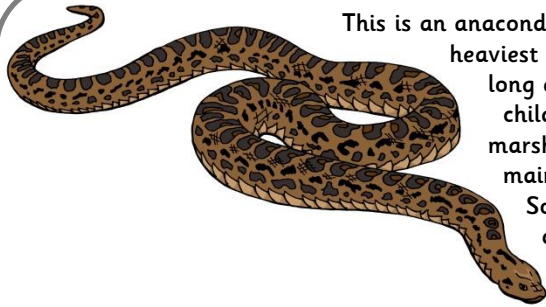


Rainforest Creatures

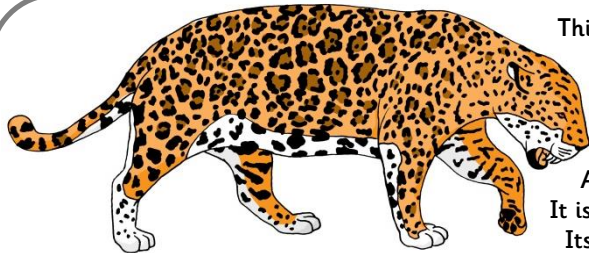
Rainforests are also called jungles. They are located close to the equator between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The weather is very hot. It rains nearly every day so it is also very wet. Many creatures live there because there is plenty of food and water, shade from the heat and shelter from the rain. In fact, more creatures live in the rainforest than anywhere else on Earth. It is estimated that about half of all the Earth's animal species live in the rainforest areas.

Trees grow very tall in the rainforests and all the vegetation is very thick and dense. Different creatures live in different layers of the forest vegetation. Some live high up in the forest canopy, while others remain on the forest floor. Many rainforest animals are camouflaged to help them avoid predators and to creep up on their own prey without being spotted.



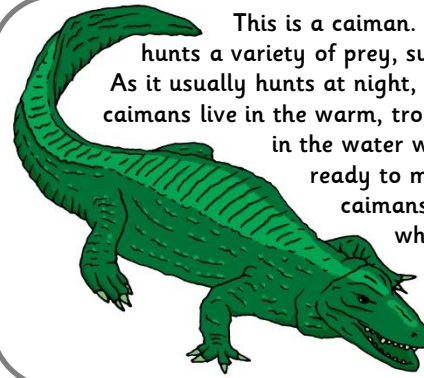
This is an anaconda. The green anaconda is the world's heaviest snake. It grows up to nine metres long and can weigh the same as seven children! Anacondas live in swamps, marshes, and slow-moving streams, mainly in the tropical rainforests of South America. Its diet is of wild pigs, deer, birds, turtles, capybara, caimans, and even jaguars. The anaconda crushes its prey and

then swallows it whole, whatever its size. Its jaws are specially adapted to enable it to do this.

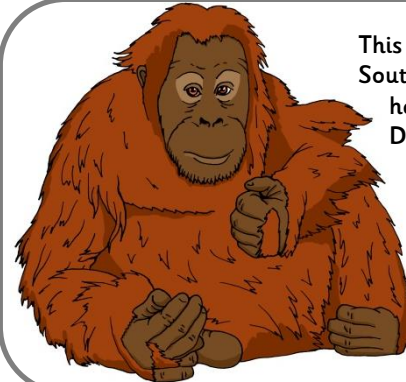


This is a jaguar. It has tan or orange fur and distinctive black spots. It has become an endangered animal and is now mainly found in the Amazon basin in South America. It is a strong swimmer and climber.

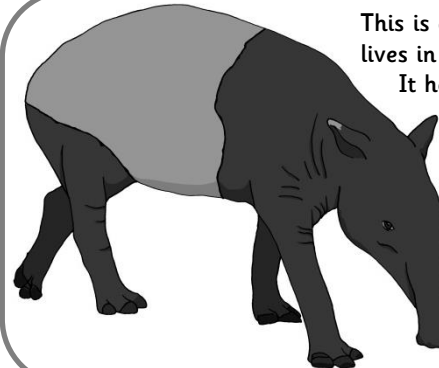
Its prey is very varied including fish, turtles, deer and tapirs. Jaguars lie in wait until its prey comes near and then they leap out to kill it. It has an exceptionally powerful bite which enables it to kill its prey swiftly with a fatal bite to the skull.



This is a caiman. It is a reptile similar to a small alligator. It hunts a variety of prey, such as fish, birds, lizards and small mammals. As it usually hunts at night, it swallows its prey whole in the dark. Most caimans live in the warm, tropical rivers of Central and South America. It lies in the water with only its eyes and snout above the water ready to make a surprise attack on its prey. Female caimans build a large nest in which to lay their eggs, which can be more than 1.5 metres wide. Female caimans lay between 10 and 50 eggs which hatch within about 6 weeks.



