



Saving the
Red Panda
of the
Eastern Himalayas

Written by Linda Rae Liss
Illustrations by George Carrara



Read
Aloud

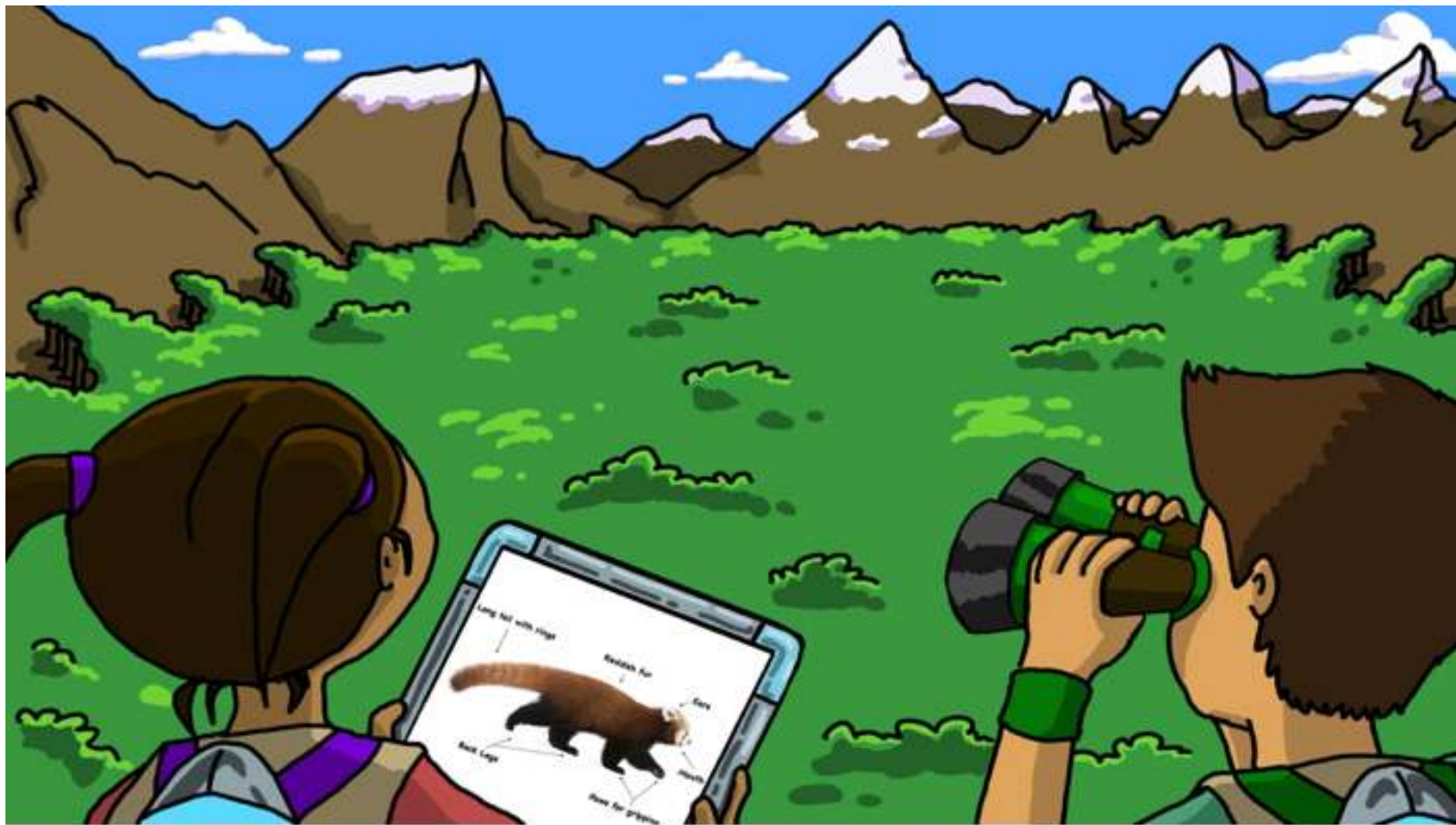


Deepa

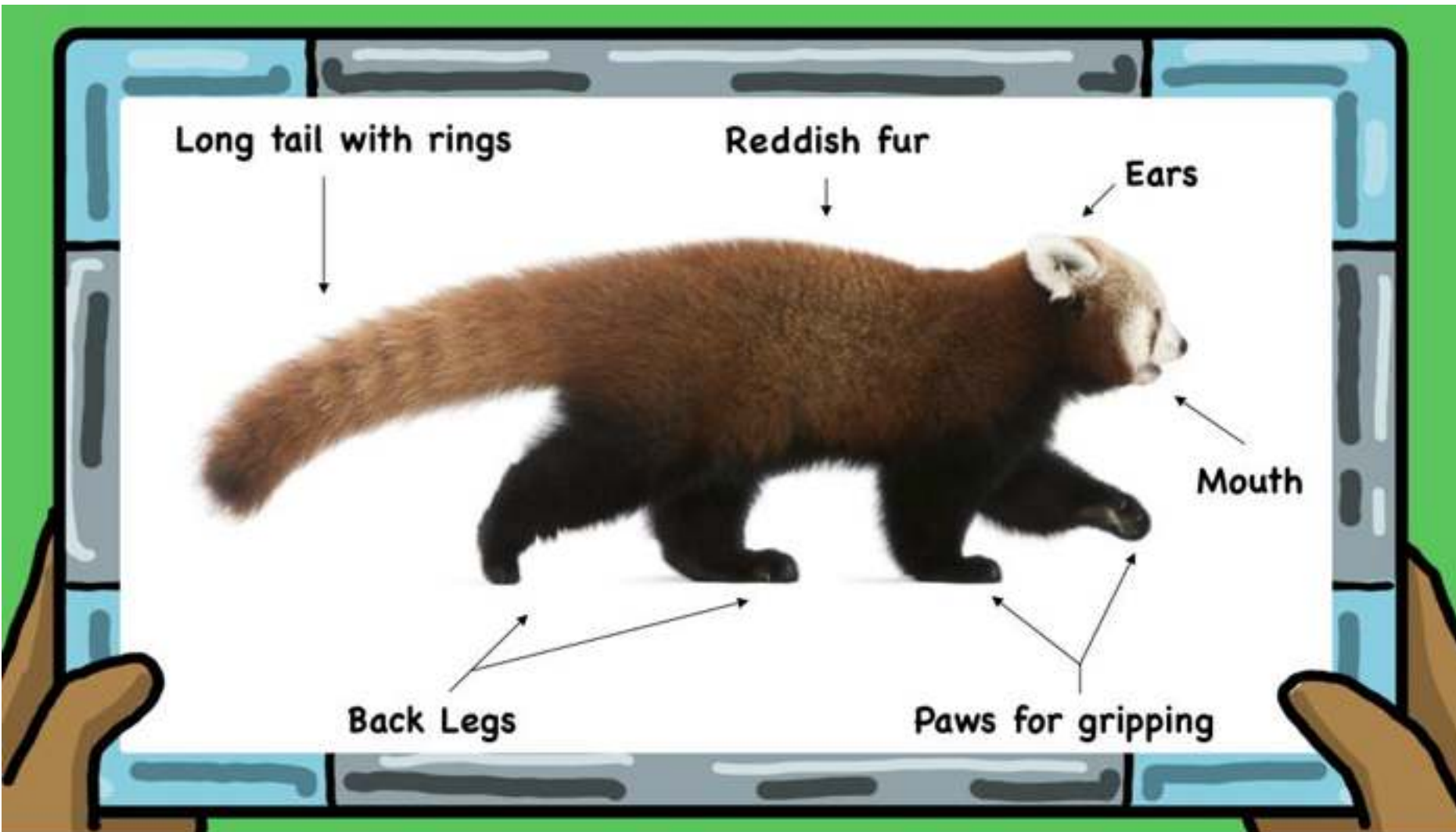


Tim

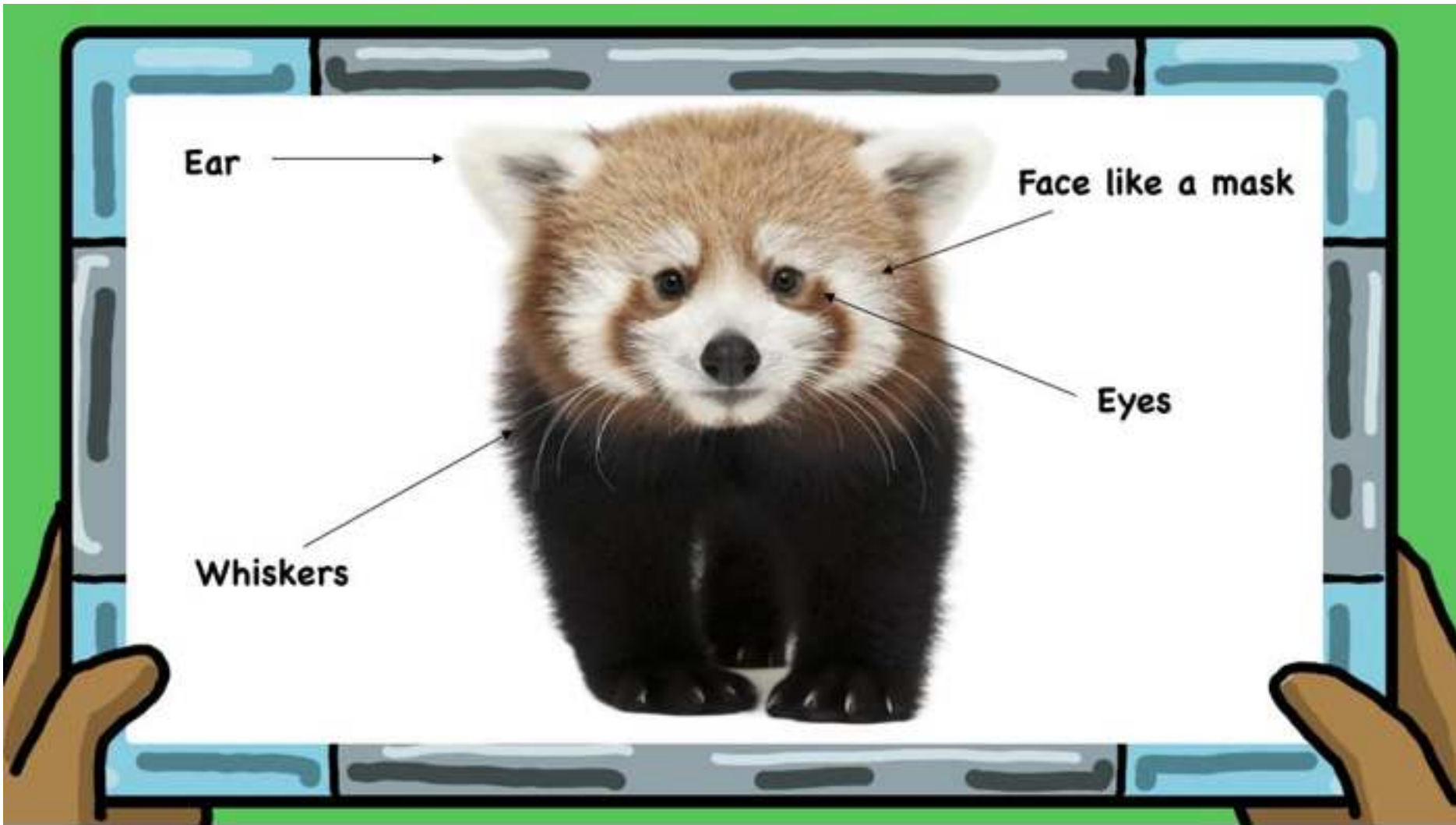
Meet Deepa and Tim, student conservationists. Deepa and Tim are planning a trip to a forest habitat in the **Eastern Himalayan Mountains** to observe red pandas.



Deepa and Tim arrive in the forest to begin their search for a red panda. Red Pandas live in bamboo forests high up in the mountains. They are **tree dwellers** and hard to see. Deepa and Tim are worried about these animals because they are in danger of becoming extinct.



Deepa and Tim want to learn more about what red pandas look like. First, they read the labels on a diagram. Tim asks, "What did you find out from the diagram?" Deepa replies, "Red pandas have reddish fur and a long, bushy tail with a pattern of rings. Look at the fur! I see a few different colors."



Next, they look closely at the red panda's face. Tim asks, "Is the red panda wearing a mask?"

Deepa replies, "No, I think the different fur colors, on its face, make it look like it is wearing a mask."



Suddenly, Tim catches a glimpse of a red panda in his binoculars. It is very hard to see the red panda because its colors blend in with the trees. Tim realizes that the different colors of the red panda's fur helps it to hide in its forest habitat.

Tim says, "This red panda is **camouflaged**."



Deepa and Tim decide to soar into the forest to get a closer look. They put on their jetpacks and fly over to where Tim saw the red panda. They will have to land high up in a tree because red pandas are good climbers.



Deepa and Tim land on a tree that is close to the **den** of a red panda, but not too close. They don't want to disturb the red panda, especially when she is sleeping with her cubs. They just want to learn more about its habits.



