



PRIMATES

OF ECUADOR



OBSERVATION GUIDE





A female Red Howler Monkey and her baby rapidly clambering at tree.

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LOVING LIFE IN THE WILD

Ecuador: a multi-faceted country

For nature lovers and those who enjoy traveling, Ecuador is an ideal country. Despite its small size, it houses an enormous diversity of flora and fauna over a wide range of habitats. Ecuador is amongst the richest countries in world in terms of primate diversity, resulting in fantastic differences in size, fur and color. This is pleasing both for travelers looking for diversity in forests and for monkey lovers. It would be possible to visit splendid dry forests with kapok trees and find howler monkeys one day, and watch spider monkeys in a charming cloud forest the next day.

Habitat loss, hunting and illegal wildlife trade put forests and large animals—like monkeys—in serious risk. People who rely on forests to survive are sometimes forced to choose between taking care of their environment or

obtaining income by exploiting natural resources. Ecotourism is a great alternative for conserving Ecuadorian forests and all organisms that depend on them, including primates. This benefits not only nature but it helps local people's economies as well.

Practicing ecotourism is the best way to enjoy an unforgettable experience in the forests of Ecuador while contributing to their conservation. Enjoy yourself on a trip filled with learning experiences and let yourself be captivated with everything nature has to offer!

Don't hunt monkeys, don't buy them, and don't mistreat them. Capturing and trading primates is illegal. Contribute to their conservation by reporting illegal wildlife trade to the Environment Protection Unit of the Police –Unidad de Protección del Medio Ambiente de la Policía- (593 2) 234 2799/234 9752.



Waking up senses early in the morning at Pañacocha lake, Orellana Province.

Cabins built with nature-friendly materials, Sani Lodge, Orellana.

Howler monkey silently moving through forest canopy.

Allow yourself to journey through the exuberant forests of Ecuador and have a unique experience with some of the most impressive animals: the primates (monkeys).



PRIMATES IN ECUADOR

Ecuador, mega diverse from north to south and east to west, is becoming a must-see destination for nature lovers. This country harbors thousands of life forms in a wide variety of habitats. Primates – humans included! – are undoubtedly some of the most interesting of these life forms. Nonetheless, human origins differ from the rest of primates that live in Ecuador.

Non-human primates arrived to America, from Africa, 38 million years ago. This was long before human beings, who arrived 14 thousand years ago. Thousands of years of geographic and environmental changes that shaped our continent resulted in the existence of 139 primate species; 20 of them live in Ecuador's current boundaries.

Songs, games and leaps fill it forests in the Amazonian and coastal forests, wherein 16 and 4 monkey species, respectively, can be found. Ecuadorian monkeys live in forests below 2 400 meters elevation, excepting

islands, in areas with little human intervention. Every species has its own behavioral patterns, which makes it possible for many species to coexist in the same territory. Because of these traits, one could find a capuchin, a spider monkey and a howler monkey living peacefully side by side. Primates are full of surprises that can be reached if approached the right way. This guide provides the necessary tools to come close to the wonderful world of monkeys and to witness their lives in the wild.

How to identify a primate from other animals

When looking at a primate you can see many human traits. They live in communities, they fight amongst themselves and they even reconcile, just like humans. We share most of our genes with other primates; maybe that's why they are so appealing to us!

Primates have acquired many different traits that make living in trees easier. They



A woolly monkey kid, aging 6 months old, hugging her mother.

One of the commonest Amazonian primates: the squirrel monkey.

have developed maneuverability in their fingers and extremities, nails instead of claws, great vision, upright posture and some other unique traits. These features have helped them to move with precision and coordination. Their large brains (when compared to body size) also allow them to behave more complexly than other animals.

So, if you see a fast moving, very nimble arboreal mammal, with a long tail and erect posture, it will most likely turn out to be a primate!

What are American primates like?

The primates that live on our continent differ greatly from their well-known African relatives: gorillas and chimpanzees. First, none of them live on the ground and most have long tails that are used as an extra arm to move around in trees. They have large eyes, small ears, side-oriented nostrils, short mouths, long limbs and flexible fingers that help them hold on to branches.

Small, big animals: their role in forests

Monkeys play important roles that keep life on earth functioning. They are great fruit eaters, and by doing so, disperse seeds and favor the continuity of forests. Else, they serve as food for predators such as felines and birds of prey. Because of their important roles, if primates disappear, so will lots of other animal and plant species, something that could alter the natural balance of entire ecosystems.



Monkeys beautify forests with their happiness, voices and movement.



Resting time begins for diurnal primates after sunset; Yasuni National Park.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to provide necessary tools for watching Ecuadorian primates in the wild. This guide is made up of different sections in which Ecuadorian primates are introduced. Some of the best locations where each species can be found are included. This guide contains several sections in which the primates of Ecuador are shown, including some of the best spots to observe each species. You will also find some tools that will help you to approach the world of the Ecuadorian primates. Species accounts contain:

3 *The forests' farmer*

2 **BROWN WOOLLY MONKEY**
Lepidoteles pteropus

1 **Common names**
chango, mono churo (chil monkey), barrigudo (potbellied), chango colorado (red woolly monkey), oso (bear and school), gata (cat), churunga (potbellied), ma mono (little monkey).

4 **What are its habits?**
It can only be found in primary dry-land forests or temporarily flooded forests. Sometimes it visits forest edges in lakes and rivers but usually far from human populations. It lives solely on the uppermost layer of the forest (over 20 m) and most of its diet consists of fruit. Its diet and its ability to travel quickly make it an important seed disperser. When it defecates, it leaves seeds on the forest ground which helps keep forests diverse.

5 **Characteristics**
Big and robust. Usually light to dark brown. Fur is short, soft. Its tail is long, strong and prehensile. When walking it keeps its back straight and its tail up with the tip rolled downwards. Its arms look muscular.

6 **Conservation status**
Endangered (EN) - very high risk of extinction in the wild. Since its primate is desired for its meat, its numbers are declining. Intense deforestation and forest degradation also affect it.

7 **Recommended search areas:**
Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas.

8 **Search tactics and recommendations:**

- It makes a lot of noise when moving through branches. To distinguish this noise from the one made by the wind, look for movement of many branches.
- When travelling, these monkeys make loud and sharp sounds as well as high and repetitive shouts.
- When travelling through rivers, take notice of sudden branch movements at the forest's edge.
- Do not stand under the trees the monkey is on, big branches may fall due to branch movement.
- Try to camouflage yourself, this way you can observe the monkeys for longer without altering their behavior.

9 **Activity**
Diurnal.

9 **Diet**
Fruit, insects, seeds, leaves, small vertebrates.

9 **Grouping**
2 to 25 individuals. Mixed groups.

- 1 Scientific name and common names used in different regions and in each region's native language.
- 2 Map of potential distribution in Ecuador. Without showing the habitat loss or degradation.
- 3 Photograph.
- 4 Habitat and behavior information of each species.
- 5 Identifying traits and comparisons between similar species that might cause confusion in field observations.
- 6 Conservation status of each species in Ecuador.
- 7 Map and information about recommended areas for monkey observation, where responsible ecotourism is practiced. For detailed information on every recommended site see Key Sites section.
- 8 Useful advice on how to approach and observe each species. This will enable you to enjoy your experience to the fullest and avoid negative impact upon monkeys and their environment.
- 9 Identification silhouette.



Relaxed monkey observation from a dugout canoe in an Amazonian black-water lagoon.

Ecuador's Forests



There are many different habitats in forests where monkeys live. A forest is made up of different layers starting from the ground and going up to tree tops. Each species prefers a specific habitat for feeding, moving around and finding refuges. There are different forest types. For example, in the Amazon, forests differ according to altitude, amount of rainfall and water level in rivers. When rainfall increases, rivers flood lowland areas and transform them into swamps. Depending on water origin, swamps can be classified as black water or white water swamps. High parts that do not flood are known as terra firme forests. Further, primates select one forest type or another according to the resources provided (mature fruit, young leaves).

According to the degree of degradation a forest may be:

- **Primary** (well-conserved, no alteration).
- **Secondary** (altered by natural causes –like falling trees–; regenerating).
- **Intervened or altered** (affected by humans).

FOREST STRUCTURE

Upper stratum
or emergent

Mid stratum
or canopy

Lower stratum,
subcanopy
or understory
(up to 20 m)



The great variety of forms and sizes of Amazonian trees provides shelter for monkeys.

One of the best options to find primates.

PRIMATE OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

It's important that you follow this advice before you embark upon your great adventure with Ecuador's primates. It will help you enjoy your experience to the fullest and also minimize negative impact on these animals.

Before you leave:

- Bring binoculars, bottled water, food, a raincoat and a flashlight (if you decide to search for nocturnal monkeys).
- Do not use insect repellent, sun block, creams or lotions that have strong odor.
- Wear dark colors (browns, greens, blacks); avoid reds, oranges, yellows and whites.
- Do not go after monkey if you suffer from any health problems.
- Go exploring in groups of maximum 4-5 people. If you are bringing children, explain to them beforehand that they must be silent and respectful to the animals.

During the exploration:

- Move slowly through the forest or river.
- Make frequent stops and scan all the trees around you.
- Be silent or keep your voice down during searches and if you find monkeys.
- Listen carefully for noise coming from trees such as movement, breaking branches or vocalizations.
- Look for a good spot to observe the monkeys, try not to get too close or make sudden movements.
- Avoid eating while watching them.
- Do not chase the monkeys if they decide to leave.



*Being optimistic,
patient and alert will
help you find these
beautiful animals!*



A tamarin cheering up the landscape with its golden mantle.



Silent walks through the jungle are ideal for searching monkeys.

Canopy bridges provide stupendous opportunities for observing canopy-dwelling wildlife.



**Amazonian
primates**



The monkey with a large family

What are its habits?

It lives in primary and degraded forests, near water bodies. It moves a few feet above the ground where vegetation is dense, branches are thin and lianas abound. It may descend to the ground to look for invertebrates which represent a large proportion of its diet. It is very active, spending most of the day moving around. In stressful or exciting situations, it washes its hands with urine and frays its feet. Sometimes it associates with other monkeys like the white-fronted capuchin to look for food, as it takes advantage of the capuchin ability to find food, whilst both species are alert for predators. Interestingly, the double-toothed kite (a small forest hawk) follows troops of these monkeys to feed on invertebrates that flee from them.



Diurnal.



Insects, fruit, nectar, flowers.



10 to over 100 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

25-32 cm (9.06 – 12.6 inches) (without tail).
Yellow olive with darker tinge throughout, giving it a dirty appearance.

