

Mountain gorilla population grows

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A female mountain gorilla sits in vegetation in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest on the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, in September 2009. The population of mountain gorillas in their main central African habitat has increased by a quarter in seven years, regional authorities said.

The population of mountain gorillas in their main central African habitat has increased by a quarter in seven years, regional authorities said Tuesday.

Most of the world's mountain gorillas are found in the Virunga massif, which includes three contiguous national parks in Rwanda, the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) (DRC) and Uganda.

The population of the iconic but endangered animal in that area increased from 380 individuals in 2003 to 480, according to a census carried out earlier this year and funded by a number of local and foreign wildlife organisations.

"The increase in [mountain gorilla](#) numbers is a testament that we in the Virunga massif are all reaping from the conservation efforts sowed on a daily basis," Rica Rwigamba, from the Rwanda Development Board said in a statement.

The only place outside of the Virunga massif where mountain gorillas are found is Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Along with 302 individuals believed to dwell in Bwindi and four orphans living in a sanctuary in DR Congo, the census put the known world [population](#) of mountain gorillas at 786.

Mountain gorillas, who have fallen prey to conflict and poaching over the years, were famously brought to the world's attention by the late Dian Fossey and are one the region's main tourist attractions.

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