

## Cotton-top Tamarin Station

<b>Habitat Station/Topic-</b> Cotton-top Tamarin
<b>Theme-</b> Cotton-top tamarins are critically endangered due to deforestation and the illegal pet trade and we can help by being environmentally aware consumers.
<b>Tangibles/Intangibles/Universal Concepts-</b> Tangibles- maps, tamarins in their habitat, globe Intangibles- conservation, endangered Universal Concepts- family, survival, care
<b>Intended Audience-</b> primarily families with children visiting the zoo
<b>Goal-</b> To share the natural history of cotton-top tamarins, their family structure, their arboreal habitat, the threats to their habitat, and current efforts to protect them.
<b>Objective-</b> Guests will understand the importance of a healthy habitat for the survival of cotton-top tamarins, and that deforestation has a significantly negative impact on that habitat. Guests will also understand that by making environmentally conscious purchases, they can help slow the rate of deforestation. 60% of guests will show an interest in making more eco-friendly choices by scanning the QR code linking to Projeto Titi or the palm oil app.
<b>Biofacts or Other Resources to be Used</b> Globe to point out Colombia Map Sample of food? Object to illustrate weight Pictures showing babies on back
<b>CONTENT</b>
<b>Introduction-</b> Hello! Would you like to learn more about our cotton-top family? We have the mom and dad, 4 older siblings, and two new babies that were born in early January 2022. (point out the babies if you can, mom has a bent tail, it is hard to tell the others apart)
<b>Natural History-</b> <b>Range-</b> Northwest Colombia <b>Habitat-</b> dry deciduous forests, rainforest, open woodlands <b>Diet (Wild):</b> Omnivore-insects, fruits, flowers, nectar, small animals, plant sap <b>Diet (Zoo):</b> Callitrichid gel, fruit, vegetables, insects, flowers <b>Weight:</b> 260-380 g <b>Behavior:</b> Tamarins live in family groups, typically of 2-9 individuals. They are diurnal and arboreal. They spend a lot of time social grooming to strengthen bonds. They have a wide variety of calls that are most likely related to food. Tamarins are matriarchal. The dominant female is usually larger than the male and has authority over her mate and other members of the group. Tamarins are monogamous (“mate for life” or “long term pair bonds”), and will usually have offspring (usually twins) twice a year. The babies each weight 15-20% of the mother’s weight. Older siblings and the male help rear the young.

**Adaptations:** Tamarins are extremely agile and are good climbers and jumpers. They spend most of their time in trees. They have long tails for balance, and claws rather than nails to help them climb. Their arboreal lifestyle helps protect them from predators.

### Conservation Messages/Action Steps

Cotton-top tamarins are critically endangered (ICUN Red List), and fewer than 6000 individuals remain in the wild. The main reason for this is habitat loss due to deforestation for development and farming. Dams along rivers are also changing the habitat. This species has legal protections both internationally and in their native Colombia. Consumers around the world can help slow deforestation by purchasing choosing items that are made from responsibly sourced, such as those certified by the Rainforest Alliance, and paper products made using recycled pulp. You can also reduce deforestation in your diet by reducing meat intake and palm oil usage by reading labels. Cotton-top tamarins and other small primates are being removed from the wild for the illegal pet trade. It is illegal to own a tamarin as a pet, but the law is rarely enforced. Fundacion Proyecto Titi works to educate the public on cotton-top tamarin's endangered status, the effects of keeping tamarins as pets, protecting habitat, and creating sustainable partnerships with locals.

**Conclusion-** I hope you now have a better understanding of these amazing little primates and how important it is to protect their home.

### Suggested Script

(This is an example, please make it your own! There are likely to be questions, answer them as you go)

Hello! Would you like to learn more about our cotton-top family? We have the mom and dad, 3 older siblings, and two new babies that were born in early January 2022. (point out the babies if you can, mom has a bent tail, it is hard to tell the others apart)

Some people call cotton-top tamarins "the cutest monkeys in South America". Cotton-top tamarins are native to northwest Colombia, and live in dry forests and rainforests. They are arboreal, which means they spend most of their time in the trees. This also helps protect them from predators. They have long tails that help them balance, they have claws that help them grip, and they are great jumpers and climbers.

They are omnivores, and here at the zoo they eat a special gel just for tamarins, fruit, vegetables, insects, and flowers. They make a variety of calls (squeaks, clicks, alarm calls), and most of them are likely related to food.

Fun Facts: Did you know that they live in family groups of 2-9 individuals, and the mom is the one in charge? In Colombia, they are called titi (tee-tee).

As cute as tamarins are, that is part of the reason that they are critically endangered. There are less than 6000 individuals in the wild, but cotton-top tamarins and other small primate species are still being taken from the wild for the illegal pet trade, despite the fact that there are Colombian and international laws prohibiting it. Proyecto Titi works to educate the public on cotton-top tamarin's endangered status, the effects of keeping tamarins as pets, protecting habitat, and creating sustainable partnerships with locals. (If you would like more information, feel free to scan this QR code.)

The main reason that cotton-top tamarins are endangered is habitat loss due to deforestation for farming and human development. This species has legal protections both internationally and in their native Colombia.

Consumers around the world can help slow deforestation by purchasing choosing items that are made from responsibly sourced, such as those certified by the Rainforest Alliance, and paper products made using recycled pulp. You can also reduce deforestation in your diet by reducing meat intake and palm oil usage by reading labels. (This QR

code will take you to Cheyenne Mountain Zoo's Palm Oil app. It provides information about better-for-the-environment choices.)

Thank you for stopping! I hope you now have a better understanding of these amazing little primates and how important it is to protect their home. If you have any questions, please let me know! Enjoy the rest of your visit!

Notes:

The new Disney movie "Encanto" is set in Colombia. You may have some guests make the connection (and start singing "We Don't Talk About Bruno").

Current group (as of 2/2022):

Mom (with bent tail)

Dad

Female born May 2019

2 males born October 2020

2 undetermined sex born January 2022

In addition:

2 females born October 2018- now at other zoos

Male born May 2019- now at another zoo (female litter mate is still here)