

JAGUAR

RANGE:

Mexico, Central to South America

HABITAT:

Rain forests, marshes, dense forests, tend to follow rivers

SIZE:

5-6 ft in length, and can weigh 124-211 lbs.

LIFE EXPECTANCY:

Live between 16-22 years in captivity, 12-16 in wild.

DIET:

Jaguars are solitary hunters that do not associate with one another outside the breeding season. They hunt around 85 species including deer, caiman, tapirs, and peccaries, but they are opportunists and will take anything from frogs and mice to birds, fish, and domestic livestock.

REPRODUCTION:

- Only associate with others during breeding season.
- Females give birth to as many as four cubs after a 90 to 110 day gestation, but raise no more than two of them to adulthood.
- The young are born with their eyes closed and do not see until after two weeks. They remain with their mother for up to two years before leaving to establish a territory for themselves

BEHAVIOR:

- Instead of biting the neck, to suffocate or sever the spinal cord, the jaguar delivers a fatal bite directly to the skull. It is because of this killing technique that jaguars often break teeth as they progress in age.
- Large carcasses are either buried or hidden in a sheltered area, for the jaguar will return to eat when it is hungry again.
- The jaguar is also a patient hunter of fish. It waits by the water's edge, occasionally hitting the surface of the water with its tail, which inadvertently attracts fish. As the fish approach the shore, the jaguar swats at them, spearing the fish with its sharp claws.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The jaguar has the strongest jaw structure of any feline and second strongest jaw structure of any land carnivore.
- They serve as "mobile links" at the landscape scale, through predation, seed dispersal or pollination.
- A condition known as melanism occasionally occurs and can create jaguars that appear entirely black (although the spots are still visible if one looks closely). These are known as black panthers, but do not form a separate species.
- In pre-Columbian civilizations of Peru, Central America, and Mexico, the jaguar was worshipped as a God.

theZOO
LOUISVILLE



Order:	Carnivora
Family:	Felidae
Genus:	Felis
Species:	onca

JAGUAR



STATUS:

Estimates indicate that less than 15,000 still exist in the wild. According to the AZA while the jaguar is rare or nonexistent in certain parts of its historical range, the jaguar is not truly in danger of extinction today. Generally the species is disappearing only where its habitat has become unsuitable. Because of this, reintroducing jaguars into the wild is impractical because of a lack of adequate environment. Only 41 animals in captivity have a traceable pedigree which will allow for breeding in the SSP.

REFERENCES:

http://www.zoo.org/educate/fact_sheets/jaguar/jaguar.htm

<http://www.iucnredlist.org/search/details.php?species=15953>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaguar>