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Just like ancient people referred to the Himalayas as the roof of the world, so do people today refer to the Himalayas' highest peak (Mt. Everest) as the roof of the world. This image depicts a NASA photograph of the Himalayas (featuring Mt. Everest with its neighbors) as seen from the International Space Station. Click on the image for a stunning view.

Ancient people called the roof of the world Himalaya, a Sanskrit word meaning "the Abode of Snow." Claiming nine of the world's ten highest peaks, the Himalayan Range stretches nearly 1,600 miles (2,600 kilometers), separating the Tibetan Plateau from the Indian subcontinent. It is a place of incomparable beauty - and danger. Scientists believe the Himalayan Mountains were formed when two different tectonic plates collided, forcing crumpled rock formations upwards. Fourteen of those rock formations, which we call mountains, have peaks higher than 8,000 meters (26,247 feet).

Looking up, in the Eastern Himalaya, one sees an abode of snow. But closer to the ground, particularly in the area near Mt Everest, we find a rich diversity of plant and animal life.

Biologists have referred to this part of the Nepal Himalaya as a "pure ecological seed," but it has also become "one of the ten most threatened biological treasures on Earth."

Depending on the terrain (ranging from soaring mountain peaks or foothills, to subtropical jungles or desert plateaus), we find endangered species like the snow leopard, the striped-face red panda, musk deer and Himalayan black bear. We also find flowers, like gorgeous Himalaya rhododendron and beautiful orchids.

Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world above sea level, is part of the Himalayan Range. Let's take a virtual trip to examine it more closely.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-HIMALAYAN-MOUNTAINS-Mummy-Tomb-of-the-Dragon-Emperor>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-HIMALAYAN-MOUNTAINS-Mummy-Tomb-of-the-Dragon-Emperor>

Media Stream



Mt. Everest Area - Space Station View

Image online, courtesy nasa.gov website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mt.-Everest-Area-Space-Station-View>



Nepal Himalaya - Map Locator

Image online, courtesy [Earlham College website](#).

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Nepal-Himalaya-Map-Locator>



Virtual Visit to Everest

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Snow Leopard - Rare Footage

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Everest - Fatal Storm of 1996

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Himalaya - A Virtual Visit

Clip online via YouTube.

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