

Preliminary Observations of Napo Tamarins (*Saguinus graellsii*) and Notes on Primates of Wildsumaco Wildlife Sanctuary

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A. caraya during the austral winter. Neither of these claims is surprising given that xeric regions of deciduous and semideciduous scrub forest likely act as barriers to the seasonal movements of a species that depends entirely on a low-quality, leafy forage. This is particularly true during the austral winter, when most such deciduous trees are devoid of leaves.

Here we describe an encounter with a solitary adult male black howler monkey of unknown age in the north-central Chaco of Paraguay. The encounter took place on a cool, overcast morning between 10:00 and 11:00 hours on 7 August, 2007. The solitary male was observed on private property approximately 130 km south of Chaco Defensores National Park (21° 41.176 South, 060° 09.234 West). The property is approximately 45,000 ha in expanse, >80% of which contains natural vegetation. In contrast, the majority of the surrounding properties have converted most of the natural vegetation into rangeland for livestock, and there is little opportunity for far-reaching habitat connectivity.

The howler was at the top of a short canopy tree (<12–15 m) completely devoid of foliage. The tree was at the edge of a new clearing that had been opened up to create a cattle pasture and was isolated from other neighboring trees (i.e., the only access into the tree would have been from the base). We were able to observe it unobstructed, aided by binoculars, for approximately 20 minutes, while standing <2–3 meters from the trunk. During this time, the animal appeared completely undisturbed, and made no attempt to flee. On the contrary, it appeared indifferent to our presence and more concerned with that morning's cold temperature as it huddled over its extremities and moved very little. This observation occurred before the onset of a prolonged drought in the Paraguayan Chaco, and at the time when few trees were bearing leaves. Furthermore, the property owner, who observed the animal as well and had owned and managed the property for more than 20 years at the time of the observation, had never before seen the species on his property or anywhere else in the north-central Chaco. It was unclear where the animal had come from and what was sustaining it. We left to pursue other unrelated activities and returned less than 1 hour later to find the monkey gone, with no evidence as to where it had gone to. A subsequent, albeit anecdotal, inquiry among landowners found few to be familiar with this species. It would not be unreasonable to conclude that this male did not exist in isolation amidst such a sizeable region in the dry Chaco. Horwich (1998) remarked on the general adaptability of all *Alouatta* species, and we agree that *A. caraya* must be particularly adaptable to persist in such an ecosystem during a time of year when its limiting resources must be considered very scarce at best.

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PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS OF NAPO TAMARINS (*SAGUINUS GRAELLIS*) AND NOTES ON PRIMATES OF WILDSUMACO WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

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Wildsumaco Wildlife Sanctuary is a new reserve located on the eastern slopes of the Andes in Ecuador (400 hectares; 1400 m elevation; S 00° 40.28' W 77° 35.91'). The reserve consists of primary and secondary forest in a matrix of agricultural land. A top priority for the sanctuary and the affiliated Rio Pucuno Foundation is to conserve the remaining forest and biodiversity of the area. Research to date has focused on birds and mammals, especially carnivores. Primate surveys were conducted for 20 days and 3 nights from July 9–31, 2010. The Napo Tamarin (*Saguinus graellisi*) was

the only primate sighted during the survey and although troops were not habituated every attempt was made to gather data. Tamarins were followed for anywhere from 15 minutes to up to five hours. Tamarins used all levels of the forest, from the ground to the canopy (0–50m) and were seen foraging in both primary and secondary forest as well as along the main road that runs through the reserve (even crossing the road on the ground). Our preliminary data indicate that there are at least three troops, but there may be up to six. Average troop size was four individuals. Several intertroop encounters were observed and consisted of continuous loud chattering vocalizations lasting over 30 minutes in one instance. A number of calls were recorded and will be analyzed in the future. Foraging data gathered indicate that like most other tamarins, the individuals at this site have a mixed diet. Individuals were seen foraging on the flowers of *Inga* sp. and *Mucuna elliptica*, fruit of *Pourouma cecropiifolia* and an unknown liana, and palm exudates. During the study period a dead juvenile male was discovered with few marks. The specimen was measured (HB = 23 cm, T = 32.5 cm, HF = 6.5 cm, E = 2.4 cm) and deposited at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador in Quito. Although cause of death could not be determined, potential predators at the site include margays, tayras and several raptor species. In addition to the tamarins, four other species of primates have been observed in the reserve: *Aotus vociferans*, *Ateles belzebuth*, *Cebus albifrons*, and *Alouatta seniculus*. Although not in the reserve Woolly monkeys (*Lagothrix lagotricha*) do reside in the nearby Sumaco Galeras National Park. Researchers will continue to monitor primates at the site and more behavioral data will be collected in the future. The Wildsumaco Biological Field Station, a joint venture between the preserve, Francis Marion University and University of North Carolina Wilmington, will open in July 2011 and facilitate future primate studies in the area. For more information on primate studies at Wildsumaco please contact Natasha Vanderhoff (nvander4@ju.edu) or visit the website (<http://www.riopucunofoundation.org/>).

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NEWS

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