

# **The Amazon Rainforest**

## **Introduction**

The Amazon Rainforest is a large tropical rainforest occupying the drainage basin of the Amazon River and its tributaries in northern South America and covering an area of 2,300,000 square miles (6,000,000 square km). It is a stunning area that gives us so much more than interesting plants and animals to learn about, it also gives the Earth a lot of its oxygen! Its forest stretches from the Atlantic Ocean in the east to the tree line of the Andes in the west. The immense extent and great continuity of this rainforest is a reflection of the high rainfall, high humidity, and monotonously high temperatures that prevail in the region.

## **Where is the Amazon Rainforest Found?**

The Amazon Rainforest is found in South America, and it goes across many countries such as Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Colombia. This amazing forest is over 2.2 million square miles large and it is the largest tropical rainforest in the world. If you would lay the Amazon out over the United States, it would cover over half of it!

## **What Kinds of Plants Grow in the Amazon Rainforest?**

There are many types of rare plants that live in the Amazon Rainforest- around 40,000 different kinds to be exact!

Some of the most common types of trees that can be found in the rainforest are the Brazil-nut tree, palm trees, and even trees that only grow on other trees, called epiphytes.

It is also home to vines, moss, and ferns. Because the rainforest is already such a harsh environment for plants, they cannot afford to be attacked or eaten by animals, too.

Many types of plants have adapted to give off poisonous toxins if an animal should come to close, using it to protect themselves from danger.

## **What Kinds of Animals Live There?**

One of the things that the Amazon Rainforest is most known for is its huge variety of animals, including mammals, birds, fish, and insects. It is home to 3,000 different kinds of fish and close to 3 million types of insects!

We hope you brought your bug net!

Some common animals that live in the rainforest are jaguars, howler monkeys, sloths, anacondas, alligators, and apes. With the large amount of animals that live in the same area, they have each adapted to living in different levels of the forest floor and trees in order to protect themselves and hide from predators. Not all of the animals that live in the Amazon Rainforest are friendly, however. In fact, a lot of them are extremely dangerous or poisonous.

Some of these types of animals include electric eels, flesh-eating piranhas, poisonous dart frogs, and even venomous snakes.

One of the deadliest animals that lives in the rainforest is the Pirarucu. This is a type of meat-eating fish that devours other fish and can grow up to 10 feet long. Not only is this fish about as long as a car, it also has razor-sharp teeth on the roof of its mouth and its tongue! That is one set of teeth I'm sure the dentist doesn't want to see!

## **Do People Live in the Amazon Rainforest?**

While the Amazon Rainforest is mainly made up of plants and animals, there are some people that call this beautiful place home.

It is thought that between 400 or 500 different groups of native tribes live in the forest, with over 50 groups of them never having met people outside of their tribe!

The Yanumami Tribe is believed to be as large as 35,000 dwelling together in large circular houses. This traditional tribe is very different from the Huli Tribe, where it is believed only 10% of its population of approximately 65,000, live traditionally. The largest of the tribes is the Pygmy Tribe with around half a million in population. This tribe are very distinctive because they are small in stature, although this does help them in the rainforest environment.

### **Conclusion**

The Amazon Rainforest is one of the most fascinating ecosystems, where plants and animals work together to create a habitat.

Did you know that The Amazon Rainforest has many dangerous animals, like poison dart frogs, venomous snakes, and meat-eating fish? That it produces 20% of the world's oxygen and is an amazing place that is full of millions of trees, unique plants, beautiful animals, and poisonous predators.