Its white mask and black snout make it look like a clown. Its long tail ends in tuft of black hairs, similar to a lions' tail. It is thin and has short fur.

Similar species: the white-fronted capuchin is bigger, cream colored and has a prehensile tail that is used to hold on to branches.

Conservation status

Near threatened (NT) –will probably be assigned to a threat category in the future. Its main threats are habitat degradation and illegal wildlife trade, as it is highly prized as pet.



Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.



SQUIRREL MONKEY

Saimiri sciureus

Common names

Bariso, mono payaso (clown monkey), mono soldado (soldier monkey), machín, Martín, tsénkúsh (shuar, achuar), fatsii (cofán), yekiri (huaorani), warisa (quichua), po sisi (secoya), tseém (shuar), bo sisi (siona–secoya).

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Walk near river and lake edges (or paddle them); this monkey is commonly found in riparian habitats.
- Paddle slowly and pay attention to any branch movement accompanied by short and sharp whistles.
- Once you find it, remain where you are and observe your surroundings. Troops tend to be large and observation opportunities are good. It is not necessary to approach to the primates.





The rain monkey



RED HOWLER MONKEY

Alouatta seniculus

Common names

Mono aullador (howler monkey), coto, mono roncadador (snoring monkey), mono llorón (weeping monkey), yakúm (achuar y shuar), a'cho (cofán), iwä (huaorani), tamia kutu (quichua).

What are its habits?

It lives in primary or recently intervened forests; prefers palm swamps and flooded forests at river or lake shores. As leaves are its main food, it can subsist in small forest patches. It moves around in the middle and top strata of the forest, but can descend to ground to eat minerals in salt licks or drink water from ponds. Male's loud vocalizations are used both for territorial defense and for protecting his harem (two or more fertile females). A curious behavior in this species is that it urinates and defecates as a defense mechanism against predators. It often consorts with other species like white-fronted capuchin, black capuchin, squirrel monkey and spider monkey. They are called *tamia kutu* (rain monkey) in quichua, because they sing before and after rainfall.



Diurnal



Leaves, fruit, flowers.



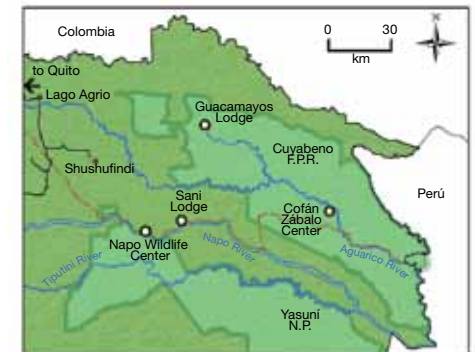
1 to 9 individuals, mixed groups.

Identification traits

Large size (45-70 cm (17.72-22.56 inches), without tail). Mostly deep red with orange tufts, a unique trait in large Amazonian primates. It inclines its chest forward while moving, stretches both arms and uses its tail as an extremity. Males are larger than females and have a bulge in their throats that is used as a resonating chamber for their calls. They also have big whitish testicles.

Conservation status

Near threatened (NT) –will probably be assigned to a higher threat category in the future. They may seem rather tolerant to habitat degradation, but a noticeable population decline has been noticed. It will probably be upgraded to a threat category in the near future.



Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Steer yourself by its strong and unparalleled roars at dawn (5h00-6h00). This will let you know where to start your search.
- Look for it quietly and pay attention for any subtle branch movements. This is a quiet monkey that moves slowly.
- Search on trees with large horizontal branches exposed to the sun. The howler monkey often rests and sunbathes on these branches.
- Do not search when it is raining, cold or there is too much sunlight. Primates stay inactive in these conditions to save energy!





Ecuador's surliest and most elusive monkey



TUFTED CAPUCHIN

Cebus macrocephalus

Common names

Capuchino café (brown capuchin), machín, mico, machín negro, nukajiam (achuar), si'an on'gu (cofán), boguinca (huaorani), mirút (shuar), take (siona-secoya).

What are its habits?

Its whereabouts in Ecuador are not well-known. It has been found in primary, secondary and degraded forests. It usually moves around in the middle and lower strata of forests, but might also visit the ground when hunting insects, small vertebrates or drinking water. It's a skillful frog hunter, often hiding amongst plants to assault them. The troops' dominant male can copulate with all reproductive females, and is in charge of defending them from predators. It might momentarily band together with other primates like the white-fronted capuchin and squirrel monkey. It is said that this monkey is very surly and that during food searches it eats practically anything that crosses its path.



Diurnal.



Fruit, seeds, insects, small vertebrates, nectar.



5-20 individuals, mixed groups.

Identification traits

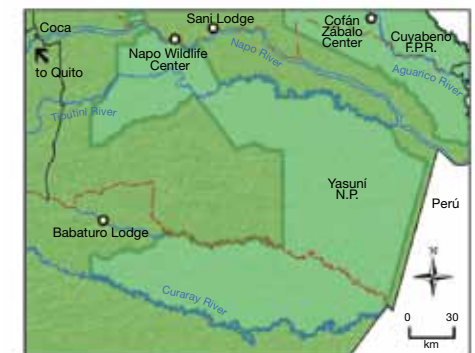
Mid-sized (35-50 cm (13.78-19.69 inches), without tail). It is brown with lighter patches on shoulders, chest and belly, and darker patches on forearms, hands, feet and tail. Its white mask and black crest provide a large

and square-headed appearance. When walking it coils its tail with the end pointing down and uses it for support.

Similar species: the white-fronted capuchin is paler. Woolly monkeys are bigger, more robust and furrier. The squirrel monkey is smaller, yellowish, has a white snout and keeps its tail straight when moving.

Conservation status

Near threatened (NT) –will probably be assigned to a threat category in the future. Habitat degradation and hunting could place its populations in serious extinction risk. Its shyness may be due to intense hunting.

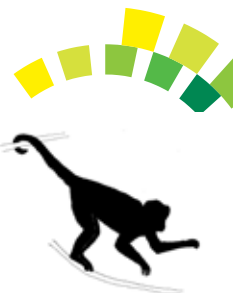


Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Being an elusive species, your search must be rigorous, slow and cautious as to avoid driving it away.
- Be on the alert for any sounds indicating that the monkey is noisily traveling through the forest.
- Because it is a surly monkey, it will be difficult to observe for long time. Try to remain silent and still to prolong your observation time.
- Do not chase the troop because they are very fast and you will not be able to catch them up.





The owl monkey
of the amazon



NOISY NIGHT MONKEY

Aotus vociferans

Common names

Tutamono, mico de noche, mono de noche (night monkey), butuch (achuar), macoro (cofán), jute (huaorani), pundia (quichua), ujukam (shuar), ñami naso (siona–secoya), macuru (Pastaza).

What are its habits?

It belongs to the sole group of nocturnal primates of America. It lives in primary or degraded forests, and even in coffee plantations. It equally occupies flooded and terra firme forests. It moves from 10-20 meters above ground, roosting during the day in hollow tree trunks and old palm trees. Other mammals like kinkajous (*Potos flavus*) and porcupines (*Coendou bicolor*) use the same places for refuge. It wakes up a little after nightfall and takes cover before dawn, also resting around midnight. It is more active during full moon, possibly because it can see more clearly and memorize its travel routes. It lives in couples (male and female), and the male is the one who carries the infant and teaches it to search for food.



Nocturnal.



Fruit, flowers, insects.



2-6 individuals, mixed groups.

Identification traits

Mid-sized (25-45 cm, (9.84 – 17.7 inches) without tail). Brownish to grayish, with orange belly. Fur is plentiful and spongy. Round face with big brown eyes surrounded by a mask of white hair. Tail is long, dark and bulky at the end, and is

usually held hanging. When walking, it arches its back and keeps its head at shoulder level.

Similar species: The lemurine night monkey lives at higher altitudes and is usually darker. Other nocturnal mammals like kinkajou (*Potos flavus*) and olingo (*Bassaricyon gabbii*) lack facial mask, have smaller and more separate eyes and longer snouts.

Conservation status

Near threatened (NT) –it will probably be assigned to a higher threat category in the future. Little is known about its populations. It is thought that deforestation may have serious effects on this species.

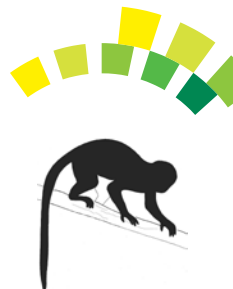


Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surroundings; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- During the day look in hollow tree trunks. Knock softly on the trunk to lure them out; they will usually stick their heads out. Return at night to the same spot to watch them in action.
- Slowly scan the surrounding trees with your flashlight. Focus mainly on the middle layers of the forest and on treetops. Don't forget your rechargeable batteries.
- If you hear any branch movement, quickly point your flashlight in the direction of the sound. If you see big shiny eyes you will probably be looking at a nocturnal monkey.
- Do not be afraid if leaves and branches fall noisily, this is how nocturnal monkeys react towards human presence. Even though you might not see it, it sees you!





Monkey of the mist



LEMURINE NIGHT MONKEY

Aotus lemurinus

Common names

Mono nocturno (nocturnal monkey), mico de noche, tutamono, tutamunu (quichua),ujukam (shuar).

What are its habits?

Little is known about the ecology of this inhabitant of the eastern slopes of the Andes. It lives inside higher altitude forests than the noisy night monkey. It has been found in primary and degraded forests. Occasionally, it has been found in trees right next to roads. In the morning it rests in hollow tree trunks and gets active at night. This monkey has acquired acute sight, essential for its nocturnal life. Its eyes are more sensitive to light than diurnal monkeys. A large vocal repertoire as well as chemical signals released by glands or urine are also useful traits for nocturnal communication. It moves quickly and is very curious, even following people without being noticed.



Nocturnal.



Fruit, leaves, flowers, insects, bird eggs.



2 to 4 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

Medium size (24-45 cm (9.45 – 17.7 inches), without tail). Dark brown to grayish, with rich orange belly. Furry body. Striking big brown eyes surrounded by a white mask. Its tail is

long and usually held hanging down. Moves quickly and nimbly.

Similar species: the noisy night monkey lives in tropical lands and has lighter colored fur. The kinkajou and the olingo lack facial mask, their eyes are smaller and more separated and have longer snouts.

Conservation status

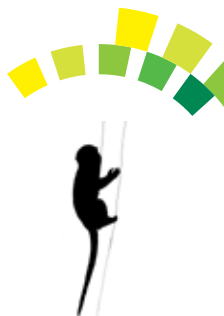
Data deficient (DD). Current status of its populations is unknown, but it is thought to be threatened by deforestation and population isolation.



