

# Saved from Extinction!

## The Przewalski's (shuh-VAL-skees) Horse

### Past

In 1969, the Przewalski's horse was declared extinct in the wild due to:

- hunting
- habitat loss
- genetic bottleneck

To save the species, the few remaining horses in captivity were put into breeding programs and reintroduced to several protected sites in Asia.

### What's a genetic bottleneck?

A genetic bottleneck is when the number of individuals in a population rapidly decreases. This makes it harder for the remaining individuals to produce healthy offspring due to lack of genetic variation.



### Present

Today, there are over 600 horses living in the deserts of Mongolia and the Przewalski's horse is now listed as endangered. They are still threatened by habitat loss, predation, and inbreeding.

### Future

Due to the genetic bottleneck, there is still low genetic diversity within the wild populations. However, scientists have turned to cloning to try and solve this issue. Frozen cells from historic Przewalski's horses (pre-extinction) can be used to incorporate rare genes back into the population.

On August 6, 2020, the first cloned Przewalski's horse was born. This foal is the first step towards improving the species genetic traits and survivability.



### Audience:

I am targeting the general public, which is who you would expect to find at a zoo or museum where my informational artifact may be found. I'm specifically targeting highschoolers and adults. I did not use super difficult wording, but I definitely wouldn't expect a toddler to understand any of it. I don't expect my audience to have any scientific background, which is why I included a pronunciation for Przewalski. I also included a definition of "genetic bottleneck" because I assume most people wouldn't know what that is. I included pictures to show what this species looks like, assuming people might not have seen or heard of it before.

### Purpose:

My purpose is to inform the general public about a species that may be unfamiliar to them. I specifically want to inform them about why this species went extinct and how they were saved. I also wanted to introduce a potentially new concept to the public, genetic bottleneck, to show why keeping species population numbers high is crucial. Lastly, I wanted to briefly mention cloning, which can be very useful for conservation purposes.

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