Google launches Wildlife Insights to help manage the world's wildlife

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Google Inc. has launched a beta version of an online portal called Wildlife Insights—its purpose is to help wildlife managers around the globe manage the wildlife in their part of the planet. The AI-based application lets researchers upload pictures of wildlife captured in their native habitats using camera traps and have them automatically labeled

and entered into a global database that anyone can freely access.

As humans continue to encroach on natural wildlife habitats, and as the planet's climate continues to change due to [global warming](#), scientists study wildlife to see how the other creatures of the world are faring. Information from scientists is often used by wildlife management officials, thus, it is import that such data is both current and accurate. One of the most common ways that scientists study [wild animals](#) is by using [camera traps](#) with a sensors in the wild. When an animal happens by, the sensor detects movement and triggers the camera to take a picture. Such cameras can be deployed for hours, weeks or even months.

When the camera is retrieved, it is then up to the scientists who deployed the camera to catalog the animal images that were captured—an extremely labor-intensive activity. That is where Wildlife Insights comes in. Instead of poring through thousands or even hundreds of thousands of images, a researcher can simply upload them to the Wildlife Insights portal, where the images are cataloged automatically.

The sorting capabilities of Wildlife Insights are due to an AI engine that has been trained in image recognition—it searches each image to first discern whether there is an animal in the picture, and if not, discards it. If there is an animal in the picture, it attempts to properly label the animal before adding the picture, label and GPS coordinates to its cloud-based database. As information in the database grows, it will become more useful. Researchers and wildlife managers will be able to carry out searches and conduct analyses such as tracking changes in population for a given species in a given area over a period of time. And that should make it easier for researchers to see what is going on with the world's [wildlife](#), and for [wildlife managers](#) to make decisions to preserve as many species as possible.

More information: www.wildlifeinsights.org/

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