

# Amazon rainforest

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Amazon Rainforest I am an explorer and I just returned from an expedition to the Amazon rainforest. The Amazon rainforest was amazing and there lots of facts that I would like to tell you about: [pic]The Rainforest grow around the equator. The hot, steamy conditions are perfect for plants. [pic]In fact, rainforests contain the largest diversity of plant and animal life on earth; many species are still unidentified. Rainforests form distinct layers, providing homes for animals at all levels. [pic]The Amazon rainforest is the world's largest remaining natural resource that now represents 54% of the total rainforest left on earth. pic]More than 20% of earth's oxygen is produced in this area the name of that area is called 'lungs of the planet'. [pic]An estimated number of 2, 700 million acres of the rainforest are burned each year. [pic]The rainforest is one of the wettest but hottest places on earth. August is the Amazon's driest month. [pic]In the southeast of England, the temperature in January is about 5°C, where as in the Amazon it is about 28°C. [pic]The total number of tree species is estimated to be about 2500. The total numbers of plants are about 40. 000. The Amazon insects are about 2. 5 million species.

There are 7500 species of butterflies and 50 species of ants are found in a single tree. [pic]Over 500 mammals, 175 lizards and over 300 other reptiles species, and one third of the world's birds live in Amazonia. Map of the Amazon rainforest The Amazon rainforest covers the area of 2. 5 million square miles, and taken up nine countries of Brazil: Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia and the Guiana's, Guyana, French Guiana and Suriname. Tropical rainforests are located around the equator where

temperatures stay near 80 degrees year round. Rainforest receive 160 to 400 inches of rain each year.

Today, rapid deforestation threatens the Amazon's forests. At current rates, 25 percent of its original forests are projected to be destroyed by 2020, it will be a disaster. Climate This is a climate graph showing temperature and precipitation that happens yearly. The rainfall in January to March is increasing then it falls to May from 310mm to 250 mm. The rainfall then decreases to 110mm, and then it goes back down to August by 60mm. The precipitation level ascends to December by 170mm. There was lots of rainfall in between January and May, its like monsoon in India.

The temperature starts in January at the level of 130 degrees Celsius, and then it drops to 110 degrees Celsius. Temperature increased to 140 degrees Celsius in April and May. Then it went up to 150 degrees Celsius in July, afterwards it shoots up to 290 degrees Celsius in September and 300 degrees Celsius in October. The temperature drops right down to 200 degrees Celsius in December. The temperature rose and the rainforest were really hot in between August and November. As I was exploring the rainforest I noticed that it is very hot, wet and sticky- very humid. I was covered with sweat and my boots were all sticky with mud.

Another thing is that it rains everyday, so regularly that you could set your watch by it. The eastern horizon becomes suddenly black, and then wind rushes through the forest, a vivid flash of lightening, a crash of thunder and finally the downpour of rain. The next day the sun rises- spring summer autumn as it were in one tropical day. There is one type of rainfall, which is called convectional rainfall, which means that the sun heats the ground,

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which heats the air nearest the ground causing it to expand and rise. Storms are common with convectional rainfall. The Amazon rainforest gets nine feet of rain every year.

Amazon Animals Birds Rainforests contain the richest variety of the world's birds. From the emergent layer, fast-flying predators, such as eagles and hawks, descend on forest animals. The canopy is home to birds such as hornbills, parrots, and toucans, which feed on fruit and small animals. On the forest floor birds scratch at the soil for insects and plant roots. Here are the three animals that I saw during my expedition. Sloth I saw the sloth, there were lots of them hanging in the trees. They are very unique mammals and I found them in the canopy layer. There are six to seven species of them.

They are divided up into two groups: the two-toed sloth, three-toed sloth. Three-toed sloths live on cecropia leaves but two-toed sloths live high in the canopy feeding on a wide variety of leaves and fruits. They are very slow and lazy animals that live in trees. Sloths spend most of their time hanging upside down from the tree branches. They sleep, mate, eat and give birth to a baby hanging upside down. They hold onto the branches with their strong sharp curved claws that are on each of their feet, which adapt to the environment they are living. They can't stand upright because of the large claws.

