



22 Threatened plant species

Across the globe, more than 40,000 species are threatened with extinction. This represents 28% of all species assessed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

According to the IUCN, the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria are intended to be an easily and widely understood system for classifying species at high risk of global extinction. It divides species into nine categories: Not Evaluated, Data Deficient, Least Concern, Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild and Extinct.

Out of the nine categories, four are used to categorize threatened species at a high risk of extinction: vulnerable, endangered, critically endangered, and extinct in the wild. [Disclaimer](#).

1. Gumwood (tree)

- **Scientific name:** *Commidendrum robustum*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 31 July 2015
- **Where are they currently found?** Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (Saint Helena (main island))
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest, Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)
- **Number of mature individuals:** 679
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/37583/67370371>

2. Attenborough's Pitcher Plant

- **Scientific name:** *Nepenthes attenboroughii*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 23 June 2007
- **Where are they currently found?** Philippines
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest, Shrubland, Grassland

- **Number of mature individuals:** 300-500
- **Population trend:** Unknown
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/159126/790335>

3. Titan Arum (the “Corpse Flower”)

- **Scientific name:** *Amorphophallus titanum*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 25 April 2018
- **Where are they currently found?** Indonesia (Sumatera)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest, Artificial/Terrestrial
- **Number of mature individuals:** 71-999,303
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **Fun Fact:** Titan Arum (*Amorphophallus titanum*) has the largest flowering structure of any plant in the world, rising up to 3 metres from the ground. It is known as the ‘corpse flower’, from the infamous rotting smell when the plant is in bloom.
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/118042834/118043213>

4. Kraaifontein Spiderhead (flower)

- **Scientific name:** *Serruria furcellata*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 4 June 2020
- **Where are they currently found?** South Africa (Western Cape)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Shrubland
- **Number of mature individuals:** 1-3
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **Fun Fact:** Just a single Kraaifontein Spiderhead (*Serruria furcellata*) plant is known to remain in the wild, following habitat loss to urban and industrial development of Cape Town, South Africa.
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/113237808/185558823>

5. Hau kuahiwi (tree)

- **Scientific name:** *Hibiscadelphus woodii*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 15 January 2020
- **Where are they currently found?** United States (Hawaiian Is.)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest
- **Number of mature individuals:** 4
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **Fun Fact:** This small Hawaiian tree occurs only on the island of Kauai, where it lives on cliffs. Also, *Hibiscadelphus* species are closely related to *Hibiscus*.
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/35153/149815881>

6. **Mulanje Cedar (tree)**

- **Scientific name:** *Widdringtonia whytei*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 1 August 2019
- **Where are they currently found?** Malawi
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest
- **Number of mature individuals:** 49
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/33216/126090798>

7. **The Medusagyne (the “Jellyfish Tree”)**

- **Scientific name:** *Medusagyne oppositifolia*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 1 February 2007
- **Where are they currently found?** Seychelles (Seychelles (main island group))
- **Habitat and ecology:** Shrubland, Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)
- **Number of mature individuals:** 86
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/37781/10072208>

8. **Dragon’s Blood Tree**

- **Scientific name:** *Dracaena cinnabari*
- **Red List assessment category:** Vulnerable (VU)
- **Last assessed:** 30 April 2004
- **Where are they currently found?** Yemen (Socotra)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest
- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Unspecified
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/30428/9548491>

The **Dracaena draco** is an **Endangered** species. Learn more: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/30394/119836316>

9. **Queen Victoria Paphiopedilum (orchid)**

- **Scientific name:** *Paphiopedilum victoria-regina*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 18 November 2014
- **Where are they currently found?** Indonesia (Sumatera)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest, Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)

- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/43322411/43328024>

10. Mace Pagoda (evergreen shrub)

- **Scientific name:** *Mimetes stokoei*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 16 June 2020
- **Where are they currently found?** South Africa (Western Cape)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Shrubland
- **Number of mature individuals:** 7-34
- **Population trend:** Stable
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/113181448/185589702>

11. Himalayan Cypripedium (orchid)

- **Scientific name:** *Cypripedium himalaicum*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 3 July 2013
- **Where are they currently found?** Bhutan; China (Tibet [or Xizang]); India (Uttar Pradesh, Jammu-Kashmir, Sikkim); Nepal
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest, Shrubland, Grassland, Wetlands (inland)
- **Number of mature individuals:** 150-200
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/43316627/43327664>

12. Venda Cycad

- **Scientific name:** *Encephalartos hirsutus*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 31 October 2009
- **Where are they currently found?** South Africa (Limpopo Province)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Savanna, Shrubland, Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)
- **Number of mature individuals:** 0-219
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/41889/149622664>