Deepa spots another red panda that is resting in a tree. Red pandas like to sleep during the day. They are most active during the **twilight** hours, at dawn when the sun comes up and at dusk when the sun goes down.



At dawn the next morning, Tim and Deepa see the red panda creep out of the tree to look for food. They observe the way the red panda can hold on to the bamboo leaves with its paws. Deepa says, "I read that they have special bones in their wrists to help them grasp the bamboo. Did you know that red pandas also eat roots, grubs, small animals, eggs, and bugs?"



Panda



Fox



Bear



Raccoon



As they observe the red panda from afar, they start to think more about what it looks like. They compare the red panda to other animals. What animals do you think the red panda looks like?



After that, they watch the red panda mother sneak up to a nest to steal eggs. Deepa thinks about the red panda's size. She compares the red panda with the size of a cat. Tim says, "A red panda is as big as a cat, but it has a longer tail than a cat."



Tim asks, "I wonder what a red panda can do with such a long tail?"

Deepa replies, "It can use it for a blanket. Red pandas live in cold mountain places so they have to wrap their bushy tail around their bodies to keep warm."

CRACK!



All of a sudden, Deepa and Tim hear a loud **CRACK!** Deepa asks, "Did you hear that Tim? Look the red panda is running back to her den!"



The two student conservationists look down and are horrified by what they see.



WHACK! WHACK! WHACK!

A man chops at the trunk of the tree with an ax.

Deepa gasps, "Oh, no! The red panda and her babies live in that tree."



Deepa and Tim soar towards the ground. They yell, "STOP! DON'T CHOP DOWN THAT TREE." The man stops swinging his ax.



Deepa pleads, "Please don't destroy this tree."

Tim tells the man that this tree is a home to a family of red pandas.

Deepa explains, "Red pandas play an important role in the Himalayan **ecosystem** and it would be a devastating loss if they became extinct. Every tree that is cut down in this forest takes the red pandas closer to extinction."



The next day the man returns to the forest without his ax. He returns with a sign.

Red Panda Conservation

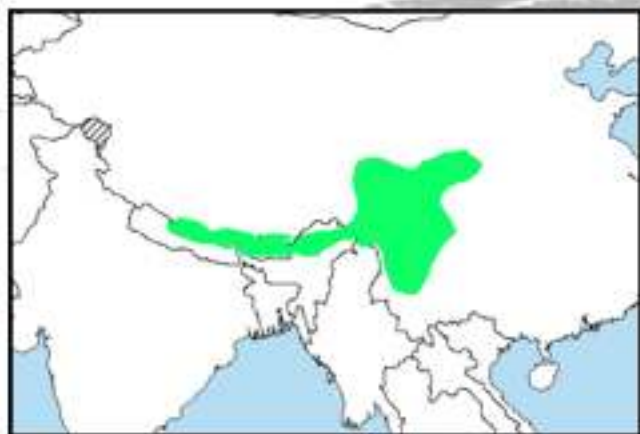
Dear Friends of the Red Panda,

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is helping to save the red panda. Almost half of all the red pandas in the world live in the Eastern Himalayas. About 38% of the total red panda habitat is in Nepal. The WWF keeps track of all the red panda habitats. The loss of nesting trees is a big problem. The red pandas don't have any place to live when their trees are cut down. Sometimes they get caught in traps that are meant for other animals. In some places they are trapped for their fur to make fur caps or hats. It is important that you tell people that we have to protect these animals and their habitat.

-Deepa & Tim



Tim and Deepa write an important message about **deforestation** and red pandas. They are worried about what will happen to the red pandas if the trees in the forest are cut down and people continue to trap red pandas for their fur. What can you do to help the red panda?



Equator



 Red Panda Habitat

Glossary

Camouflage (Page 6)

Using skin or fur color to match surroundings. Animals that can change the color of their skin or fur have a greater chance of survival by tricking predators or prey.



Deforestation (Page 20)

Clearing or removing trees from a forest for use by humans.



Den (Page 8)

A den is the shelter made by a wild animal. It is usually a cave or burrow that is small and warm.



Ecosystem (Page 18)

A community of animals, plants and insects living in nature in a specific area.



Red Panda (Page 2)

A mammal that lives in Eastern Himalayan Mountains. It is slightly larger than a domestic cat with a bear-like body and thick fur.



Tree Dwellers (Page 3)

Animals that spend nearly all their time high up in the forest trees. They eat, sleep, and raise their young in the trees of a forest.



