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Growing up, I always admired the natural beauty of my home state of South Carolina. The variety of ecosystems across the state, from the coastal waterways up through the Piedmont Mountains, provides a variety of homes for a diverse group of animals. Sadly though, many of these native animals are endangered and threatened with extinction. This series of lithographic prints illustrates a number of these endangered and threatened species.

Printmaking and the ability to make editions are seemingly contradictory to extinction, as one image can be reproduced multiple times. Yet, the method of paper lithography references temporality within each print. After printing, the plate cannot be reused. It is gone, extinct in a way. And while more copies of the image can be made from new plates, each print goes through its own cycle of creation and death.

Illustrating every endangered or threatened species would be far too expansive a project, but this series provides examples from all classes in order to display some of this diversity. The images of the animals themselves are simple, black outlines representing the endangered or threatened status of these animals. They are but a graphic outline of their living counterparts.

While the animals are left empty and colorless in the prints, they appear in concert with bright, bold-patterned backgrounds.

These backgrounds, inspired by geometric patterns, provide an abstract landscape to place my drawings into. The joining of art and geometry is not unheard of, as the tessellated, illusionary works of Escher are one source of inspiration for me. The abstract backgrounds extract the animals from their natural context, further reflecting their threatened or endangered status.

And while the backgrounds are abstract, they are not arbitrary. The shapes and colors chosen mimic the shapes, patterns, or coloring of the animal itself and its environment. As the animals presented here in my images are overpowered and overwhelmed, they are similarly forced from their natural environments in the real world.