

RANGE

These tamarins are found in a small area of northwest Colombia in a range bound by the Cauca and Magdalena Rivers and the Atlantic coast

HABITAT

Cotton-top tamarins are found in humid tropical forest, dry deciduous forest, and secondary growth forest. They are most commonly found in trees but can be seen on the ground, foraging among leaf litter. These tamarins are also highly adaptable to secondary or remnant forest fringes or patches and can live in relatively disturbed habitats.

SIZE

The average height of both males and females is 232 mm (9.13 in). Wild males and females weigh between 410 and 450 g (14.5 and 15.9 oz), but average 416.5 g (14.7 oz), while captive cotton-top tamarins are significantly heavier and weigh, on average, 565.7 g (19.9 oz).

LIFE EXPECTANCY

Cotton-top tamarins live for an average of 13.5 years, but the oldest recorded cotton-top tamarin lived to be 24 years old in captivity

DIET

The primary components of cotton-top tamarin diet are insects, fruit, plant exudates (material that oozes out of a plant including gum, sap, resin, and latex), and nectar, but they have also been recorded eating reptiles and amphibians.

REPRODUCTION

Tamarins live in extended family groups of between four and 15 individuals, but usually 2–8. *Saguinus oedipus* lives in groups of 2–9. Generally, only one female per group breeds during a particular breeding season. Cotton-top tamarins also exhibit the trait of primarily giving birth to non-identical twins, as is seen in other callitrichines

BEHAVIOR

The most common modes of locomotion for cotton-top tamarins include quadrupedal running, bounding, or galloping along medium to small branches as well as clinging and leaping between trees on thin or small branches

POINTS OF INTEREST

- The species is considered to be one of the 25 most endangered primates.
- Cotton-top tamarins are one of three Amazonian species of tamarin.
- It is estimated that there are between 300 and 1000 cotton-top tamarins left in Colombia. There are 1800 cotton-top tamarins in captivity and of those, 64% are found in research laboratories.
- Legally protected in Colombia since 1969. The major threat in the past was export for the pet trade, zoos and biomedical research, but export was banned in 1974. The primary threat to this species is now deforestation and the loss of habitat.
- Tamarins are highly important seed dispersers in tropical ecosystems. They ingest and void seeds larger than those consumed by much larger species of primates, including chimpanzees, baboons, and macaques.
- One function of swallowing such disproportionately large seeds may be to mechanically expel intestinal parasites from their digestive tract. Certain worms, caused by consuming orthopteran prey, attach to the lining of the gut and cause inflammation, lesions, and death. By swallowing and expelling seeds, these may, as they work their way through the gastrointestinal tract, dislodge intestinal parasites
- Proyecto Tití, a conservation program for the Cotton-top Tamarin in Colombia, was established in 1987 to begin the first long-term field study on this species in collaboration with Colombian biologists, educators, and government authorities.

STATUS

IUCN: Critically Endangered. CITES: Appendix I

**PHOTO
COMING
SOON**

photo:

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| Order: | Primates |
| Family: | Callitrichidae |
| Genus: | Saguinus |
| Species: | oedipus |

Tamarin, Cotton-Top

CONTINUED

REFERENCES

- http://pin.primate.wisc.edu/factsheets/entry/cotton-top_tamarin
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- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cottontop_Tamarin
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