Recommended search areas: Cosanga (Napó Province).

Search tactics and recommendations:

- During daytime, look for it in hollow tree trunks where it rests. You can knock lightly on the trunk to lure them out. They will usually stick their heads out.
- To observe it at night, track down their refuge during daytime and return before nightfall.
- Scan trees with your flashlight, focusing mainly on the middle layers of the forest and tree tops. Don't forget your rechargeable batteries!
- If you hear any branch movement, quickly point your flashlight in the direction of the sound. Big bright eyes will indicate that there is a nocturnal monkey there.
- Do not be frightened by branches and leaves falling noisily; this is how it reacts after human presence. Even though you don't see it, it sees you!





The “chicha” making monkey

YELLOW-HANDED TITI MONKEY

Callicebus lucifer

Common names

ucillo negro (black titi), titi de manos blancas (white handed titi), viudita (little widow), mono negro (black monkey), monja (nun), tso'ga (cofán), yana sukali (quichua), nea wa'o (siona–secoya).

What are its habits?

It can only be found in primary forests north of the Aguarico River. It lives in terra firme forests and in margins between terra firme and swamps. It moves 15-25 meters above ground, avoiding open spaces such as large swamps or palm stands. It defends its territory with loud calls, usually early in the morning. Male and female sing in duos. Females are known to vocalize to attract males. These primates like to sleep on the highest branches of trees, intertwining their tails. A quichua song says that this primate stained its hands making “chicha” (a traditional beverage), explaining why it has yellow hands.



Diurnal.



Fruit, insects, flowers, seeds.



2- 5 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

Small (31-38 cm) (12.2 – 14.96 inches). Dark brown with reddish staining. Fur is abundant, long and spongy. It has a white collar around its neck and its hands are yellowish. When it moves it keeps its head at the same level as its back.

Similar species: the red titi monkey is lighter brown, its belly and chest are deep red and has a white frontal diadem. Graells' tamarin is much smaller and thinner, and has a white snout. The equatorial saki monkey is bigger, furrer and has a bulky tail.

Conservation status

Vulnerable (VU) –high risk of extinction in the wild. This species is very sensitive to habitat loss and degradation, so might be seriously affected by deforestation.

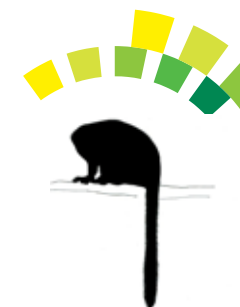


Recommended search areas:

Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- This monkeys' odd and unmistakable morning calls: long and repetitive grunts and yells, will help you find them.
- Search early in the morning (6h00-8h00) and after 16h00, when they are more active.
- Look for it thoroughly in medium to tall trees; it may go by unnoticed when inactive.





The loyal monkey



RED TITI MONKEY

Callicebus discolor

Common names

Cotoncillo rojo (red cotoncillo), tití rojo (red titi), socayo, guapo (handsome), songo songo, sunká-mat, kungiké (achuar, shuar), tso'ga (cofán), gon'aduca (waorani)

What are its habits?

It lives in all kinds of forests, from primary to recently intervened forests, but mostly near rivers, lakes or swamps, where vegetation is dense and lianas proliferate. It can be found from 8-23 cm (3.15 – 9.06 inches) above ground. Since leaves are a main component of its diet and they take a long time to digest, this monkey is not very active and its movements are slow. It is monogamous, male and female may be together their entire lives. Offspring separates from the family when they are ready to breed. These monkeys are very affective; possibly as a strategy to maintain the pair bond.



Diurnal.



Leaves, fruit, seeds, insects



2-5 individuals. Mixed groups.

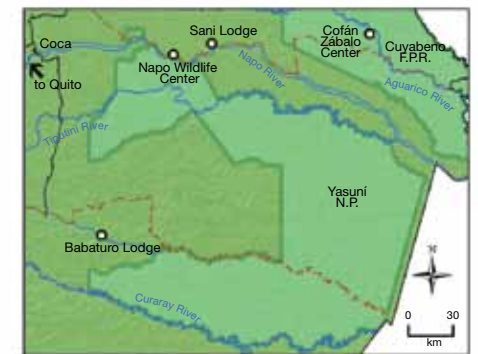
Identification traits

Small (28-34 cm) (11.02 – 13.39 inches). Light brown back with reddish tinge. Its ventral parts vary from orange to deep red. It has a white frontal diadem. Fur is plentiful and spongy. Head is held at the same level as shoulders and back. Long, straight tail that hangs when moving.

Similar species: tamarins are smaller, have less abundant fur and are more agile. Red howler monkey is bigger, completely reddish and uses its tail as a fifth limb to move around.

Conservation status

Near threatened (NT) – It will probably be assigned to threat category in the future. Even though it can live in fairly degraded habitats, low quality of resources (such as food) and population isolation resulting from deforestation may affect it.

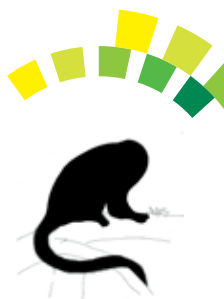


Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surroundings; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- These monkeys utter loud, distinct, repetitive and prolonged cries and yells from dawn to the early morning (6h00-8h00). Let yourself be guided by your ear to find them.
- They are usually found on the edge of water bodies, so it is a good idea to search them from a canoe.
- Sail slowly and keep your eyes open because this species can go unnoticed when not moving.
- A good time to look for it is late in the afternoon when it is moving around searching for food.
- Gaze at small to medium trees on the edge of rivers or lakes, where vegetation is dense.





The forest farmer

BROWN WOOLLY MONKEY

Lagothrix poeppigii

Common names

Chorongo, mono choro, barrigudo (potbellied), chorongo colorado (red woolly monkey), chúu (shuar and achuar), gata (waorani), churunku (quichua), ma naso (siona–secoya).

What are its habits?

It can only be found in primary terra firme forests or temporarily flooded forests. Sometimes it visits forest edges in lakes and rivers but usually far from human populations. Found only south of the Aguarico River. It moves around mainly in the highest strata of the forest (above 20 m). up to 90% of its diet is made up of fruit. Its preference for fruit coupled with its long travels through the jungle makes it an important seed disperser. When it defecates, seeds are dropped on the forest ground, contributing to the continued existence of diverse forests.



Diurnal.



Fruit, insects, seeds, leaves, small vertebrates.



2-25 individuals, mixed groups.

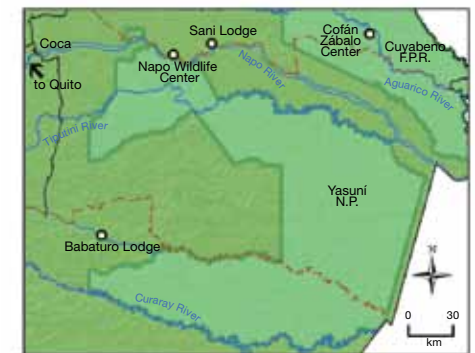
Identification traits

Big and robust (39-59 cm (15.35 – 23.23 inches), without tail). Mainly light to dark brown. Fur is short, soft and bulky. Its tail is long, strong and prehensile. When walking it keeps its back straight and its tail up but

rolled downwards. Its arms look muscular. **Similar species:** the spider monkey is black with white fur on its ventral region, its extremities are longer and it is less robust. The red howler monkey is red and thinner.

Conservation status

Endangered (EN) –very high risk of extinction in the wild. Its main threat is hunting because of its highly prized meat. Intense deforestation and forest degradation also affect it; it has even vanished from many areas.

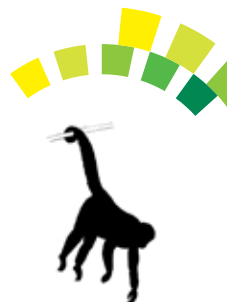


Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- It is very noisy when moving through branches. To distinguish this noise from the one made by the wind, look if branch movements repeat once and again.
- When travelling, these monkeys make loud and sharp sounds as well as high and repetitive shouts.
- Take notice of sudden branch movements at the forests' edge when paddling at rivers and lakes.
- Do not stand under the trees where the woolly monkeys are; large twigs may fall due to branch movement.
- Try to camouflage yourself, this way you can observe the monkeys for longer without altering their behavior.





The monkey that wanders throughout forests.



SILVERY WOOLLY MONKEY

Lagothrix lagotricha

Common names

Chorongo (woolly monkey), mono choro, mono negro (black monkey), barrigudo (potbellied), chorongo blanco (white chorongo; north of Aguarico River), tosi con'si (cofán), churunku (quichua), naso (siona–secoya).

What are its habits?

Primary forest dweller, only north of the Aguarico River. It prefers terra firme or seasonally flooded forests, and is regularly found at river and lake edges, mainly at highest forest strata (above 15 m) (49.21 ft). During the day it can travel up to 3 km (1.86 miles) searching for food; primarily mature fruit that is swallowed entirely. This behavior results in seed dispersal –and subsequent germination– as the monkey travel through the forest. It lives in troops with a strict social hierarchy. There is one dominant male who has greater opportunity to mate with females in breeding condition, as well as better access to food. Groups are larger in areas with little or no hunting.



Diurnal.



Fruit, seeds, leaves, insects.



2-60 individuals.

Identification traits

Very big (40-68 cm) (15.75 – 26.77 inches). Brownish gray to gray. Abundant and bulky fur. Muscular appearance, especially its limbs. Long tail, which is also used as traveling tool.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- It makes a lot of noise when moving. To distinguish this noise from the one made by the wind, look if branch movements are followed by similar movements.
- When travelling through rivers and lakes, take notice of sudden branch movements at forest edges.
- Do not stand under the trees the woolly monkey is on; heavy twigs may fall due to branch movement.
- Try to go unnoticed by the monkeys. This way you will observe the monkeys for longer without altering their behavior.

When moving quickly and nimbly, it keeps its tail up and rolled at the tip.

Similar species: there are no other big primates within its range that may cause confusion. Capuchin monkeys are smaller, one is cream-colored and the other is deep brown with darker parts all over its body.

Conservation status

Endangered (EN) –high risk of extinction in the wild. As it gives birth to a single infant every two or more years, strong hunting pressure (it is the most heavily hunted species) and habitat loss put this species on the brink of extinction.



Recommended search areas:

Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.





