

Ivan fact file

- **COMMON NAME:**
- **SCIENTIFIC NAME:**
- **ORIGIN:**
- **TYPE:**
- **DIET:**
- **GROUP NAME:**
- **AVERAGE LIFE SPAN IN THE WILD:**
- **SIZE:**
- **WEIGHT:**

Where will you find gorillas?

- Mountain gorillas live in Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Green, volcanic mountains.
- Lowland gorillas live in the forests of central and western Africa in Equatorial Guinea, Angola, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Food

- Gorillas stick to a mainly vegetarian diet, feeding on stems, bamboo shoots and fruits.
- Western lowland gorillas, however, also have an appetite for termites and ants, and break open termite nests to eat the larvae.
- Eastern lowland gorilla consumes parts of at least 104 plant species.
- Gorillas are able to survive on vegetation such as leaves, stems, roots, vines, herbs, trees, and grasses but such vegetation has relatively low nutritional quality. Therefore, they must consume a larger quantity, but it is available year-round.

Communication

- Gorillas communicate in a variety of ways, including facial expressions, sounds, postures and gestures.
- When things are calm, gorillas often greet each other by touching their noses together, and will sometimes even give a reassuring embrace.
- Gorillas have many ways in which they communicate, both verbally and non verbally. It can be very loud around gorillas when they are active and communicating but there is plenty of information about what their sounds mean.
- Gorillas often mix sounds with actions and that makes it more clear to researchers what is being said.

Group

- Gorillas live in groups. Groups of gorillas are called troops or bands.
- A band of gorillas can have as many as 50 members, though sometimes a band consists of as few as two members.
- Troops are led by a dominant male, called a silverback, which can often be identified by a grey strip of hair on his back.

Threats to survival

- The hunting, trading and consumption of gorillas – and other apes – is almost universally illegal in all Congo Basin countries. However, poaching continues.
- Apes are being killed to primarily to supply high-end demand for meat in urban centres, where the consumption of ape meat is considered to be prestigious amongst the wealthy elite.
- Gorillas are also sought after as pets or trophies and for their body parts, which are used in medicine and as magical charms.
- Forests are rapidly being destroyed by commercial logging interests, for subsistence agriculture and road building activities. This makes it harder for gorillas to sustain their lives.

Did you know...?

- The word "gorilla" comes from a Greek word "Gorillai", which means "hairy women"