In their forest habitat, however, their hook-like claws provide a far more reliable grip on tree branches than the grip of a normal fist. Sloths have a thick brown and slightly greenish fur coat. Sloths are about a size of a cat. They are short, flat head, big eyes, a short tail, long legs and tiny ears. Some sloths have green algae on their fur to camouflage effect and providing some

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nutrients to the sloths, which lick the algae. Their fur goes upside down for rainwater to drip off. Sloths also have adaptations to stay warm! Apparently the sloth's laziness is because of its diet.

They eat only leaves, which are naturally low in energy and they are hard to digest. They sleep to get energy and they sleep about for 20 hours a day. They camouflage to hide from the predators like harpy eagles, anacondas, jaguars and humans. They can live up to 12 years in the wild. They are better at swimming than walking. Anaconda- heaviest snake in the world. Honestly I really hate snakes, but unfortunately I saw an anaconda resting in one of the trees. Luckily it wasn't hungry. It was camouflaged so it cannot be visible. Then I found out that they are the heaviest snakes in the world.

They also known as the water boa, they are giant, semi-aquatic meat-eater lives in swampy areas of tropical South America. The largest anaconda ever measured was almost 28 feet long with a girth of 44 inches. The weight was over 500 lbs. Anacondas are not poisonous but it coils itself around its prey and they crush it. Anaconda could swallow entire cow. The digestion can take up to several days. They feed mostly on capybara, humans (if necessary), fish, and mammals. Anaconda don't use its teeth to chew, it uses it to hold on to its prey to prevent it from escaping. Hummingbirds Awww! The hummingbirds look so cute.

There were lots of them. It was really colourful when they all came together into groups. They are extremely small and brilliantly coloured, their wings beating up to 80 times per second and making an audible buzzing sound as they as they fly. They are incredibly fast and they don't keep still. Hummingbirds require lots of energy. They have the fastest wing beats of

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any bird and their hearts beat up to 1, 260 beats per minute. Hummingbirds may visit 1, 000 flowers per day. For protein, hummingbirds eat spiders and strain gnats from mid-air. They will pull insects out of spider webs including the spider itself.

Sapsucker holes are a double treat, netting both insects and sap! They mainly live in the canopy area. Plants As I researched on plants I discovered that many rainforest trees are tall, with straight trunks with few branches and buttress roots support them. Other plants include epiphytes, such as bromeliads and orchids. Epiphytes use other plants as support, attaching themselves to branches by their roots to reach the light. They trap water and obtain nutrients from plant material that fall on them. Bromeliads have spiky leaves that channel water, leaves and fruit into a pool in the centre; these rot to provide the bromeliad with nutrients.

Structure of the Amazon rainforest trees The Emergent The upper layer can reach up to 60 m above the forest floor. Here the tallest trees of the forest stick out in isolation from the mass of trees below. The emergent layer is home to bats, predatory birds, and fruit eaters such as the sun conure. Emergent trees are the tallest trees in a rain forest canopy, the ones that get the light. When they fall, they help a lot of light reach down onto the forest floor for other trees to finally get their chance to grow. Canopy Between 30-45m above ground level is the canopy.

This dense layer of branches and leaves contains the greatest variety of animal life in the forest. Lianas- woody creepers – reach up to the sunlight of the upper canopy. Plants like Epiphytes grow on canopy trees. A common term for canopy trees is shade trees. A canopy is the outer layer of the tree's

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leaves, and shade trees have a dense canopy that block out the light. Some good canopy trees include: Oaks, maples, ashes, lindens, elms, poplars, beeches, tiliac, tulipwood, tree waratah, birches, golden robinia, crepe myrtle, Japanese crab apple, ornamental pea, flowering plum. Understorey

Shrubs grow in the Understorey layer wherever light squeeze through the canopy. Lizards, such as the common iguana, live here, climbing up tree trunks and feeding on insects and vegetation. The Understorey is the group of small trees, shrubs and vines that grow under the taller trees. These plants can grow in the shade of the taller trees. Understorey trees usually stay short, even if they are very old. Forest floor There are few plants on the dark forest floor, but many small animals such as insects feed on and recycle material that falls from above. Almost no plants grow in this area, as a result.