The flying monkey

EQUATORIAL SAKI MONKEY

Pithecia aequatorialis

Common names

Mono volador (flying monkey), mono saki (saki monkey), sepúr pentsepets (achuar- shuar), coguinko (huaorani), parahuaku (quichua).



What are its habits?

It lives exclusively in primary forests south of the Napo River, on terra firme and flooded forests. It seems to prefer the highest strata of the forest. When it travels through the jungle, does so by jumping from treetop to treetop; this explains why it is called the “flying monkey”. It avoids places with tangled vegetation or widely open areas. It spends most of the time sitting lethargically, hidden between branches. Movements, though, are quick and nimble. Being a monogamous species, the male is responsible of taking care of the young during the first stages of development.



Diurnal.



Seeds, fruit, flowers, insects.



1-4 individuals. Solitary. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

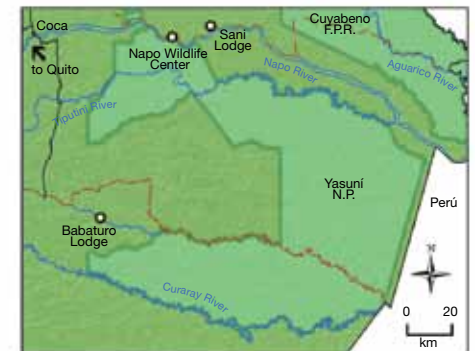
Medium size (39-47 cm) (15.35 – 18.5 inches). Long and plentiful fur, grayish black mainly on its back. Dirty and disheveled appearance. Bulky and lush tail mostly held hanging. Chest and belly are orange brown. Short facial hair with a yellowish

white, orange or gray tuft on crown.

Similar species: the monk saki monkey’s face is the same color as its back and lacks a colored tuft on its crown. The red titi monkey is smaller, brown-and-red, and has a thinner tail.

Conservation status

Near threatened (NT) –will probably be assigned to a threat category in the future. Little is known about this species, but it is considered to be threatened by habitat loss. This, combined with its monogamous reproductive characteristics, makes it more vulnerable.

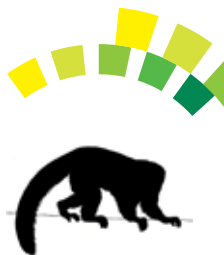


Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Search for it slowly and rigorously, it tends to stay motionless for many hours.
- Look for something furry and gray on the highest branches, its tail is particularly bulky.
- When moving it utters sounds to keep in contact with other members of the troop. These calls sound like high and repetitive bird trills.
- Be on the alert for violent branch movements, its travels tend to be noisy especially when jumping from one treetop to the next.
- Hide yourself when observing them and don’t come too close, they scare easily and will flee if notice the observer.





The forests' tactician



MONK SAKI MONKEY

Pithecia monachus

Common names

Parahuaco, mono saki (saki monkey), sepúr (shuar, achuar), para'vaco (cofán), coguinko (huaorani), parawaku (quichua), wa'o su'tu (siona-secoya).

What are its habits?

It lives in primary and secondary forests, apparently preferring terra firme forests, but also visiting forest edges to rivers and lakes, especially black-water bodies. It takes refuge in the highest branches of trees. During long trips troops are divided in small groups or individuals travel alone. When frightened, it uses an escape strategy in which the male distracts the intruder with loud grunts while the rest of the group flees. When the intruder is gone the male rejoins the rest of the troop. It has large canines that allow it to break hard food items, like seeds, that other primates can't open.



Diurnal.



Seeds, fruit, leaves.



1-8 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

Mid-sized (37-48 cm) (14.57 – 18.9 inches). Fur is long and plentiful, mostly gray. Dirty and disheveled appearance. Black face with a few white hairs. Lush, bulky and black tail that usually hangs down.

Similar species: the equatorial saki monkey has a yellowish bulky tuft on its crown. Titi monkeys are smaller and have thinner tails. The red titi monkey is brown-and-red; the yellow-handed titi monkey is dark brown with reddish tinges.

Conservation status

Near threatened –will probably be assigned to a threat category in the future. Although there is little information about its populations, habitat degradation and loss is considered a serious risk for this species.

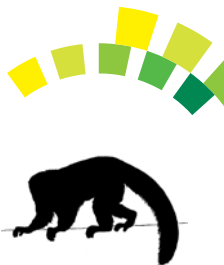


Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surroundings; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Little activity before 8h00, after 16h00 and at noon, will make it harder for you to find it.
- Look at the branches of the tallest trees; it usually sits on them for many hours. Its bulky hanging tail can be used as a reference to find it.
- Carefully listen to the sounds it makes to stay in contact with the troop. These are high, sharp and repetitive clicks, as well as grunts when it feels threatened.
- Watch for sudden branch movements, it makes a lot of noise when jumping from one tree to the next.
- Hide when you see it and don't come too close. It scares easily and will flee when it sees you.





The monkey that drinks milk



GRAELLS' TAMARIN

Saguinus graellsii

Common names

Chichico negro (black tamarin), leoncito (little lion), mono negro (black monkey), chima'shu (cofán), yana chichicu (quichua), nea sisi (siona–secoya).

What are its habits?

It lives in all kind of habitats, though mainly in terra firme forest, and only north of the Napo River. It prefers areas with abundant vegetation in the understory, which provides protection from predators and good opportunities to find food. It has even been found in recently degraded areas. Occupies heights from 5-20 meters (16.4 – 65.6 inches) above ground, but might descend to the ground when hunting insects. Different troops sometimes join together to form large groups that remain jointly for several days. During these encounters there may be swapping of individuals between troops. During the dry season it travels farther than during the rainy season because there is less food. It uses urine marks on branches to communicate with other individuals. The name “bebeleche” (milk drinker) is given due to its white whiskers.



Diurnal.



Insects, flowers, fruit, tree exudates.



2-9 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

Small (21-25 cm, without tail) (8.27 – 9.84 inches), mostly black or dark gray, with soft yellowish tones on its back and white snout. Quick and nimble.

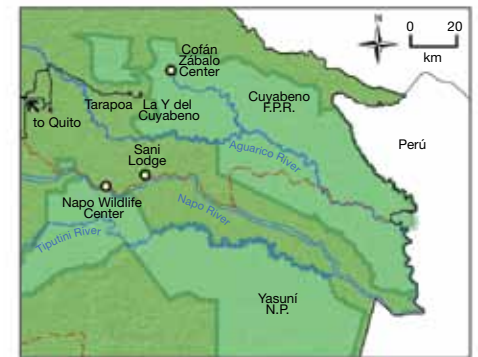
Search tactics and recommendations:

- Search for it through dense understory, it is usually resting on branches.
- Its song is thin, similar to a bird's chirp. If these sounds increase in volume and frequency it means you are getting closer.
- To identify it from other primates, notice its agile jumps, small size, thin body and thin fur.
- If you search it from a canoe, move slowly because it is difficult to spot due to its small size.
- Pay attention to any branch movement at forest edges, it may be moving around.

Similar species: the titi monkey is bigger, with bulkier fur and is less agile when moving. It differs from other tamarins in the absence of reddish or orange mantle and yellowish patch on its lower back. However, this species does not coexist with the other two tamarins.

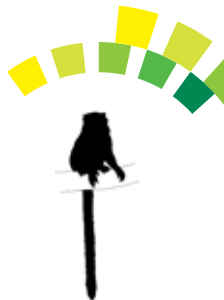
Conservation status

Vulnerable (VU) –high risk of extinction in the wild. Its distribution area in Ecuador is very small and supports intense habitat degradation; therefore, its populations are currently highly endangered.



Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.





A very social monkey

SADDLEBACKED TAMARIN

Saguinus fuscicollis

Common names

Chichico, bebeleche (milk drinker), leoncito (little lion), chichico rojo (red tamarin), borla blanco (white tassel), pinchich' (achuar, shuar), yatomo (huaorani), puca chichicu (quichua), ma sisi (siona–secoya).

What are its habits?

It lives in primary and secondary forests south of the Napo River, mostly in the intervening areas between terra firme forest, flooded forest and open areas near human populations. It prefers the middle and lower strata of the jungle, where vegetation is dense and there are abundant lianas. It lives in groups made up of many individuals that help taking care of the young. This is an excellent strategy for the young to thrive. Groups can be formed by one male and one female, one female and many males or one male and many females. It is a very social species that communicates with other members of its species with vocalizations, chemical signals and even facial expressions. It spends a lot of time grooming others and being groomed.



Diurnal.



Fruit, insects, flowers, nectar, tree exudates.



2-12 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

Small (17-27 cm) (6.69 – 10.63 inches) and varied coloration. Head, arms, shoulders and tail are black or dark brown; its back and hips

are dark brown with yellow streaks. Its belly and lower parts are reddish. When moving, it does so very fast and nimbly, with its tail straight, generally hanging downwards.

Similar species: the back of golden-mantled tamarin is gold or orange. The pygmy marmoset is smaller and yellower. The titi monkey is bigger and furrier.

Conservation status

Near threatened (NT) –will probably be assigned a threat category in the future. Forest alteration may put its populations at risk.



Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Search for it through dense understory vegetation, where it usually rests.
- Its song is high-pitched and repetitive, similar to a bird's chirp. Its song with increase in volume and frequency when alarmed by the presence of an outsider.
- Be cautious and move slowly when you find it; don't chase it because it scares easily and will flee immediately.





The monkey that births twins



GOLDEN MANTLED TAMARIN

Saguinus tripartitus

Common names

Chichico, chichico amarillo (yellow tamarin), leoncito (little lion), pinchich' (achuar), yatomo, miimo (huaorani), chichicu (quichua).

What are its habits?

It lives in terra firme forests, often near flooded areas, and moves mainly through the lower strata. It is only found south of the Napo River and north of the Curaray River. It is active usually during the first morning hours. Its troops can tolerate other troops of the same species and may even form large temporary groups. Like other tamarins, it usually births twins. Apparently, this happens to help ensure the survival of at least one offspring.



Diurnal.



Insects, fruit, exudates, nectar, flowers, tree trunks.



4-10 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

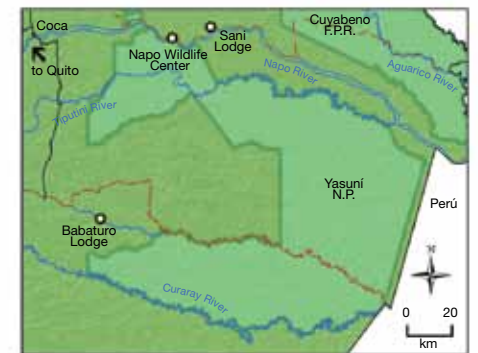
Small monkey (21-24 cm) (8.27 – 8.45 inches) with multicolored fur. Black face, white snout, golden to deep orange neck and mantle, grayish brown back with orange tinge. Its tail is darker than its back. It moves nimbly

jumping long distances and hanging its tail downwards.

