



JAGUAR NEWS

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Jaguar densities in French Guiana

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The region of the Guiana Shield has recently been identified as a key area for conservation of large terrestrial mammals, including the jaguar. It holds a large jaguar population considered as stable, with frequent dispersals, and habitat of high quality (WCS, 2006). The region nevertheless suffers from a rather limited knowledge of the species. First assessments of densities, using photo-trapping, were implemented in the country in 2007 and 2008. Two sites, located in the northern part of the country and facing light logging pressure, were sampled with a total effort of 3,380 traps/night and 3,312 traps/night, respectively. Data analysis followed classical methods, including identification of animals, assessment of theoretical population size with capture/recapture models, and assessment of effective study area using recapture distances (Silver et al., 2004). At the first site, a total of 27 pictures was obtained, 6 animals were identified. The maximum distances between observations of a single animal ranged from 3.4 to 10.8 km, the calculated density was 3.3 adults / 100 km². At the second site, a total of 44 pictures was obtained, 9 animals were identified, resulting in



Jaguar on an old logging track. Picture by B. de Thoisy / Kwata NGO.



Both of our study sites are used for low impact and selective logging, with a mean of 3-7 m³ of wood extracted per hectare. Picture by B. de Thoisy / Kwata NGO.

a calculated density of 4.9 adults / 100 km².

These two sites have no legal protection status and face low-impact logging, associated with a moderate hunting pressure mainly for subsistence among small Amerindian and bush Negro communities. This study is the first one implemented in the northern Amazonian basin, consequently only little information is available for comparison. The densities of jaguars in French Guiana are roughly within the ranges reported in central and southern South America (Noss et al., 2006). Low-impact practices of logging in French Guiana result in rather limited pressures on habitats, in comparison to logging activities elsewhere in South America. Further, on both sites, the logged forests are contiguous to southern pristine areas. Consequently, large vertebrate populations of both preys and predators can persist. Indeed, densities of pumas were also calculated, and ranged between 4.2 and 7.7 adults/100 km². Nevertheless, at the country scale, although large-scale deforestation is limited, increased illegal gold-mining activities during the last decade (Hammond et al. 2007) is still not mitigated, and may threaten wildlife status in many areas.

This study has been implemented with the support of the Wildlife Conservation Society (Jaguar Conservation Small Grants program) and is now part of the project SPECIES, funded by WWF Network, European Funds (FEDER), FFEM, the DGIS and the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research.

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[ARTICLE]

Jaguars at the Crossroads of the Continents

By Jacalyn Willis, Ph. D., Montclair State University, New Jersey, USA, squirrelmsu@yahoo.com

I was excited to see jaguar photos from our camera-traps after 60,000 photos of other animals. I have run a mammal census since 1983 on Barro Colorado Island (BCI), Panama. In 1994, my husband, Gregory Willis, set up cameras at our research site to learn about ocelots and their prey, and to supplement trail transects with data on elusive and nocturnal species.



This jaguar on Barro Colorado Island in April and May of 2009 remained unseen by the many workers who do research there. Photo taken by Reconyx camera-trap of Jacalyn and Gregory Willis.



Jacalyn Willis setting a camera-trap. Photo credit: Gregory Willis

In 1983, Greg saw a jaguar on BCI. It stopped on the trail ahead of him, and provided the first evidence of a jaguar on the island since 1924. The next jaguar sighting on BCI was in 1993. Although the island is only 16 Km², and 200 meters from the mainland of the Panama Canal Zone, it is difficult to observe the 5 feline species found there. No one has seen the recent jaguar, although our cameras show that it spent at least 12 days on BCI.

BCI lies in the center of the canal that divides the continents, and is a crucial location for maintaining gene flow for jaguars, yet no one knows how many jaguars are in Panama. Human hunting pressure on jaguars is very severe, even in national parks. It is clear that they exist at very low densities right now. We fear that if hunting is not stopped in the next few years, the population will be unable to recover to its natural level.

My colleagues Ricardo Moreno and Aida Bustamante did two years of camera-trapping in the Darien area in eastern Panama and found just four jaguars in an area of almost 300 Km². They interviewed hunters and found that jaguars are under great pressure from humans who hunt jaguars with dogs and compete with jaguars for the same prey. Greg and I have set up camera-trapping locations in other critical habitats in Panama to provide convincing data to push for stronger conservation efforts.

A1 Team Brazil announced Jaguar Conservation Fund its official charity



Brazil's A1GP car with Jaguar Conservation Fund logo on the front.
Photo Credit: A1GP

A1GP Media Release

The A1 Grand Prix World Cup of Motorsport (A1GP) is an officially renowned annual car race with international participation. Brazil is one of the 20 nations participating in the 2008/09 A1GP, represented by the driver Felipe Guimarães. On the first of May 2009, just before the final weekend of 2008/09 A1GP in London, the A1 Team Brazil announced an official charity for the team– the Jaguar Conservation Fund (Instituto Onça-Pintada).

The partnership, which will continue into the 2009/10 season, aims at promoting awareness of the jaguar and its plight as an endangered species in Brazil.

The Jaguar Conservation Fund logo already appeared on the Brazilian car during the race at Brands Hatch, London, on May 4th (see picture), and will continue to appear throughout next season. The team will sport a fluffy jaguar in the pit lane as its mascot.

Read more: <http://www.theautochannel.com/news/2009/05/01/459123.html>

[PICTURE OF THE MONTH]



In June 2008, at about 12:00 am we were driving along the dike of the Samuel hydroelectric dam bordering the Samuel Ecological Station in Cadeias do Jamari, Rondônia state, Brazil, when we saw some dark dots on the horizon. We took a picture and zoomed in on the dots – it was the jaguars. We drove closer to take a better picture and from a distance of about 200 m, we obtained this photograph, probably a female jaguar with her two cubs.

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If you have a picture catching a glimpse of a jaguar's life in the wild and want to distribute it through our newsletter, please send it to jaguar@jaguar.org.br with a description of the location, date and credits of the picture.

If you don't want to receive this newsletter, please send a cancellation email to jaguar@jaguar.org.br

The Jaguar Conservation Fund is not responsible for the content of texts written by members of other institutions.

"Our mission is to promote the conservation of the jaguar, its natural prey and habitat throughout the species geographical range, as well as its peaceful coexistence with man through research, management and conservation strategies."

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