Since hardly any sun reaches the forest floor things begin to decay quickly. A leaf that might take one year to decompose in a regular climate will disappear in 6 weeks. Leaf-cutter ant use leaves as a compost to grow fungus they feed on. Indian Tribes The kayapo village Traditional Kayapo villages are formed by a circle of houses built around a large cleared area. The houses from the kayapo village are mainly made from materials from the forest. Men work together as a team and a colourful parrot guides the men like where to put the stuff and etc. There are 10 houses altogether.

They are made from palm trees. In the middle of the village there is the men's house. Young and unmarried men go there. They join the senior men to paint their faces and bodies as a tradition and they learn the history of tribes and the daily basis. The river is used for fishing, bathing, cooking and drinking. Fishing is a year-round activity, but it has to be done in the dry

season, when the water level is at its lowest, that fish are caught in large numbers. To achieve this, the Kayapo use timbo vines. The men beat the vines for hours in the water with small clubs (sticks wider at one end).

This decreases the oxygen of the water but this won't poison the fish. The fish won't be able to breathe in the water. Then the fish floats to the other end of the water and the children catches the fish with their bare hands. Then they go back to their village and hand their fish over to their wife, if they are unmarried they will give the fish to their mother or sister. Other foods are grown in the garden where women look after them. The women harvest the family's garden for vegetables. They also prepare body paint with the help of their children. Children play hunting games.

Kayapo learn portugese to help them understand the world around them. They use radios to communicate with the other tribes. Deforestation Deforestation is when the amazon tropical rainforest or any forest which is being cut down at an alarimg rate. It is estimated that 100, 000 species will become extinct in the next 40 years as a result of deforestation. The potential for discovering new foods or medicines from these species will be lost forever. The problem is that the rainforest does not grow back. This is because most of the nutrients which the plants needs to grow are stored in the trees.

Once the trees have been removed, the source of the nutrients diappears. Any goodness that is left in the soil is quickly washed away by the heavy rainfall that happens in this region. There used to be 6 million indigenous people in the amazon rainforest; today there are only 200, 000 left. This is because deforestation is destroying their traditional lands, they have <https://assignbuster.com/amazon-rainforest/>



suffered from diseases brought in by the settlers. If deforestation is not controlled only 28 per cent of the amazon rainforest will be left by 2020. Deforestation is caused by: Agriculture- the forest has been cleared to clear farmland for large estates.

Ranching- a major cause of deforestation is for beef cattle farming. Mining- the amazon is rich in minerals like iron ore, tin and gold - the forest is destroyed by the mines. Dams- the dams provide essential electricity, which is a renewable energy source. However the forest is flooded and wildlife will lose their habitat. Roads- 12, 000 km of roads have been built in the amazon. Conclusion We can help to protect the rainforest by making sure that we do not buy any products that are responsible for trees being cut down. We can also support organisations that protect rainforests such as friends of the earth or greenpeace.

Each year an area of forest slightly larger than trees are cut down, releasing global warming pollution in the form of carbon dioxide and methane from burning and decaying vegetation. Deforestation disturbs the water cycle by allowing water to runoff directly to rivers rather than being trapped in soil and vegetation and slowly released throughout the year. 85% of the Amazon rainforest may be lost due to global warming. By the end of the year the trees had released more than two-thirds of the carbon dioxide they have stored during their lives, helping to act as a break on global warming.

Instead they began accelerating the climate change. These are some steps for saving rainforests which are known as " TREES" Teach others about the importance of the environment and how they can help save rainforests. Restore damaged ecosystems by planting trees on land where forests have

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been cut down. Encourage people to live in a way that doesn't hurt the environment Establish parks to protect rainforests and wildlife Support companies that operate in ways that minimize damage to the environment That was the end to my journey I had a lovely time. I like to go there again.