13. Sicilian Fir (tree)

- **Scientific name:** *Abies nebrodensis*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 15 March 2016
- **Where are they currently found?** Italy (Sicilia)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Shrubland
- **Number of mature individuals:** 25

- **Population trend:** Increasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/30478/91164876>

Various species of firs are threatened. Learn more:

Fraser's Fir (*Abies fraseri*, Endangered)

Guatemalan Fir (*Abies guatemalensis*, Endangered)

Korean Fir (*Abies koreana*, Endangered)

14. **Turbinicarpus hoferi (cactus)**

- **Scientific name:** *Turbinicarpus hoferi*
- **Red List assessment category:** Critically Endangered (CR)
- **Last assessed:** 19 November 2009
- **Where are they currently found?** Mexico (Nuevo León)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Shrubland, Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks)
- **Number of mature individuals:** 500-999
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/40976/2948670>

15. **Asian Surf Grass**

- **Scientific name:** *Phyllospadix japonicus*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 11 August 2008
- **Where are they currently found?** China; Japan; Korea, Democratic People's Republic of; Korea, Republic of
- **Habitat and ecology:** Marine Neritic, Marine Intertidal
- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/173341/6994909>

Various species of grass are threatened. Learn more:

Ocean Turf Grass (*Halophila beccarii*, Vulnerable)

Clover Grass (*Halophila baillonii*, Vulnerable)

16. **Saharan Cypress (tree)**

- **Scientific name:** *Cupressus dupreziana*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 7 March 2012
- **Where are they currently found?** Algeria; Morocco
- **Habitat and ecology:** Desert
- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/30325/2792650>

17. Goldenseal (herb)

- **Scientific name:** *Hydrastis canadensis*
- **Red List assessment category:** Vulnerable (VU)
- **Last assessed:** 30 April 2014
- **Where are they currently found?** Canada (Ontario); United States (Alabama, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Georgia, Delaware, Connecticut, Arkansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest
- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/44340011/44340071>

18. Waterwheel (aquatic plant)

- **Scientific name:** *Aldrovanda vesiculosa*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 5 October 2019
- **Where are they currently found?** Australia (Northern Territory, New South Wales, Western Australia, Queensland); Botswana; Bulgaria; China (Heilongjiang); Greece (Greece (mainland)); Hungary; Lithuania; North Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; South Africa (Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga); Uganda; Ukraine; Zambia
- **Habitat and ecology:** Wetlands (inland), Artificial/Aquatic & Marine
- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **Fun Fact:** The Waterwheel plant captures small aquatic invertebrates using traps similar to those of the Venus flytrap.
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/162346/83998419>

The Venus Flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*, Vulnerable) is also threatened.

19. Giant Sequoia (tree)

- **Scientific name:** *Sequoiadendron giganteum*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 18 April 2011
- **Where are they currently found?** United States (California)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest
- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/34023/2840676>

20. Grant Duff's Iris (flower)

- **Scientific name:** *Iris grant-duffii*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 5 February 2016
- **Where are they currently found?** Israel, Syrian Arab Republic
- **Habitat and ecology:** Wetlands (inland)
- **Number of mature individuals:** 200,000
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/165457/1082918>

21. Vanilla Mansa (Flat-leaved vanilla a.k.a “Madagascar Vanilla”)

- **Scientific name:** *Vanilla planifolia*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 16 February 2017
- **Where are they currently found?** Belize; Mexico (Quintana Roo, Puebla, Oaxaca, Chiapas)
- **Habitat and ecology:** Forest
- **Number of mature individuals:** Unknown
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **Fun Fact:** Native to Belize and Mexico, this flowering orchid is the main plant that commercial vanilla flavoring is derived from and is widely used in foods, beverages, and cosmetics.
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/103090930/172970359>

22. Queen of the Andes (flower)

- **Scientific name:** *Puya raimondii*
- **Red List assessment category:** Endangered (EN)
- **Last assessed:** 28 November 2008
- **Where are they currently found?** Bolivia, Plurinational States of; Peru
- **Habitat and ecology:** Grassland, Rocky areas (eg. inland cliffs, mountain peaks), Artificial/Terrestrial
- **Number of mature individuals:** 830,000-835,000
- **Population trend:** Decreasing
- **Fun Fact:** When grown in the wild, the Queen of the Andes plants usually do not flower until they are about 80 – 100 years old. The Queen of the Andes is also the largest bromeliad and is in the same taxonomic family as the Spanish Moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*) and Pineapple (*Ananas comosus*).
- **IUCN link:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/168358/6482345>

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