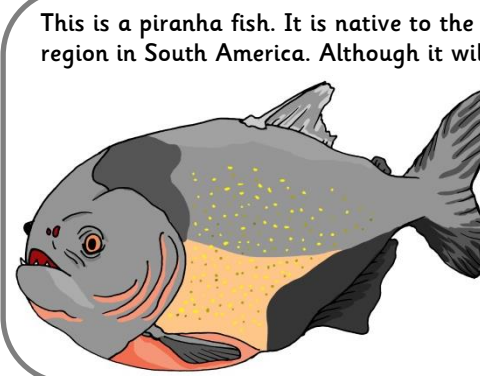
This is an orangutan. Its home is in the rainforests of South East Asia, but because so many of these forests have been destroyed, orangutans are very rare. Despite being almost orange in colour, orangutans are well camouflaged in the dappled shadows of their habitat. Most of its diet consists of fruit and leaves gathered from rainforest trees. Orangutans have really long arms which help them to swing from tree to tree. Feeding mainly at dawn and dusk, an orangutan will make nest to rest in at other times.



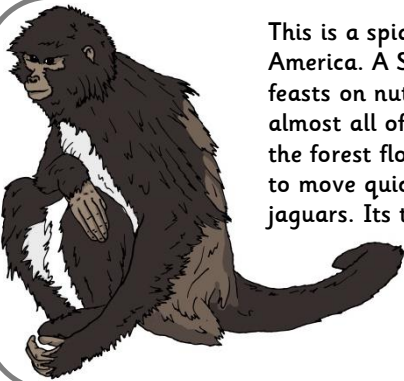
This is a tapir. It is an animal similar to a pig that lives in the rainforests of Central and South America. It has a snout combining its nose and upper lip which helps it to grasp and bite off vegetation. It eats shoots and leafy plants that grow on the forest floor. Tapirs are most active at night when it uses its sense of smell. Its vision is poor. Tapirs are good swimmers and often plunge into water to escape big cats who do not swim so well.



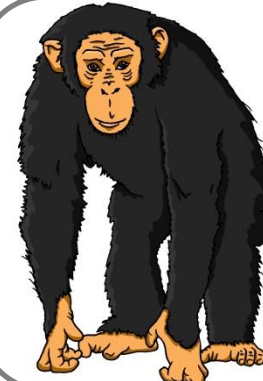
This is a sloth. It lives in the rainforests of South America and eats fruit and leaves. Moving very slowly, it travels along the branches of trees, often hanging upside down. The digestive system of the sloth works very slowly so the sloth may only need to come to the ground once a week to go to the toilet! It is covered by long brown fur. Tiny green plants called algae grow on the fur which helps camouflage the animal. The sloth's tongue can protrude a long way from its mouth, helping it to reach leaves further away.



This is a piranha fish. It is native to the warm rivers and lakes of the Amazon region in South America. Although it will eat plants too, the piranha has very sharp teeth and an aggressive appetite for meat. When it is alone, a piranha will eat small fish, birds, reptiles and mammals. However, when piranhas are in large groups, they will attack larger creatures in the water too.



This is a spider monkey. It lives in Central and South America. A Spider monkey finds its food in the treetops and feasts on nuts, fruits, leaves, bird eggs, and spiders. It lives almost all of the time high in the tree canopy, rarely visiting the forest floor. It has a very long strong tail which helps it to move quickly to escape from predators like eagles or jaguars. Its thick fur comes in a variety of colours including brown, black and even white.



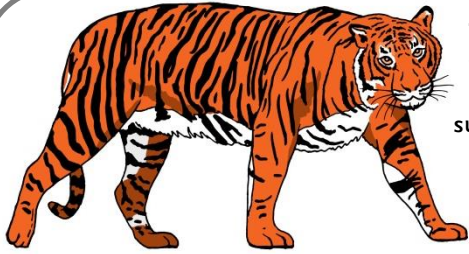
This is a chimpanzee. It lives in the forests of Central and Western Africa. Mostly it eats fruit, leaves and seeds, but it also enjoys ants and termites. Sometimes it hunts larger prey, such as bush pigs or small monkeys. The chimpanzee is covered in black hair. It is also very clever and is able to use tools, such as sticks, to help it obtain food.



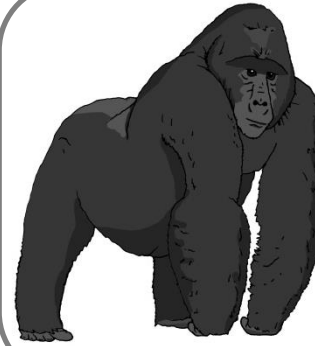
This is a golden lion tamarin. It is very rare and only lives in forests in Brazil, South America. It uses its long fingers to pick insects out of the bark of trees. It also eats snails, lizards, fruit and leaves. It has beautiful golden fur which frames its black face in a similar way to the mane of a lion. Tamarins live mainly in the trees and usually give birth to two young ones.



