



Green Family Newsletter



July 2011



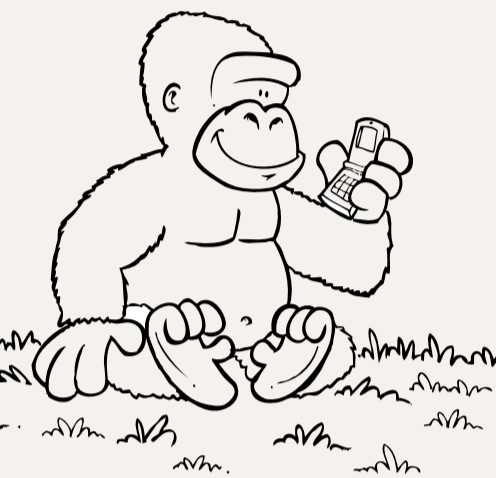
Hi, I'm Theresa, mum of the Green family and chief environmental coordinator for our little household. With my husband Lorne, and our kids Max and Liv, we're always looking for new ways to live greener and to positively impact our environment. We've just discovered a fantastic new conservation campaign and we'd love to have you on board to support it!

What's it about?

"They're Calling on You" is an initiative developed by Zoos Victoria (and supported by the Bendigo Bank) that aims to help protect the gorilla population of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), simply by donating unused mobile phones.

Like our family was initially, you might be unaware of the connection between African gorillas and mobile phones. It's all to do with a rare metal called coltan. Coltan is required in a multitude of electronic devices, including mobile phones, and 80% of the world's coltan reserves are found in the DRC. The global demand for coltan has led to massive coltan mining in areas of the DRC that also happen to be the natural habitat for primate species such as the Eastern Lowland and Mountain Gorilla. Their pristine forest homes are being devastated by coltan mining (much of it illegal), exposing them to large scale poaching that is having a catastrophic impact on gorilla populations.

If we can help reduce the demand for coltan – by refurbishing or recycling old and unused mobile phones - the threat to primate species in the DRC can be reduced. Liv – seven years old and our very own environmental crusader – reckons the solution is easy and that everyone should just stop using mobiles altogether. After eventually persuading her it might be a little difficult to stop all mobile phone calls, she decided to jump in and help out with one of Zoos Victoria's campaign suggestions.



What can we do?

After hearing that Zoos Victoria provide free courier pick up when 16 or more phones have been collected at the one location, Liv rocketed into action at her school. She handed out a campaign flyer to all the teachers and asked them to bring in any of their unused or old mobiles - within a week she'd collected more than 20! Liv was chuffed knowing she was helping protect the gorillas in the Congo as well as keeping old mobiles out of our local landfills, and proudly handed over all the phones to the courier. For the teachers that didn't get their phones to school in time, Liv told them they can simply go to the Zoos Victoria website (www.zoo.org.au/callingonyou) and print off a post paid label to send off any other phones.....as Liv said to her teachers, it couldn't be any easier than that!



Not to be outdone by his little sister, Max decided to find out what he could do to help. He was amazed to learn that the funds raised by the recycler from selling just a single recycled mobile, would provide the daily food rations for a national park eco-guard protecting Congo gorillas. This made him realise that the smallest of actions here in Australia could have a big impact on the other side of the world in Africa. Inspired, he told all his footy team-mates to get their parents to bring any old phones to their next footy match. He couldn't believe it when Saturday came around and almost all his team-mates turned up at the game with footy boots, their mouthguard...and a phone!



Being the environmentally conscious (and dutiful) husband that he is, Lorne has also been keenly supporting "They're Calling on You." He explained to Max and Liv that that some of the \$65,000 already raised through the sale of refurbished mobile phones has been used to help create community wildlife reserves in the DRC to provide a sanctuary for threatened gorilla species. As well as that, other funds have been invested in training programmes for local communities in eastern Congo to provide education on pursuing sustainable alternative livelihoods, as opposed to slaughtering the endangered gorillas for the bush-meat market.

As a family, we've been enthusiastically embracing as many environmental initiatives as possible in our everyday lives, many of which we've adopted from the **Generation Green** program. We think "They're Calling on You" is great way for us to act locally and for those actions to have positive environmental and community consequences in Africa and in our own backyard.

If you'd like to join the Green family in the campaign, you can pick a pre-paid Melbourne Zoo mobile phone recycling satchel at your local Bendigo Bank branch throughout July, August and September. And if you'd like any further information, please visit the "They're Calling on You" campaign page on the Zoos Victoria website at www.zoo.org.au/callingonyou

Until next time, thanks for your support
- The GREEN Family

