

Project Update: January 2007

After eight months of camera trapping, spoor tracking and hunting harvest recording in Amacayacu National Park (ANP), we have concluded the protected area sampling phase in Colombian Amazonia. We registered twice the number of jaguars expected, more ocelots than imagined but less pumas and dozens of prey species, with particular high numbers of lowland tapir. This indicates that the habitat is well conserved and that the park has been effective an effective conservation tool. Tikuna hunting is done by few people from the villages, mainly mature male adults, who hunt for subsistence and sell some of the meat to their neighbors. Analysis of hunting harvest data will allow to evaluate impact and sustainability of hunting and possible future trends in the food security of indigenous peoples who depend on wild meat as their only protein source. In their hands lies the fate of the jaguar. This month we begin the unprotected are sampling in order to compare with data from ANP.



Registering indigenous hunting harvest. We work closely with indigenous subsistence hunters to register their harvest. Several characteristics such as effort, frequency, and type of prey are collected. This data will allow to evaluate impact and sustainability of hunting and possible future trends in the food security of indigenous people who depend on wild meat as their only protein source. Pictures by E. Payan.



The PI changing film roll and batteries to one of the cameras. Camera traps operating in the Amazon, under extreme heat and humidity must be checked maximum every ten days to also replace saturated silica gel desiccant cushions and re-seal with silicone on the outside. This requires a significant logistical challenge in a 70 square km are with 20 camera stations. Picture by S. Durant.



Tracking large mammals. Another mammal presence capturing method is through tracks and sign. Tracks, scrapes, carcasses and faeces compose the various sign registered. Here, you can see Jenny Gallo, a Colombian biology undergraduate and the PI, collecting jaguar faeces which are a specially informative type of track sign it also indicate diet habits of the host. Jenny is doing her thesis with the project. Picture by S. Durant.



N'wira. The first jaguar (*Panthera onca*) caught on camera by the project, an adult healthy male posing for us. He is called N'wira which in the Tikuna language means "the first one". He was still roaming our study area by December 2006. This is the first wild jaguar caught by camera traps for Colombia. Picture by E. Payan.



Ocelot walking by night. Ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*) double the number of jaguars in the study site, they seem to have recovered well from the slaughter they suffered in the decades of the 60's and 70's caused by the fur coat demand from Europe and the U. S. A. Picture by E. Payan.



Puma (*Puma concolor*). In eight months of camera trapping pumas only appeared in pictures from two separate weeks, although with several photos each. Their behavior is a mystery, although they apparently avoid temporal and spatial overlap with jaguars.