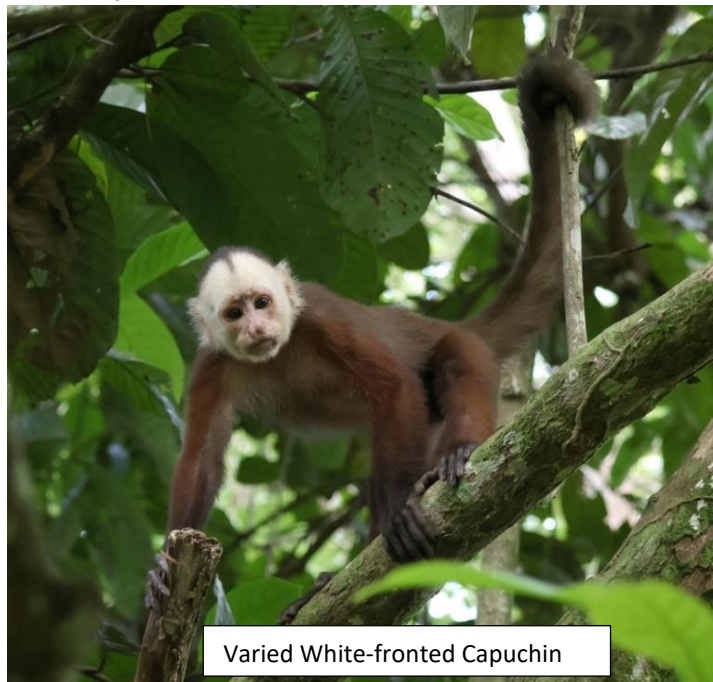


Primate paradise in central Colombia (november 2023)

Alex Schouten and Jeannette den Hertog

With about 40 species of primates Colombia was on our watchlist for some time. But... we don't speak Spanish and the safety situation in the country was unclear to us. According to the Dutch government parts of Colombia are a no go area and off course these areas are the most interesting for primate lovers as we are. After reading the trip report of Rob and Romy Jansen on mammalwatching.com, who spent 3 months in the country as part of their sabbatical of 2,5 years, we decided to get in contact with them. We also got in contact with a French primate guide who lives in the southern part of Colombia (Putu Mayo). They both convinced us it was safe (enough) for tourists to visit the Putumayo (south Colombia) and the area around San José de Guaviare (Cerro Azul) and we decided to give it a go! To make a long story short: it was a very successful trip with 20 species of primates seen!



We always organize our primate trips ourselves because we like to travel at a leisurely pace and occasionally take a relax day. We asked Wild about Colombia to organize the part to Cerro Azul (area of San Jose del Guaviare) for us because it is not easy to find accommodation there and the condition of the road towards Cerro Azul was unclear to us. But they told us they only wanted to organize a complete trip and not just a part of it. So we organized the entire trip ourselves and afterwards we are happy that we took that decision as Colombia is an easy country to travel, the people are friendly and helpful, it's safe and the language barrier is virtually non-existent because Google Translate does the job well.

Getting around

Colombia is a large country and traveling overland is slow, especially if you travel west-east. You then cross mountain ranges and the road winds continuously. Only in the north-south direction the roads are straight(er) because they run in the valleys between the mountain ranges. The travel time is difficult to predict because there are regular road works, where they easily close the road for half an hour.... The quality of the main roads is good to excellent, but as soon as you leave the main roads, this changes. Always inform about the quality of the minor road when you leave the tarmac and take a dirt road.

When you have to travel big distances a domestic flight may be a good idea. For the Putumayo part of our trip we flew from Bogota to Puerto Asis as the 750 km from Bogota takes more than 15 hours to drive. After our visits to the Putumayo and El Encanto Nature Reserve (cool climate, lots of birds and a slight chance to see Woolly Monkey) we flew back to Bogota from Pitalito, rented a car (Suzuki Vitara via Localiza) and did everything by car for the remaining 4 weeks. Driving is easy in Colombia if you are able to skip rush hours in the big cities. We recommend Localiza as the car was excellent and the process of picking up and dropping off the car was efficient with no hidden costs.

Before you continue reading: in contrast to the authors of most trip reports on this website, we are no fanatic mammal watchers. We organize the trips ourselves, take it easy, stay at least 3 or 4 nights at every location and our focus is on primates. In Colombia we also visited some places in the mountains to escape the heat of the tropical lowlands and relax for a few days. That is the reason we don't add a detailed itinerary to this report. But in the end we saw nearly all the diurnal primate species we wanted to see, so the trip was very successful!

PLACES VISITED AND PRIMATES SEEN

For coordinates of most of the reserves we refer to the excellent report of Rob and Romy Jansen.