Similar species: the saddlebacked tamarin is darker and has reddish lower partes. The red titi monkey is bigger, has slower movements and is redder.

Conservation status

Vulnerable (VU) –high risk of extinction in the wild. Even though it is abundant in some locations, it seems to be highly susceptible to drastic changes in its habitats.



Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Because of its small size and quick movements, it is difficult to see. Pay attention to its sharp calls which are similar to a bird's chirp. Also notice its size and body shape.
- Look for it during the first morning hours (6h00-8h00) when it is very active.
- Its calls usually increase in frequency and volume as the observer approaches. Stop if you feel you are too close because this will drive it away.
- Pay attention to places where many birds meet and there is lots of hub-bub; places like these might attract this monkey because there are abundant insects.





The smallest monkey in the world

What are its habits?

An adult measure 14-18 cm (5.5-7.1 inches) including tail: smaller than the palm of your hand! It lives in flooded forests with dense vegetation and many lianas, always close to water bodies. It moves around not far from the ground level. When females are in heat, they become more passive and release smells that attract males. The young grow up well protected because they are watched out by their mother as well as several “nannies”, who are actually its older sisters. It feeds mainly on tree and liana sap, drilling small holes that can reach depths of 18 cm (7.1 inches). It can move very quickly and suddenly start and stop moving, and to turn back and hide easily, as a strategy to bewilder predators. This explains why it is very hard to find it. This is the only primate in the American continent that has dissimilar dialects in different regions.



Diurnal.



Tree exudates (sap), insects, fruit, leaves, nectar.



2-9 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

Tiny! Yellowish brown, with darker strips over its entire body, but mostly on its tail. Very furry, showing a mane of hair on its head, similar to a lion; tail is thin. It usually moves up tree

trunks vertically, like a squirrel.

Similar species: owing to its size and behavior, it is more similar to the Amazon dwarf squirrel (*Microsciurus flaviventer*) than to other monkeys. The squirrel lacks mane of hair on its head and its tail is furrer and bulkier.

Conservation status

Vulnerable (VU) –high risk of extinction in the wild. Because of its specialized diet, habitat changes affect its survival, particularly in riparian areas of large rivers. Hunting pressure also affects this species. It is very sensitive to human presence and tourism; this can even lead to changes in its habits and behavior!



Recommended search areas:

Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Explore and search in small parties, silently and moving slowly and subtly because this species is very sensitive to human presence.
- Search for it at the beginning of the day (6h00) and towards the end of the afternoon (17h00), when the marmoset is more active.
- If you hear a short, high-pitched and clear song that increases in volume and frequency, start looking in vertical tree trunks. This call, similar to a bird’s song, is the sound it makes when it’s alarmed.
- Look for it in the central branches of trees, 7-10 m above ground, where it usually sleeps.
- It scares easily and flees quickly. Therefore, if you see it, observe it from where you are standing.

PYGMY MARMOSET

Callithrix pygmea

Common names

Tití, mono de bolsillo (pocket monkey), chichico dorado (golden tamarin), tití pigmeo (pygmy titi), leoncito (little lion), mono león (lion monkey), chambira, chichico (quichua), yatomo (waorani), inti chichiku (quichua), tseépai (shuar), ñukwa sisi (siona–secoya), tseépai (shuar).





The largest American primate

WHITE BELLED SPIDER MONKEY

Ateles belzebuth

Common names

Mono araña (spider monkey), marimonda, manilargo (long hands), mono negro (black monkey), maquisapa (quichua), deye (huaorani), washi (achuar, shuar), chuba (Pastaza), duye (cofán).

What are its habits?

It lives almost exclusively in primary terra firme forests. It prefers the highest parts of the forest (20-30 meters high) (65.62 – 98.43 ft) where it moves easily and very fast. It likes to rest on emergent trees. This species does not have thumbs, an oddity that helps it to hold on branches and move from tree to tree. It travels in groups that vary in sizes depending on fruit availability. Sometimes it joins other species

like the howler monkey. It is a very smart monkey; that can spot its predators swiftly.



Diurnal.



Fruit, leaves, flowers.



1-20 individuals. Groups made up of males only, females only or mixed groups.

Identification traits

It's the only big (42-60 cm), black and long-armed monkey in the Ecuadorian Amazon. It has a white belly and a prehensile tail. It has very long limbs and tail, and thin body. When moving, it maintains an upright posture, alternates its long arms, and uses its tail as a fifth extremity. Females have a large hanging clitoris.

Similar species: the woolly monkey is more robust, furrer and brownish colored.

Conservation status

Endangered (EN) –high risk of extinction in wild. Its main threats are hunting, deforestation and forest fragmentation. These threats are deepened because it births a single baby every 3-4 years, making population recoveries problematical.

Recommended search areas:

In the north, Yasuni National Park and surroundings; Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve; in the south, Bombuscaro, Podocarpus National Park.



Search tactics and recommendations:

- Search preferably during the first morning hours (6h00-8h00) and just before dusk as this species is more active at that time of the day.
- Pay attention to large and exposed branches on tall trees, where it generally rests.
- A regularly heard call sounds like a barking dog, only stronger and longer.
- Do not stand underneath the trees where the monkeys are moving. They might shake and brake branches when seeing humans.
- Try to stay away from the troop and observe silently.





Shadows amongst trees indicate that clouds are arriving to cloud forest at Los Cedros Reserve, Imbabura Province.



**Western
primates**



Common names

Mono araña (spider monkey), bracilargo (long arms), marimonda, mono negro (black monkey), chuba (afro-ecuadorian), waya (awá), wa'cü-huasco (chachi)

What are its habits?

Lives in primary or old secondary forests, where prefers tall, thick trees with wide treetops and overlapping branches. These features provide it good visibility of the forest and rapid traveling. You might also find it on the ground eating clays in salt licks, which are natural mineral deposits that exist in nutrient-poor ecosystems. It can travel up to 3 kilometers (1.86 miles) per day; its body is well designed for this. It has a complex social organization that consists in groups that stick together or separate depending on food availability. When there are more mature fruits in the forest, they form larger groups than when fruit is scarce.



Diurnal.



Fruit, leaves, flowers, insects, eggs.



1-10 individuals. Male troops, female troops or mixed groups.

Identification traits

Large (31-63 cm) (12.2 – 24.8 inches). Very long arms, legs and tail. Tail is strong and is

used to hold from branches and move around. Body is thin, mostly black, with a tuft of hair in the crown. Small, thin face and pointy chin. Females can be recognized by their pink clitoris that hangs noticeably.

Similar species: The mantled howler monkey has shorter extremities and bigger head, is smaller and moves more slowly and less upright.

Conservation status

Critically Endangered (CR) –near the brink of extinction. It is the most threatened primate in Ecuador due to hunting and extensive habitat loss because of deforestation.



Recommended search areas:

Buffer zone of the western portion of Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve (Canande and Santiago Rivers).

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Be alert for any loud movements coming from treetops, it is a very active primate that makes a lot of noise when traveling.
- Pay attention to any sounds that might remind you of a dog's bark (one of its calls sounds like that).
- Be very quiet and move cautiously during search and observation, this shy species often flees after human presence.
- Keep your distance when watching it; that way you will watch it longer.
- Do not chase the troop if they decide to flee because it will be impossible to keep up with them.

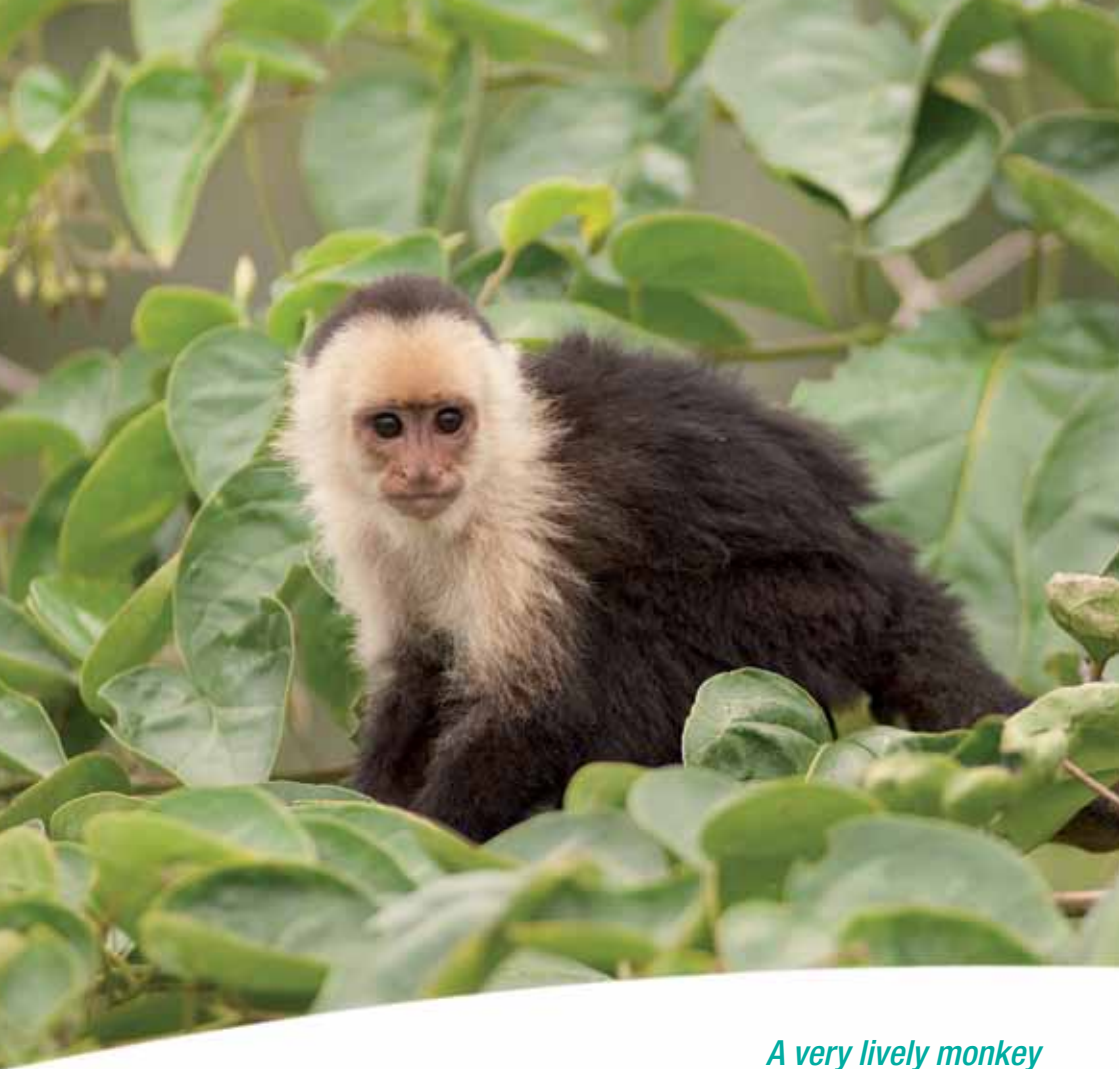
The dancing monkey of the Choco region



BROWN-HEADED SPIDER MONKEY

Ateles fusciceps





A very lively monkey

What are its habits?