Glossary

Twilight (Page 9)

The time of day or night, right after sunset or right before sunrise, when the sun gives off a glow and it is not totally dark.





Written by

Linda Rae Liss

Illustrated by

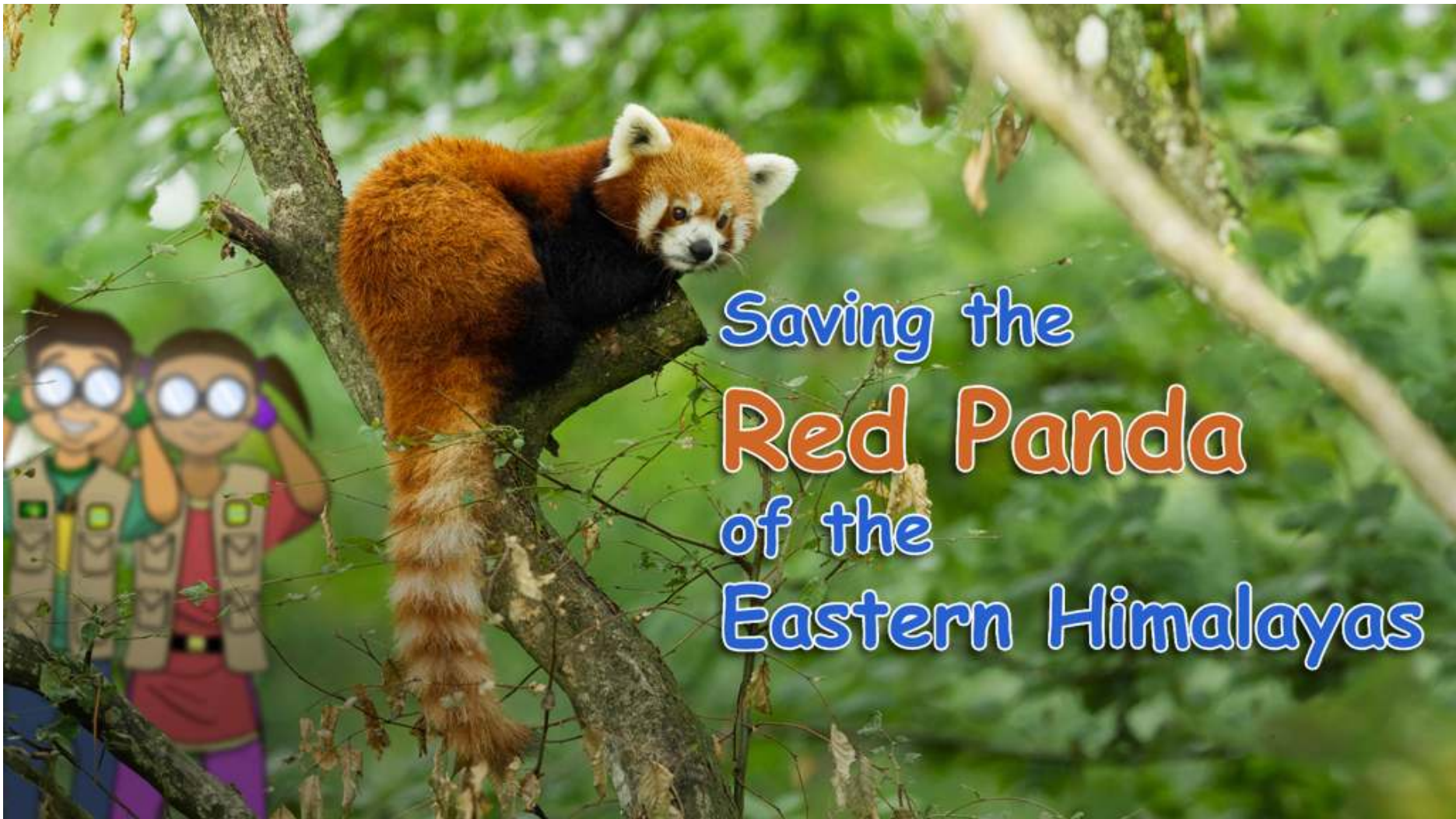
George Carrara

Saving the Red Panda of the Eastern Himalayas

For more books and lesson guides visit us at
www.WordScientists.org

Copyright 2017, National Education Support Trust USA Inc. Distributed under Creative Commons Noncommercial 4.0 License. You may not use the material contained herein for commercial purposes. Greater detail may be found at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/legalcode> or a successor site from Creative Commons.





Saving the
Red Panda
of the
Eastern Himalayas