

COTTON-TOP TAMARIN

(SAGUINUS OEDIPUS)

The rainforests of Northwestern Columbia are now the only place the Cotton-top Tamarin can be found in their natural habitat.



The Cotton-top tamarin, which was once found in a number of Central American countries, is now found only in the rainforests of north-western Colombia. There are more than 20 species of tamarin (and their close relatives, marmosets) with much variety in fur and colouration, especially on the head and face.

Tamarins, which have a life span of 10-15 years in the wild and up to 20 years in captivity, live in family groups of 6-10 individuals. Each group will contain one dominant breeding pair. Females usually give birth to two babies between January and June. The whole group will take an active role in raising infants.

Babies weigh approximately 50 grams and adults can weigh up to 550 grams.

Cotton-top tamarins feed on insects, small invertebrates, fruit and other plant material. They are a territorial species, communicating vocally by way of up to 38 vocalisations - some of which cannot be heard by humans. Their nimbleness, sharp claws, long limbs and long tails make them ideally suited to tree-top life.

Widespread rain forest destruction has resulted in significant habitat loss and they are now listed as critically endangered.