It usually lives near the canopy of primary, secondary and degraded forests, but often descends to ground level when searching for food such as insects. It is very active, spending most of the day examining leaves, tearing tree bark out and tossing leaf litter apart for searching food. These primates are very smart. They have been seen using sticks and other tools to obtain food or to defend themselves. It has also been reported using plants as medicine and insect repellent. Interestingly, it has some behaviors that are reminiscent of humans. For instance, group members sometimes reconcile after fights. Lastly, some forest hawks follow groups of capuchins and feed on insects that escape from the monkeys.



Diurnal.



Fruit, flowers, insects, small vertebrates.



2-24 individuals. Mixed groups.

Identification traits

Medium size (33-45 cm) (12.99 – 17.72 inches). Bicolored, with black body and whitish

head, neck, shoulders, forearms and chest. **Similar species:** While the white-headed capuchin is cream colored, howler and spider monkeys are blackish and larger.

Conservation status

Endangered (EN) –high risk of extinction in the wild. Extinction is a serious risk for this species because of intense deforestation along its small distribution area in Ecuador.

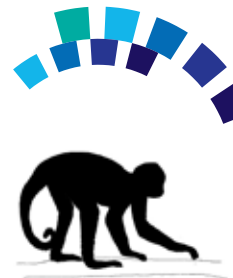


Recommended search areas:

Western border of the Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Ideal hours to look for it are 8h00-10h00 when it is more active.
- Whistles and barks of a small dog can drive you to its whereabouts.
- It is usually very noisy when moving through the forest, so watch out for any movement or sounds coming from treetops.
- When you find it, move cautiously and silently so that you can observe it longer.



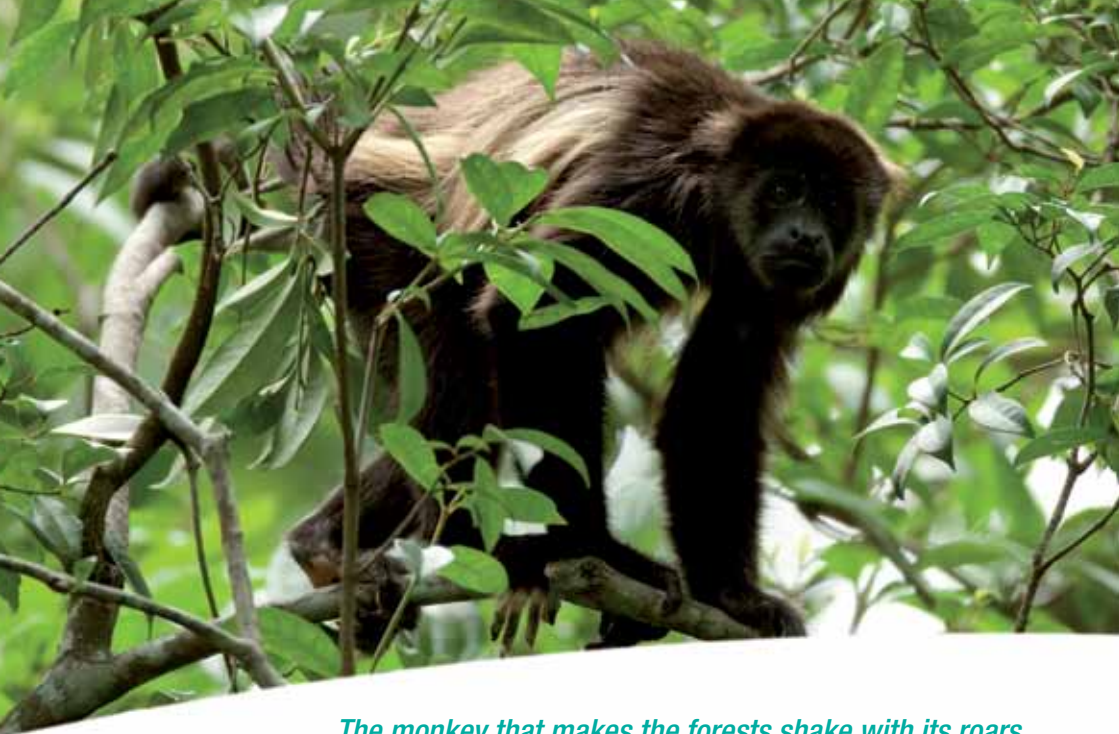
WHITE-HEADED CAPUCHIN

Cebus capucinus

Common names

Capuchino (capuchin), mico, machín, cariblanco (whitefaced), lanco (Afro-Ecuadorian), waya ainki (awá), cú'ri –churi- (chachi).





The monkey that makes the forests shake with its roars.



MANTLED HOWLER MONKEY

Alouatta palliata

Common names

Mono aullador (howler monkey), mongón, mono negro (black monkey), coto, mono burro (donkey monkey), mono chillón (screaming monkey, Afro-Ecuadorian), mono uri (uri monkey), waya punki (awá), juyu'ngu (chachi).

What are its habits?

It lives in primary or degraded forests, from canopy to a few meters above the ground. It may even be seen walking on the ground, crossing streets, pastures and other open areas! It can survive in small forest patches, even yards two hectares in extension. Why? Because the howler monkey requires lots of rest and little movement in order to digest leaves, which are its main food and they take a long digestion time. It also visits salt licks (mineral deposits) and eats decaying wood to help

absorb nutrients from leaves. Hunters say this monkey will play dead and fall before getting shot. Its howls can be heard over 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away.



Diurnal.



Leaves, fruits, flowers, nectar, insects.



2-18 individuals. Mixed groups.



Identification traits

Robust (48-67 cm) (18.9 – 23.38 inches). Generally black or dark brown with yellowish tufts on chest sides; looks large-headed. It has a hunchbacked appearance, and stands with its head at the same level as its shoulders. Males have noticeable white testicles and a big goiter (its hyoid apparatus) in their throat, which is used to amplify their loud calls.

Similar species: differs from the spider monkey by its shorter limbs, characteristic posture and slower, less agile movements.

Conservation status

Endangered (EN) –high risk of extinction in the wild. This species can survive in different habitats and small forest patches, but massive deforestation has isolated populations and diminished resource quality in forests, affecting the species' survival.

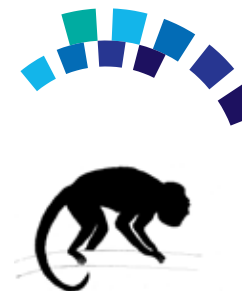


Recommended search areas:

Pacoche Wildlife Refuge; El Bálsamo mountain range; Machalilla National Parque; Jama-Pedernales; San Miguel de Los Bancos; western border of the Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve.

Search tactics and recommendations:

- Avoid days with extreme temperatures (high or low); howler monkeys will remain motionless.
- Its loud, hoarse and long roars are usually heard early in the morning or late in the afternoon. They can be used to track them down.
- Look at trees with branches exposed to sunlight. Howler monkeys usually rest and sunbath on these branches.
- Listen for weightless branch and leaf movements, these monkeys eat and move cautiously.
- Do not stand beneath the trees the howler monkeys are on. They might urinate, defecate or even throw sticks at you as a defense mechanism.





The only monkey that lives on both sides of the Andes



WHITE-FRONTED CAPUCHIN

Cebus albifrons

Common names

Capuchino (capuchin), mico, machín, machín colorado (reddish capuchin, coastal area), machín de cara blanca (white-faced capuchin), mono blanco (white monkey), mico carablanca (whitefaced monkey), tolosi on'gu (cofán), bogu'i –bogi– (huaorani), yurak machin (quichua), mono lanudo (Napo, Amazon Region).

What are its habits?

It can live in primary, secondary or altered forests, where occupies all forest strata, including ground level where it searches food in dry leaf litter, especially when fruit is scarce. It can approach crops such as cornfields to find food. In the Amazon it prefers borders between flooded and terra firme forests. Likewise, it inhabits palm swamps, where searches food and rests. Each troop has a dominant male who takes control of the group, and all troop members pay at-

tention to its warning behaviors under risky situations. It is very agile and smart. The clever squirrel monkey associates with this capuchin in order to find food more easily.



Diurnal.



Fruit, insects, vertebrates, vertebrate eggs.



1-35 individuals. Mixed groups.



Identification traits

Medium size (35-46 cm) (13.78 – 18.11 inches). It is mostly creamy, with darker tones on crown and back. It has thin body and short hair. When moving around, it coils its tail with the end pointing downwards. Sometimes it uses its tail to hold on to branches.

Similar species: In the western lowlands, the white-fronted capuchin is black and white; other primate species are darker and larger. In the Amazon, the black capuchin is darker and has a black tuft on its forehead; the squirrel monkey is smaller, with a black snout and its tail has a dark tuft at the end. Woolly monkeys are larger, darker and furrier.

Conservation status

Critically endangered (CR) in the west –nearly extinct– because of intense deforestation, habitat alteration and hunting. In the Amazon this species is not facing such a critical situation,



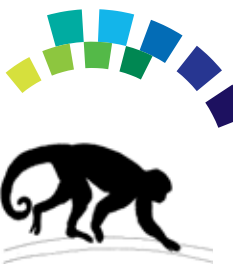
so it is ranked as Near threatened (NT).

Recommended search areas:

Machalilla National Park; Jama-Pedernales; Pacoche Wildlife Refuge; El Bálsamo mountain range (western lowlands); Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve; Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas, Bombuscaro, Podocarpus National Park, Cosanga (Amazonian lowlands).