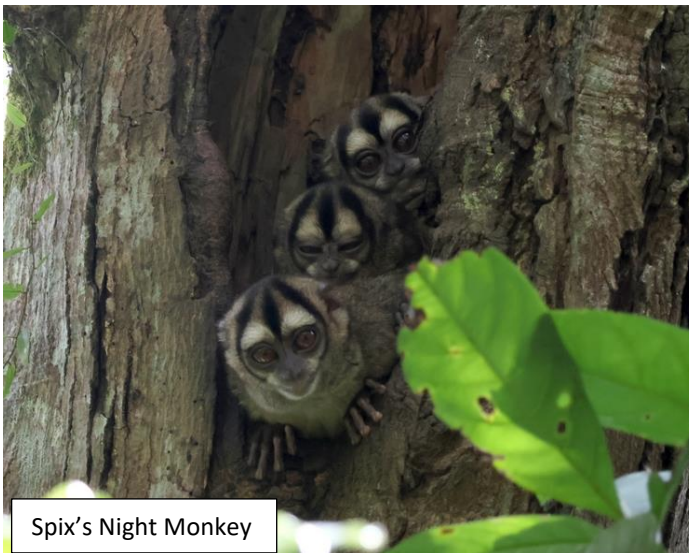
1. KOFAN Centro Ecoturistico

A small nature reserve located just 5 km from the city Puerto Asis. We stayed here 4 nights and enjoyed every minute. The cottages are spacious, they have a good bathroom and wifi. It's a walk of a few minutes from the cottages to the restaurant where they have very good veggie food, the best of the trip. All the staff is very friendly and helpful. The cottages are not cheap (around 80 USD incl. breakfast), but the nature trail is for free if you stay at Kofan and you can make use of the (big) swimming pool, which is a treat during the heat of the day. You can make a reservation by Whatsapp (+57 322 4225 925, only Spanish).

This is probably the best place to see the **Spix's Night Monkey**. You can see it along the (short) nature trail, where there is a sign near their sleeping tree. **Ecuadorian Squirrel Monkeys** and **Lesson's Saddle-back Tamarins** can be found in the nature reserve as well. A family of tamarins even sleeps in the kitchen of the restaurant and when there is a downpour both primates species hide under the roof of the restaurant. So within a few hours we had 3 primates species in this nature reserve 😊.



Lesson's Saddle-back Tamarin



Spix's Night Monkey



Ecuadorian Squirrel Monkey

2. Amazon Birds

This nature reserve, which is bigger than KOFAN, is located about 1,5 km south of KOFAN. There is a sign along the road, but it's a bit inconspicuous. We contacted Yolima Moriel, which runs the place with her brother Fleyder, by whatsapp (+57 3152071050). We paid 75000 COP per person for a guided walk in the morning, including a kind of small breakfast. Yolima is a very friendly lady, but is not very experienced with birds and primates. But... we had a great morning in the reserve with her: the walking trail is flat and almost entirely shaded and we spotted some primate species. Amazon Birds is a very good place to see the **Western Pygmy Marmosets**, one of the smallest primates on this planet. They live near a big tree which is full of small holes where they eat the gum. One of those trees is just a 5 minute walk from the entrance and ... the marmosets were at home. Amazon Birds puts fruits on a small plateau, which attracts insects. In addition to gum, marmosets also eat insects. We went into the forest to search for other primates. We first encountered **Ecuadorian Squirrel Monkeys** and **Lesson's Saddle-back Tamarins** and after a while we spotted a family of Titi's. But... not a clear **Medem's titi's** with black hands and feet and neither a clear



Western Pygmy Marmoset

Yellow-handed Titi (or Lucifer's Titi) with yellow hands and feet. No, the titi we spotted had greyish hands! According to the maps in different sources (website IUCN, Larger Mammals of South America etc) there should be no overlap in the range of these two species. But in Dondé se Oculata el Sol (site number 3 in this report) both species live close together and probably interbreed. Our grey-handed Titi could also be the result of interbreeding, an interesting situation.... After the kind of disappointment about the grey hands of the titi spotted, we heard a strange call, some movement in the trees and there was a **Miller's Saki**! Pretty rare in this reserve, but the picture is clear. So we could add another 2 species of primates on the second day of our trip in Colombia. So already 5,5 species of primate in 2 days!



Hybrid Medem's x Yellow-handed Titi ?



Miller's Saki (young male?)

