

# THE FRAGILE WEB

*Transcript from YouTube: Amazing circle of Life - The Fragile Web*

Life first emerged in the oceans nearly three and a half billion years ago. Water, air, light and energy - these are the elements that made life possible. About 425 million years ago life began moving from sea to land. Vegetation covered the earth. Over millions of years an amazing variety of habitats and ecosystems developed. This enabled the diversity of life forms to proliferate on our planet. From tiny microbes invisible to the eye to enormous giants of the oceans, the richness and variety of life is astounding. Because of the diverse climates and landscapes, different species evolved to survive and thrive in different habitats.

In spite of diverse ecosystems, the earth is a unified pulsating living system in which all beings are connected together. For millions of years species have evolved - as allies, adversaries and enemies... developing strategies to adapt, survive and reproduce. Breeding time and behaviour and even the number of offspring produced is all part of nature's intricate design. Top predators like lions and tigers produce only two or three offspring every few years. Having no predators above them, their survival is ensured. Species lower in the food chain breed more often and produce more babies. The higher number ensure the survival of at least a few. The majority become food resource for other species.

Every species and life form has been designed with a specific purpose and plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy and vibrant ecosystem. Even the tiny bee is as important as the tiger and vital for the survival of all other life forms on earth, including man. If the bee and other pollinators disappear, the

tiger will vanish within a year. Man will disappear in three years and all other life on earth will soon follow.

In the mindless race for progress, man is creating a new world, transforming the whole planet as he plunders it. We have ravaged our forests, polluted our water systems, poisoned our air, altered our environment, impacting climate and pushing thousands of species to the brink of extinction and beyond. Almost 300 species are disappearing each day. Mankind may have triggered the next mass extinction. Our planet has never before witnessed an extinction of this speed and magnitude. Never before has just one species been responsible for the destruction of so many others. According to scientists, within the next 30 years, one-fifth of all living species could go extinct. Species that have evolved over millions of years will vanish in a few decades. A global tragedy is unfolding right before our eyes.

Extinction is an irreversible process. Species that go extinct will be lost forever, never to return. A once vibrant living planet has been plundered and destroyed. In our haste we have forgotten that we are not the supreme commanders of the earth but only a strand in the delicate web of life. Our own survival and evolution depends on learning to share this planet with other creatures that have been here millions of years before us.

If mankind is the cause, it can also be the solution. Just as we have the ability damage and destroy, we also have within us the ability to protect and conserve and learn from our mistakes and once again learn to live in harmony with nature. The future of this fragile planet, our home, is in our hands.

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