

**EXTINCTION**  
Fall 2017  
Professor Parenteau

**ASSIGNMENT FOR FIRST CLASS:**

**Aug 30.** The State of the Planet

Nova Special: [Mass Extinction](#)

Joel Sartore <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49lzBOB4HB4>

Biodiversity Hot Spots [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqUdcW\\_uNMo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqUdcW_uNMo)

Importance of Biodiversity [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqUdcW\\_uNMo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqUdcW_uNMo)

**Questions to ponder:**

Is there a mass extinction crisis?

How are extinction rates calculated?

What are the root causes of species extinction?

What role do humans play in the process of extinction?

Do species matter?

Is species preservation a realistic goal?

Should we try to save every species?

Should a benefit-cost analysis be used to decide which species are worth preserving?

What is the appropriate role for zoos and other captive breeding programs?

What about cloning and “reanimation?”

What are biodiversity hot spots?