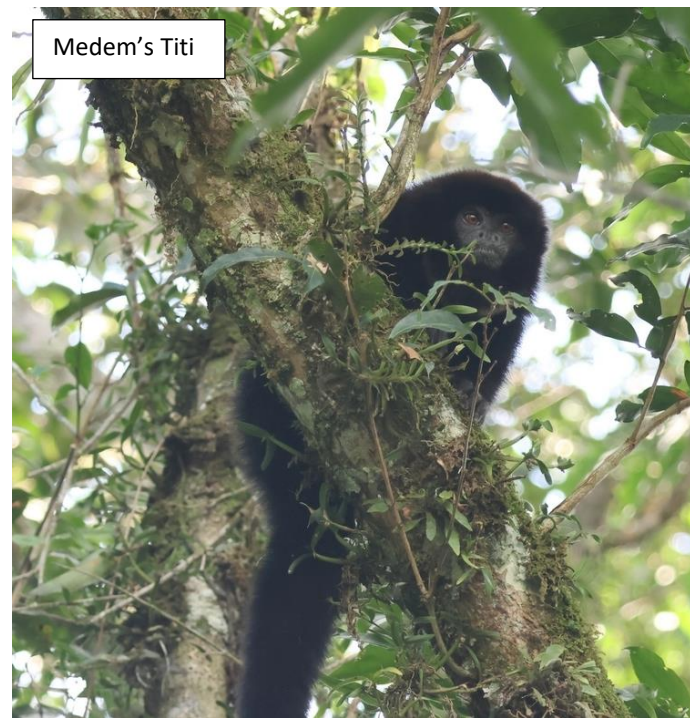
3. Reserva Natural Dondé se Oculata el Sol

This nature reserve is a 1,5 hour drive from KOFAN. There are 2 places to stay at the edge of the reserve:

- Posada Ecológica Portal del Sol. This accommodation has an idyllic setting on a small slope at the edge of the rainforest. Although it's a 20 minute walk to the entrance of the reserve, we decided to stay here. The owners are very very friendly and helpful and we had an excellent stay. The owner will bring you and the luggage from the main road to the posada with his motorbike (distance of less than 1 km). And if you want to have an early start at the entrance of the reserve he will bring you with his motorbike. So the accommodation is a bit more remote, but very nice. From the posada there is a trail which takes you immediately into the forest. The owner had built a lookout tower close to the posada. We spent 1 afternoon there with (primate) guide Corentin and saw a nice range of birds, but no mammals.
- Alojamiento Donde Se Oculata el Sol. This accommodation is situated at the entrance of the reserve and you can drive with a car to the restaurant/main building. The cabins are located at a short distance from the main building. You can find it on google maps and the accommodation can be booked through the primate guide Corentin (...) or through the website of booking.com.



We contacted primate guide Corentin (+57 313 5362852) beforehand because we had a lot of questions about the safety situation, the accommodation, the primates, the logistics etc etc. He is a French guy who lives in the nearby city of Mocoa and speaks English. An interesting combination. Corentin answered all our questions and also gave information about other places. What a nice guy! The first morning we made a walk in the forest with him, but no primates were seen. Late in the afternoon Corentin checked a small forest patch right beside the road and yes... a family of **Medem's (or Colombian Black-handed) titi's** with clearly black hands and feet were preparing for the night. So the plan for the next morning was clear: be there at dawn and hopefully the titi's will give a nice concert at sunrise. And yes, the next morning they did and we listened to their somewhat strange song for about 15 minutes. After the concert they started to move and by using overhanging branches they crossed the road and disappeared into the forest. We walked along the unsealed road with Corentin and saw a nice family of **Western Pygmy Marmosets** near a small river and had breakfast at the Alojamiento Donde Se Oculta el Sol. What a nice morning it was! Back at our pousada we took a rest during the heat of the day. A few times **Lesson's Saddle-back Tamarins** were feeding behind the kitchen of the posada. In the afternoon we walked the trail into the forest, which starts behind our room. We saw 3 species of primates all within 15 minutes of walking: **Medem's titi's**, **Ecuadorian Squirrel Monkeys** and **Black-capped Capuchins**.



So we had 5 species of primates out of the 8 species which occur in the reserve, a reasonable score. We didn't see the Colombian Red Howler Monkey, the Miller's Saki and the Yellow-handed Titi. But.... the accommodation is perfect, Corentin is a great guy and guide, it's not touristic and even with 'just' 5 species of primate we really liked this place! A potential hotspot for ecotourism.

