

Rainforest animal fact cards

Marmoset

Rainforest location: understory

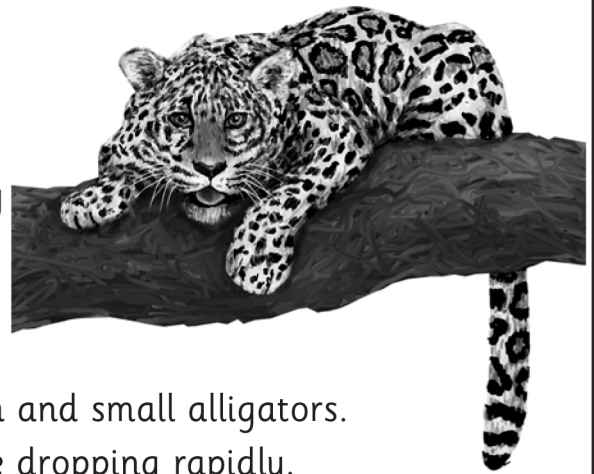
Marmosets are about the same size as a squirrel and are members of the monkey family. They mainly eat insects, fruit and leaves, but in some places they live on the sap and gum that they take out of trees with their long teeth. Young are looked after by other adult marmosets in addition to their mother and older siblings.



Jaguar

Rainforest location: understory

The jaguar is the biggest member of the cat family found in the Amazon Rainforest. They are good climbers and usually sleep in the lower branches of trees, where they remain well camouflaged. Jaguars love meat and will eat almost any living thing including fish and small alligators. They are becoming rare as their numbers are dropping rapidly.



Chameleon

Rainforest location: understory

The chameleon is a member of the lizard family and has the ability to change the colour of its skin to blend in with its surroundings. It catches insects by shooting out its very long tongue at high speed. Chameleons can rotate their large eyes through a complete turn and are able to focus on two different things at the same time.



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Sloth

Rainforest location: canopy

The sloth spends much of its time in trees and rarely goes down to the ground. They eat plants and shoots as well as insects, lizards and small birds. Strong claws help them hang upside down in trees and they can also be used in defence. Sloths only move when it is really necessary and even then slowly, saving as much energy as possible.



Toucan

Rainforest location: canopy

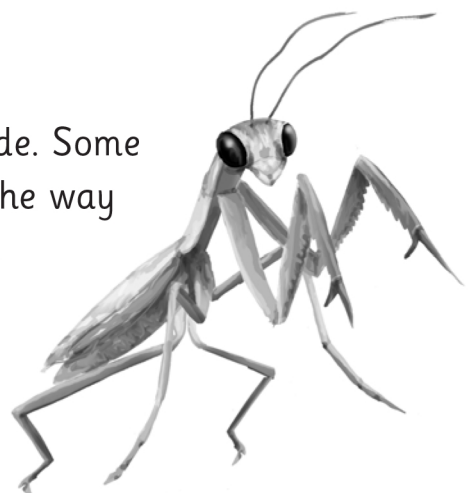
Toucans are some of the most colourful of the rainforest birds, often having brilliantly bright feathers of red, green, yellow and blue. Their wings are small because they only need to fly short distances in the trees. Toucans have large, strong beaks. They live mainly on fruit, but have also been known to eat insects and small lizards.



Mantis

Rainforest location: canopy

There are over 2000 species of this insect worldwide. Some species are called the 'praying' mantis because of the way they hold up their front legs as if in prayer. Mantis are excellent hunters and feed on insects, flies and aphids. They are masters of camouflage and can blend in with leaves, sticks and grass as they wait for their prey.



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Emerald tree boa

Rainforest location: canopy

This species of bright green snake has white zigzag patterns on its back. It can grow up to 2m in length. It is a nocturnal carnivore, feeding on small mammals, lizards, birds and frogs. It stretches its jaws wide to swallow its prey whole, and may go two months between meals after having a good feed.



Harpy eagle

Rainforest location: emergent layer

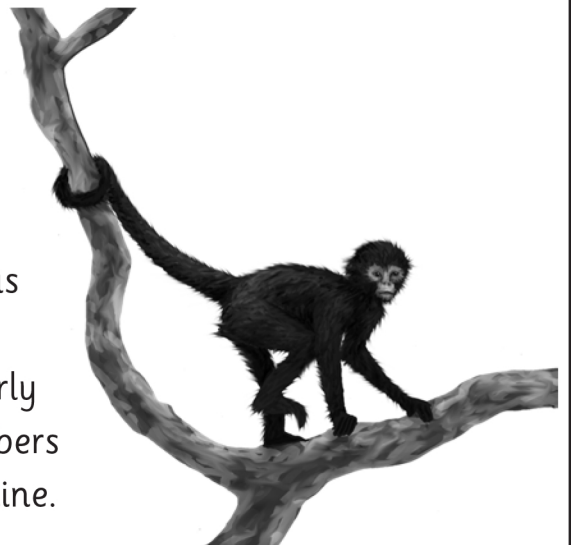
The harpy eagle is the largest and most powerful bird in the rainforest. It can fly at high speeds and uses its strong claws to snatch monkeys and other small creatures climbing in the top of trees. These eagles build a large nest of sticks in the tops of trees and usually lay two eggs every two to three years.



Spider monkey

Rainforest location: emergent layer

Spider monkeys have been given their name because they have long spindly legs. They use their tail, which can be almost a metre long, as a fifth limb for climbing. Spider monkeys feed mainly on fruit and nuts, and prefer to eat early in the morning. They tend to avoid large numbers and can usually be seen in groups of four to nine.



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Hummingbird

Rainforest location: emergent layer

By flapping their wings very fast (from 15–80 times per second), hummingbirds can hover in the air and even fly backwards. They fly quickly from flower to flower, feeding off nectar with their long bills. Hovering requires large amounts of energy, so hummingbirds spend much of their time perched in trees resting.



Leaf-cutter ant

Rainforest location: forest floor

Leaf-cutter ants are very social creatures and a mature colony can contain as many as eight million ants. Some 'soldier' ants in the colony protect the nest; others collect leaves or work on the gathered leaves in the nest. The leaves act as a compost to produce a special fungus on which the ants feed. Leaf-cutter ants have been known to strip a large citrus tree in less than 24 hours.



Rhinoceros beetle

Rainforest location: forest floor

Rhinoceros beetles are so named because they have large horns at the front of their body that they use for protection. Fully-grown beetles have to be strong to move through the heavy leaf litter on the forest floor, where they eat nectar, plant sap and fruit. Despite being fierce to look at, this beetle has no bite or sting and is totally harmless.