Search tactics and recommendations:

- If you are traveling by river, watch out for movements on the branches and trees on the forest edge.
- This monkey is noisy; if you search silently, it will be easier to find.
- The sounds it makes are low, spaced chirps or high, long groans.
- Look for it during the first morning hours, when it is more active.
- When you find it, avoid standing under the trees it is on because it may break off branches and throw them to the ground as a defense mechanism.





PRIMATE OBSERVATION TRAILS IN ECUADOR

Trail 1. WESTERN TRAIL

Be amazed by the variety of forest types, from northern rain forests to southern dry forests. Four primate species will accompany you on this trail.

Where: San Miguel de Los Bancos (1), western limits of Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve (2), Pacoche Wildlife Refuge (3), Machalilla National Park (4).

Trail 2. AMAZONIAN TRAIL

This is, undoubtedly, the trail of diversity. Along this trail, you can observe all of primate species living in the Amazon: 16 species!

Where: Cosanga (5), Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve (6), Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas (7).

Trail 3. WESTERN ADVENTURE TRAIL

For adventurous primate-lovers, those determined to feel the splendor of the western forests with their four monkey species. Long walks and a bit of rural life will make you feel what it's like to live on these lands.

Where: Western limits of Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve (2), El Bálsamo mountain range (8), Jama-Pedernales (9).

Trail 4. AMAZONIAN ADVENTURE TRAIL

For the most avid only! This trail permits you to journey into remote Amazonian forests in the north of the country, and travel across Ecuador towards the wonderful southern forests. If you want to approach the Amazon in a different way, this is the path to choose.

Where: Cosanga (5), Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve (6), Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas (7), Bombuscaro (10).

PRIMATE OBSERVATION ROUTE

Travel, observe and feel! This route is the most recommended for nature lovers. Here, not only will you travel to different forests throughout Ecuador but you will also be able to see every single monkey species!

Where: western limits of Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve (2), Pacoche Wildlife Refuge (3), Cosanga (5), Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve (6), Yasuni National Park and surrounding areas (7).

*For further information about where to go see next section.



SIMBOLOGY	
	Protected areas
	Province Capital
	Monkey observation sites
	Puerto Misahualli
	AmazOOnico Rescue Center
	Big primate
	Medium-sized primate
	Small primate



WHERE TO GO

- Where is it
- 🏠 What it has
- 👁️ Activities
- 🦁 Species found
- 🚶 Difficulty level
- 📞 Contact information
- 💰 Prices

WESTERN

Western limits of Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve

PLAYA DE ORO COMMUNITY

→ Playa de Oro Community, south bank of Santiago River. From Borbón (Esmeraldas Province) you must go towards Selva Alegre. In Selva Alegre take a canoe trip for one hour and a half. There are bus rides available from Borbón to Selva Alegre.

🏠 Afroecuadorian community that owns 25,713 acres (10 406 hectares) on the border of Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve, most of which is primary forest.

👁️ Swimming in Santiago River, visits to the community, walks to waterfalls, jungle excursions, flora and fauna observation.

🦁 Brown-headed spider monkey, mantled howler monkey, white-headed capuchin.

🚶 Intermediate.

📞 Playa de Oro, (593 9) 960 6918, jramiro-buitron@gmail.com

COOPERATIVA TESORO ESCONDIDO

→ In Cristóbal Colón town, three hours from Quinindé (Esmeraldas Province).

🏠 Communal lands reaching 3,950 acres

(1600 hectares), most of which is primary or secondary forest. Tesoro Escondido is on the border of Cotacachi Cayapas E. R. It is advised to be in good shape and willing to go on long walks that might be difficult.

👁️ Bathing in waterfalls and Gualpí River, sport fishing, community life sharing, jungle excursion, flora and fauna observation, cave exploration.

🦁 Brown-headed spider monkey, mantled howler monkey, white-headed capuchin.

🚶 High.

📞 Tesoro Escondido, (593 8) 8760 339/ (593 9) 1802 980/ (593 9) 0806 090/ (593 9) 0174 452, nildaelizalde@hotmail.com

Jama- Pedernales Area

THREE FOREST TRAIL

→ 20 minutes south of Pedernales along the coastal highway towards Jama, in Tabuga-Camarones (Manabí).

🏠 A four-day tour that takes you through different private properties. It offers the opportunity to explore three forest types. It begins in Tabuga town, goes through Jama-Coaque Reserve and finishes at Lalo Loor forest.

👁️ Walks through the jungle, coexistence with community, birdwatching, flora and fauna

observation, waterfall visit.

🦁 Mantled howler monkey, white-fronted capuchin.

🚶 Intermediate-high.

📞 Three Forest Trail, (593 9) 4436 123, info@threeforeststrail.com, www.threeforeststrail.com

El Bálsamo Mountain Range

EL PEÑÓN DEL SOL

→ San Clemente Point (Manabí).

🏠 Starting point of the El Bálsamo Mountain Range forest corridor. It includes some coastal spots: La Mesita, La Gorda, Chirije Archaeological Park and Peñón del Sol. The tour covers 45 kilometers (27.9 miles) in four days. It is an adventurous tour, with camping sites along the way.

👁️ visits to varied ecosystems, archaeological sites, observation of mammals and birds.

🦁 Mantled howler monkey, white-fronted capuchin.

🚶 Intermediate-high.

📞 Cordillera El Bálsamo Corridor (593 8) 8900076/ (593 9) 4376 399/ (593 5) 2693 004, elpenondelsol@hotmail.com, cerrosecobahia@gmail.com, www.cerroseco.org

💰 \$35 plus tax per day.

Pachoche Wildlife Refuge

PACOCHE LODGE & RESERVE

→ 20 minutes south of Manta on the coastal highway along the Manta-Puerto Cayo road section, near the towns of Pacoche, San Lorenzo and Ligüiqui (Manabí).

🏠 Includes a 10 hectares (24.7 acre) private property next to Pacoche Wildlife Refuge and to small beaches (Ligüiqui and San Lorenzo).

👁️ Bird observation, flora and fauna observation, forest excursion, visits to beaches, tours to nearby La Plata Island, tours to the "Panama Hat Route".

🦁 Mantled howler monkey, white-fronted capuchin.

🚶 Low-intermediate.

📞 Pacoche Lodge, (593 9) 5001 690/ (593 9)

8163 113/ (593 2) 2471 168, info@pacocheodge.com, www.pacocheodge.com

💰 \$55.00 (double cabin); includes Manabian-style breakfast. Lunch costs \$4. Price does not include walks through trails.

Machalilla National Park

EL PITAL COMMUNITY

→ 20 minutes from Puerto López (Manabí); take a taxi or truck in Puerto López to get to El Pital Community, taking the road to Guales.

🏠 El Pital owns 2000 hectares (4,940 acres), a portion of them in the Machalilla N. P.; there are three trails and five local guides that have been accredited by the Ministries of Tourism and Environment.

👁️ Birdwatching, flora observation, walks and horse rides in the jungle, coexistence with community.

🦁 Mantled howler monkey, white-fronted capuchin.

🚶 Intermediate.

📞 El Pital Community, (593 9) 4188343/(593 8)5269042, carlosmanrique61@hotmail.com, http://elpital.org

San Miguel de Los Bancos Area

ASHIRINGA

→ 20 minutes from San Miguel de Los Bancos on Los Bancos–Las Mercedes–Santo Domingo road (Pichincha).

🏠 Private property made up of 45 hectares (110 acres) of forest, nearby the Macas River.

👁️ Birdwatching, visits to Macas River, agritourism, cheese and and crafts elaboration.

🦁 Mantled howler monkey, white-fronted capuchin.

🚶 Intermediate.

📞 Ashiringa, (593 9) 4739 826/ (593 8) 8221 491/ (593 2) 275 6616, patymacas08@hotmail.com

AMAZONIA

Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve

COFAN ZABALO CENTER

➔ Zábalo Community, northern bank of the Aguarico River (Sucumbíos). A 40-minute car trip from Nueva Loja (Lago Agrío) to Dureno Cofan community. From there, it is a five hour canoe trip to the Cofan Zábalo Center.

🏠 This center is inside the Cuyabeno Fauna Production Reserve, in the territory of Dureno Community. It embraces 1600 hectares (345,900 acres). Members of the community have participated in research projects and have a broad knowledge of fauna and flora. Forests are practically pristine, making this an optimal site for fauna observation.

👁️ Walks through the jungle, community visits, canoe trips, mammal, bird and flora observation.

🐼 White-fronted capuchin, red howler monkey, noisy night monkey, yellow-handed titi monkey, red titi monkey, pygmy marmoset, silvery woolly monkey, monk saki monkey, graells' tamarin, squirrel monkey.

🦜 Intermediate.

☎️ Cofan Survival Foundation. Mariano Cardinal N74-153 and Joaquín Mancheno, Carcelén, Quito. (593 2) 2470 946, randycofan@yahoo.com, fespinosas@hotmail.es, www.cofan.org

GUACAMAYO ECOLOGUE

➔ On the banks of the Cuyabeno River (Sucumbíos), two hours by land from Lago Agrío to El Puente de Cuyabeno (Cuyabeno Bridge). From there it is a two hour canoe ride to the lodge.

🏠 A private lodge inside Cuyabeno F. P. R. Good environmental practices include solar energy and biodigestor systems for toilets. Cabins are made of wood and the roofs are made of palm fronds.

👁️ Fauna and flora observation, jungle excursions, visit to Laguna Grande, visits to Siona or Cofan communities, bird's observation tower.

🐼 White-fronted capuchin, red howler monkey, noisy night monkey, yellow-handed titi monkey, pygmy marmoset, silvery woolly monkey, monk saki monkey, graells' tamarin, squirrel monkey.

🦜 Low.

☎️ Ara Expeditions. Juan Rodríguez E7-55 between Reina Victoria and Diego de Almagro (El Imperial Hostel), Quito. (593 2) 2904 765 / (593 8) 2964 581, info@araexpedition.com, www.araexpeditions.com

💰 \$215 (4 days/3 nights), \$255 (5 days/4 nights). Price does not include transportation to Lago Agrío, reserve entrance fee and contribution to local community (\$4).

Yasuní National Park and surrounding areas

NAPO WILDLIFE CENTER (NWC)

➔ On the banks of Añangucocha lagoon (Orellana). From Coca, NWC staff will take you in a motorized canoe, in a two-hours ride, to the lodge.