According to Corentin it's possible to find some more primate species in the Putumayo on top of the 8 species in the Reserva Natural Dondé se Oculata el Sol:

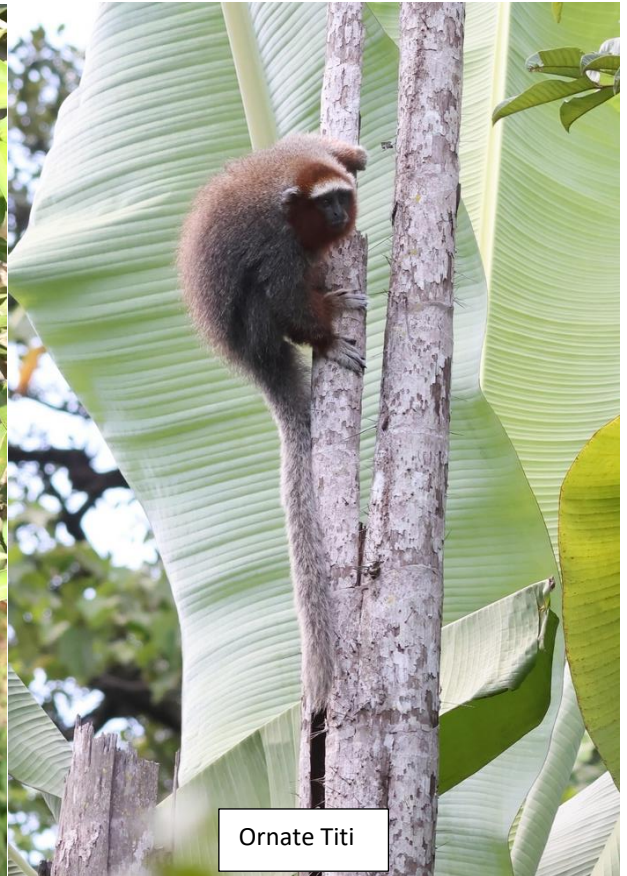
- the **Red Titi Monkey**, close to the border of Ecuador. This species has a pretty big distribution area and the southern tip of Colombia is the northern end of their distribution. The safety situation close to the border with Ecuador was not very good at the time of our visit, so we decided not to go to that area.
- The **Caquetá Titi Monkey** (see 'species missed' at the end of this report).
- **Woolly Monkey**. It's possible to make a boat trip from Puerto Asis to the Tangara reserve, but the guy who runs this tour asked a steep price for a day trip (around 200 USD per person) and we decided not to do the boat trip on the Caquetá River. You can ask Corentin about the trip. Rob and Romy spotted Woolly Monkeys on La Isla Escondida, see their report.

4. Palmarum Lodge (+57 301 2826262, Cesar is the owner)
This lodge is situated about 170 km south of the big city of Villavicencio. It was a bit of a gamble to stay here for 4 nights because it is not frequented visited by mammal or primate watchers. The lodge itself is basic, but nice. They only have 2 rooms on the first floor and the bathroom (which is a separate building on the ground floor) is shared with the family that runs the lodge. The most tricky thing is to get to the lodge. From Vista Hermosa most of the road (20 km) is a good gravel road. But... you have to cross 2 streams. When there has been no rain, crossing these streams with a Suzuki Vitara is OK. But just after a





Colombian Squirrel Monkey



Ornate Titi

(big) storm they will be impassable and you have to wait until the water level in the river drops to normal levels again. So our advice is to leave the car in or close to Vista Hermosa and be picked up by the Landcruiser of the owner of the Palmarum lodge. At the lodge you don't need a car to see the primates. From the lodge you can walk to a nice waterfall (Cascadas de Caño union) in 1 to 1,5 hours. Along the way we saw **Black-capped capuchins**, **Colombian Red Howler Monkey** and **Colombian Squirrel Monkey**. Near the waterfall there is a chance to see Woolly Monkeys, but they didn't show up. On the way back we had lunch at the house of the mother of Cesar and suddenly a family of **Ornate Titi** were close to the (open) kitchen and we had great views on them. Later that day we had another family of Ornate Titi closer to the