This is a howler monkey. It lives in the top of the forest canopy of South America where it forages for its favourite leaves, fruit and flowers. The howler monkey has thick hair which can be black, brown or red in colour. It makes a loud booming call to warn other monkeys not to invade its territory. The calls of an adult male can be heard up to three miles away.



This is a tiger. It is the biggest animal in the cat family. The tiger's orange fur with black stripes helps it to blend with its surroundings. Each tiger has its own pattern of stripes. Tigers live in Asia, some in cold places and many in the jungle. It eats meat and hunts and kills smaller animals like deer, antelopes and wild pigs. Tigers give birth to two or three cubs at a time. Cubs may be born in a den among rocks, tall grass or tree roots.



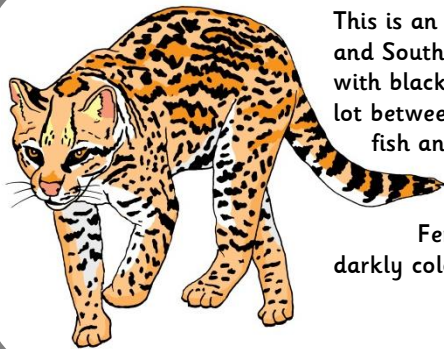
This is a gorilla. It is the largest ape. It lives only in central Africa near the Equator. The gorilla is covered by thick black or brown hair. It mainly eats plants and really likes young juicy shoots of grass. It sometimes eats worms, ants or other insects. Gorillas do not drink water as they get all the liquid they need from the plants they eat. It spends a lot of time sleeping! Female gorillas have one baby. A mother gorilla will usually have three children in her lifetime, spaced about four years apart.



This is a giant anteater. It lives in South America. It eats ants and termites. The anteater uses a really long tongue to eat and can eat up to 30,000 ants a day! It has coarse hair which is grey or brown and a long bushy tail. If it finds ripe fruit on the floor, it may also eat that. A female anteater gives birth to one young one which will ride on its mother's back for up to a year.



This is a toucan. It is covered in black and white feathers and has a very big, bright orange beak which is mainly used to pick and peel fruit. It also eats some insects, frogs and reptiles. It lives in the treetops of South America. However, it does not fly well and often hops between trees. It can only fly short distances. It nests in holes in trees and usually lays between two and four eggs.



This is an ocelot. It lives in the rainforests of Central and South America. Its fur is reddish brown in colour with black spots and rosettes, this can vary quite a lot between animals. The ocelot eats small mammals, fish and frogs. It also takes to the trees to catch monkeys and birds. The ocelot is nocturnal, only active once it gets dark. Female ocelots have litters of two or three darkly coloured kittens.



This is a hummingbird. It is a tiny, colourful bird which lives throughout North, Central and South America but mainly in the tropics. There are more than 300 different types of hummingbird. It drinks nectar from flowers using its long beak. Its wings have to flap very fast so that it can hover to feed. Occasionally it will eat small insects. It makes its tiny nest in trees or bushes and usually lays between one and three eggs.

Rainforest Creatures

Complete this table with ✓. (AF2)

Name of creature	Eats plants or fruit (or parts of these)	Eats other creatures	Lives in Africa	Lives in South America	Lives in North America	Lives in Central America	Lives in Asia	Striped or spotted coat for camouflage	Lays eggs
tiger									
gorilla									
giant anteater									
toucan									
ocelot									
hummingbird									
golden lion tamarin									
howler monkey									
chimpanzee									
piranha fish									
spider monkey									
sloth									
jaguar									
tapir									
oragutan									
anaconda									
caiman									

Why has the writer put the information in boxes? (AF4)

What does the anteater use to help it eat? (AF2)

Do you think all birds pick and peel fruit in the same way that a toucan does? (AF3)

Why do you think that the ocelot has a spotted coat? (AF3)

Why is a table like that above a good way to present information? (AF4)

How do you think that the howler monkey got its name? (AF3)

Why do you think that the ocelot hunts at night? (AF3)

In which ways is the howler monkey similar to the spider monkey? (AF2/AF7)

Why do you think that it is only when piranhas are in large groups that they attack large animals? (AF3)

Why are orangutans becoming very rare? (AF2)

What do you think could be done to help them? (AF6/AF7)

Which creatures make the rivers of South America dangerous places in which to swim? (AF2/AF3/AF7)