🏠 A project managed by Añangu Quichua Community, inside Yasuni N. P. It has two sustainable tourism certificates. Buildings are made in the traditional manner, with wide areas for contemplating the surrounding forest. The community protects 24,000 hectares (59,305 acres).

👁️ Visits to parrot clay licks, canopy tower, visits to communities, canoe rides, fauna observation.

🐼 White-fronted capuchin, red howler monkey, white-bellied spider monkey, noisy night monkey, tufted capuchin, red titi monkey, pygmy marmoset, brown woolly monkey, equatorial saki, monk saki monkey, saddleback tamarin, golden-mantled tamarin, squirrel monkey.

🦜 Low-intermediate.

☎️ Río Yaupi N31-90 and Mariana de Jesús,

Quito. (593 2) 6005 893, info@napowildlifecenter.com, www.napowildlifecenter.com

💰 \$608 (4 days/3 nights), \$1,216 (8 days/7 nights). Price does not include taxes (for Ecuadorians only), and does not include transportation to Coca.

SANI LODGE

➔ On the banks of Challuacocha lagoon (Sucumbíos). From Coca, Sani staff will take you in a motorized canoe, in a four-hour ride along the Napo River, to the lodge.

🏠 This lodge is located in the 37,000 hectares (91,429 acres) protected by Sani Isla Quichua Community; it was established in 1999 as a sustainable income source for local people.

👁️ Visits to clay licks, canopy tower, visits to communities, fauna and flora observation, visits to Pañacocha lagoon.

🐼 White-fronted capuchin, red howler monkey, white-bellied spider monkey, noisy night monkey, tufted capuchin, red titi monkey, pygmy marmoset, brown woolly monkey, equatorial saki, monk saki monkey, graell's tamarin, saddleback tamarin, squirrel monkey.

🦜 Low-intermediate.

☎️ San Ignacio 134 and 6 de Diciembre, Quito. (593 2) 2543 492, 3237 139/ (593 9) 4341 728, info@sanilodge.com, www.sanilodge.com

💰 \$396 (4 days/3 nights camping), \$1,347 (8 days/7 nights in double cabin), per person. Price does not include transportation to Coca.

BATABURO LODGE

➔ Close to Tigüino Huaorani Community (Orellana), on the Shiripuno River. Driving from Coca takes three and a half hours to Puerto Tigüino, where a four hours canoe ride begins.

🏠 Inside Huaorani territory, established in agreement between Kempery Tours and the Waorani Nationality of Ecuador (NAWE). A percentage of the entrance fee is given to Tigüino Community; after 15 operation years the lodge will be managed by the community.

👁️ Fauna and flora observation, piranha fishing, learning visits to Huaorani communities, visits to clay licks, canoe rides.

🐼 White-fronted capuchin, white-bellied spider monkey, noisy night monkey, red titi monkey, pygmy marmoset, brown woolly monkey, equatorial saki, monk saki monkey, golden-mantled tamarin, squirrel monkey.

🦜 Low-Intermediate.

☎️ Kempery Tours. Gaspar de Villaroel 54 and llalo, Alangasi. (593 2) 2788 162/ (593 8) 7415 430, kempery@kempery.com, kemperytourstravel@gmail.com, www.kempery.com

💰 \$310 (4 days/3 nights), \$385 (5 days/4 nights). Price does not include transportation to Coca and community entrance fee (\$20).

Cosanga

CABAÑAS SAN ISIDRO

➔ In Las Caucheras road, nearby Cosanga town (Napo), four hours east of Quito.

🏠 Private forest of 1,100 hectares (2,718 acres) of subtropical montane forest. It has a sustainable tourism certificate and supports research programs in the area.

👁️ Bird watching, visits to waterfalls and to Cosanga River, visits to Andean cock-of-the-rock displaying arenas, nocturnal observation of moths and beetles, self-guided trails, hummingbird gardens, orchids green house.

🐼 White-fronted capuchin, lemurine night monkey.

🦜 Low-Intermediate.

☎️ Luis Cordero E10-55 and 12 de Octubre, ed. Sancho Arias, office 301, Quito. (593 2) 2906 769/ 2909 027, info@cabanasanisidro.com, www.cabanasanisidro.com

💰 \$80 per night, per person (plus taxes). Lodging and three meals included.

CABAÑAS EL ALISO

➔ 20 minutes from Cosanga along Las Caucheras road, on the border of Antisana Ecological

Reserve (Napó), four hours east of Quito.

🏠 A large wooded cabin serves as lodge; is divided in four multiple rooms, and five trails enter into surrounding forests.

👁️ Searches of spectacled bear and puma tracks, butterfly observation, bird watching, diurnal and nocturnal jungle excursions. Visit to the nearby Yanayacu Research Station can be arranged from El Aliso, where night monkeys have been observed (contact at Yanayacu: José Simbaña (593 9) 302 1278, www.yanayacu.com).

🐼 Lemurine night monkey.

🚶 Low-Intermediate.

☎️ Cabañas El Aliso. (593 2) 2280 127.

💰 \$40 per days (\$25 for students) Guiding is included.

Misahualli area

RUNA HUASI

➔ From the city of Tena take a ride south to Punta Barantilla, from where a 5-minute canoe ride takes you to Runa Huasi. Jumandi and Centinela del Tena buses take you to Puerto Barantilla (one hour from Tena).

🏠 Project managed by Ahuano Quichua Community, as part of Selva Viva project. Chances to see wild primates are low, but it is possible to visit the nearby (5 minutes walk) AmaZOOnico Rescue Center, where people take care of animals that where previously held in captivity or extracted from their natural habitats. Healthy animals are reintroduced into natural areas.

👁️ Jungle excursions, visits to Quichua families, swimming in rivers, nocturnal walks.

🚶 Low.

☎️ Contact can be made through Liana Lodge. (593 9) 9800 463, lianalodge@gmail.com, www.selvaviva.ec

💰 \$10 per night for lodging, \$5 per meal and tours from \$4-26 (depending on activities and group size).

Bombuscaro

CABAÑAS ECOLÓGICAS COPALINGA

➔ In the Bombuscaro area, 10 minutes from the city of Zamora, on the border with Podocarpus National Park (Zamora Chinchipe).

🏠 A private forest of 75 hectares (185 acres), with a sustainable tourism certificate; Copalinga promotes reforestation with native tree species and participates in environmental education with a local primary school. Cabins are built in wood, and the reserve has five well-marked trails. Chances for primate observation are good, but depend on seasonality.

👁️ Bird watching, visits to waterfalls, self-guided trails, orchid observation.

🐼 White-headed capuchin, white-bellied spider monkey.

🚶 Intermediate-High.

☎️ Copalinga. (593 9) 3477 013, info@copalinga.com, www.copalinga.com

💰 \$23.50 per night in rustic cabins, \$42 in double room (per person). Breakfast is included.



Coexisting with nature

THE CAPUCHIN MONKEYS OF MISAHUALLI

Hundreds of tourists depart from the charming port of Misahualli towards their jungle excursions, visits to indigenous communities or adventurous sailing down some Amazonian rivers. Nonetheless, there is no need to move far from Misahualli to contemplate one of its main attractions: the white-headed capuchin monkeys. A couple of minutes waiting in a sandy beach are enough to observe a troop of capuchins that has lived generation after generation in riparian woodland right next to this beach. You will have the unequalled opportunity to see infants hanging from their mothers, young lads and adults playing around, eating insects or, simply, taking a nap. At some point, capuchins abandon their riparian trees and climb up to the town, to interact with people, becoming the attention focus of national and

international visitors.

If you are planning to visit Misahualli and look for its restless capuchin monkeys, we urge you to be respectful with them. Keep in mind that they are wild animals that behave instinctively. Do not try to interfere in its natural habits, as to avoid making them dependent on humans. Take into account the following recommendations:

- Do not disturb or touch the monkeys.
- Never feed them! You can cause them sickness, human dependence and inability to search their own food.
- Do not use flash when taking photos.
- Take care of your personal belongings as these monkeys are frisky and might borrow your stuff to play around.

A colorful sunset at Challuacocha lagoon, Orellana Province.



RESPECTING LIFE

Preserving nature and its destinations, respecting cultural manifestations, reducing environmental impacts and involving local people in tourism is a commitment and a responsibility everyone involved in ecotourism has: operators, guides, agencies, managers and, of course, tourists themselves!

Travelling responsibly

Travelling responsibly does not necessarily imply spending a lot of money. There are many options available for people with varied tastes and economies.

Before making any decisions about your trip, inform yourself! It is currently possible to obtain a lot of information from the Internet. Getting in touch directly (by e-mail or phone) and consulting guidebooks can help you pick the best destination according to your needs.

- Ask your tour operator about their environmental practices. Look for places that maintain a fair relationship with local communities and those that share income and work.
- Be respectful of local people; ask for permission before taking pictures or filming.
- Enjoy your natural environs without bothering or touching wild animals.
- Use the trails that are specifically marked and support conservation by paying entrance fees to communities or protected areas.
- Respect and obey environmental regulations that have been established at each location you visit.
- Never buy crafts that have been made using animals or living animals. Neither buy food made from wild animals.
- Pay fair prices.
- Buy local products and use the services that are given by the local population.



Primate observation in the wild.



Red titi monkey in its alarm posture.

CONSCIOUS TOURISM Means loving Life

El Conscious Tourism is a life changing experience that encourages awareness and generates growth, making us become better human beings.

It is a new concept founded on ethical and sustainable principles, one that promotes values such as peace, friendship, respect and love for life as the essence of the tourism practice.

It constitutes an accord of coexistence, responsibility, mutual respect, and fellowship between tourism suppliers and operators, the tourist and the country's natural and cultural heritage.

Conscious Tourism is a dynamic concept that is in constant evolution. It is an experience of giving and receiving.

Reflection and conceptualization of responsible and conscious tourism started on June 27th 2011. This happened on the Pululahua volcano crater located on the Equator, in Ecuador.



Here is a list of all the primate species you can find in Ecuador. Fill it out!

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Brown-headed spider monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Red titi monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White-bellied spider monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pygmy marmoset | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White-headed capuchin | <input type="checkbox"/> | Brown woolly monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White-fronted capuchin | <input type="checkbox"/> | Silvery woolly monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tufted capuchin | <input type="checkbox"/> | Equatorial saki | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Red howler monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Monk saki monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mantled howler monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Graells' tamarin | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Noisy night monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Saddlebacked tamarin | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lemurine night monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Golden-mantled tamarin | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yellow-handed titi monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Squirrel monkey | <input type="checkbox"/> |



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