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Contest Calls on Nature Lovers

Endangered, threatened species could earn you money

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Getty Images

It's not often that an endangered species can do something for people but this is an exception.

A contest that kicked off in the Bay Area this weekend asks everyone to look up, down and all around the Golden Gate Recreation Area and surrounding parks for rare species of plants and animals. [It's called the Endangered Species Big Year](#) and it could mean big money prizes for winners.

The goal of the contest is to help people become more connected to endangered and threatened species at Golden Gate National Parks while helping wildlife experts learn more about and help protect natural resources and prevent extinction.

Participants are looking for everything from abalone to owls and pretty much everything in between -- including plants. [All of the species are shown and described on a page at the Endangered Species Big Year Web site.](#)

The one who helps save the most species will get the biggest prize of \$1,000; other prizes will be handed out throughout the year for competitors who meet certain milestones throughout the year-long contest.

Then again, isn't the thought of helping to save a dwindling or rare plant or animal rewarding enough?

This is the second year the The Wild Equity Institute is organizing the race.

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