for available food resulted in ranchers destroying zebras in vast numbers. There are no effective means to control the slaughter. With the current political unrest in Namibia and the associated abundance of firearms in the area, there will undoubtedly be further indiscriminate destruction of zebras.

If this rulemaking is finally adopted, the two species, including their hides and products made from them, could not be imported into the United States without a permit, which would

only be issued for scientific purposes or to enhance the survival or propagation of the species.

Home Air Often Polluted

University of California scientists, aided by the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration, have just completed initial studies on six single-family homes in the San Francisco Bay area and have concluded that the air *inside* the average home is often more polluted than air on a smoggy day outdoors.

The study, which utilized sophisticated instruments to monitor inside air quality 24 hours a day, has raised some serious concerns over the effectiveness of new building codes in President Carter's legislative energy package. Although the Environmental Protection Agency has never set air quality standards for indoor pollution, the study showed that indoor levels of such pollutants as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, vinyl chloride, and fluorocarbons are often two to three times higher than existing outdoor air quality standards set by state and federal agencies.

According to the study, the household pollutants result from aerosol sprays, cigarette smoke, organic compounds used in cleaning and cooking, and, most frequently, from poorly constructed or improperly serviced gas appliances.

The researchers indicated that better ventilation is possible through the use of exhaust fans over stoves and tighter venting leading outside from gas furnaces. The study indicated that most new, well-constructed, single-family houses have air exchange rates of one air change per hour (ACPH). Energy conservation measures now being considered would limit this to one-quarter to one-half ACPH, thereby allowing high concentrations of pollutants to develop.

The Energy Research and Development Administration has been involved in drafting a national model building code for use by builders to make homes and buildings more energy efficient which may be used as a blueprint for the national building code called for in President Carter's legislative energy package. However, the code does not include considerations for indoor pollutants.





1978. "Zebras Proposed for Endangered List." *Field Museum of Natural History bulletin* 49(4), 11–11.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/25536>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/376108>

Holding Institution

University Library, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

Sponsored by

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the Chicago Field Museum.
For information contact dcc@library.uiuc.edu.

Rights Holder: Field Museum of Natural History

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.