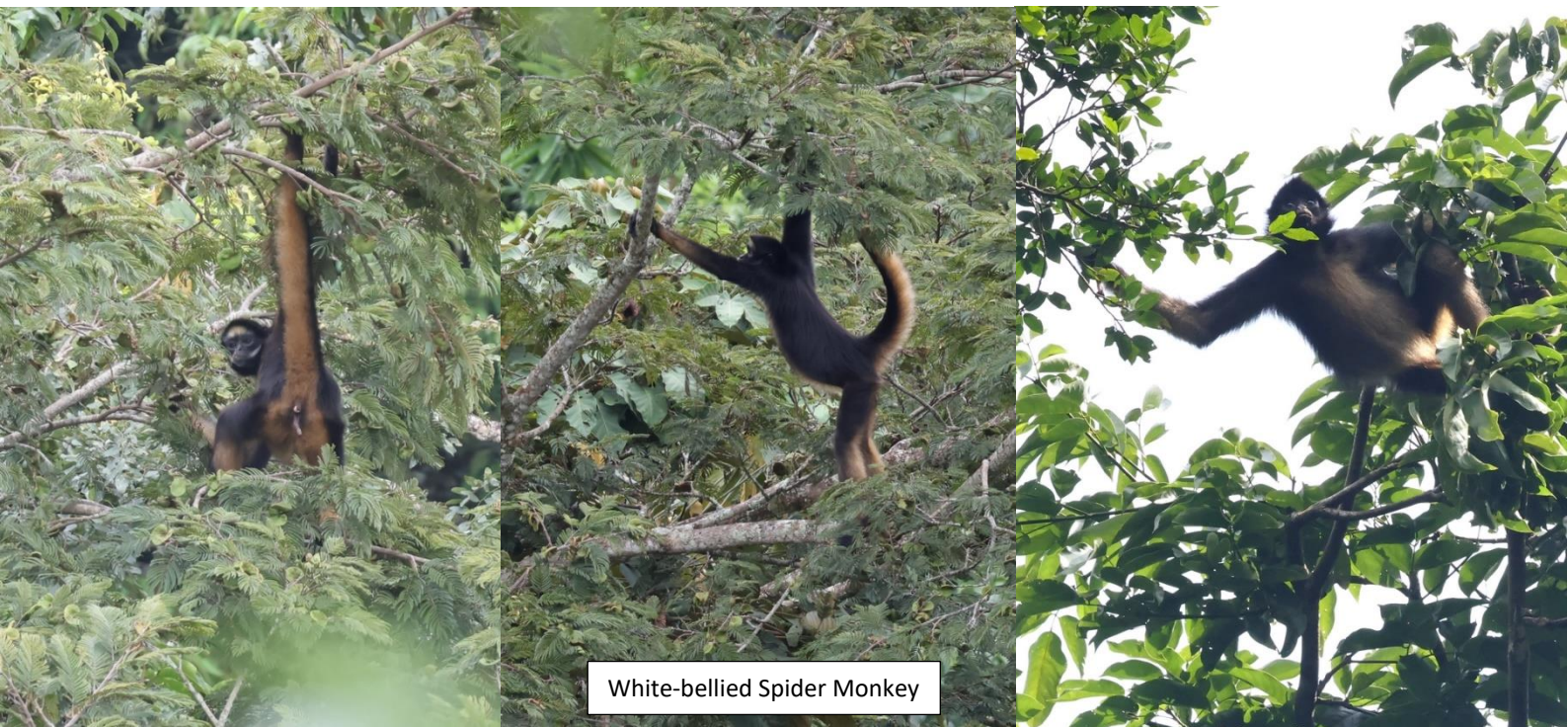


Black-capped Capuchin

lodge. According to Cesar about 4 families of **Ornate Titi** live in the vegetation along the river, so there is good chance of seeing them if you stay 2 or 3 nights at the Palmarum lodge. The squirrel monkeys pass the lodge every afternoon on their way from the feeding grounds to their sleeping site in the riverside vegetation. We even had views of these monkeys while laying in our bed. But the best has to come yet. Cesar (birdwatcher and naturalist) took us to

the village of Santo Domingo, about 20 km south of the Palmarum lodge. In the past this was a busy town and the center of the local drug trafficking. But after the deal with the FARC a couple of years ago there is almost no work left in the area and many people have left the area. The village makes a spooky impression. Just outside Santo Domingo is a former finca of a FARC chief. Nowadays an older, very friendly couple lives there. When we arrived at the finca, they had put some chairs in their garden overlooking a valley. And..... on the other side of the small valley a few **White-bellied Spider Monkeys** (endangered) were enjoying small fruits in the trees. We were able to view the spider monkeys extensively and for a long time (a few hours). The owners of the finca made a nice lunch for us and with a full belly we went back to the Palmarum Lodge in the backseats of the old Landcruiser of Cesar. What a surprise, this species is not easy to see elsewhere in Colombia.

So we have seen 5 species of primate during our stay at the Palmarum Lodge. With a bit of luck that could have been 7 species. The woolly monkey is regularly seen near the Cascadas de Caño union and a sleeping tree of Brumback Night Monkeys just collapsed a week before we arrived. They have not been seen since their tree fell. Because the Palmarum lodge only has 2 rooms, it's not suitable for a tourist group. But for a couple it's one of the best places we have ever been!



5. Area near San José Del Guaviare.

We visited 2 sights near San José Del Guaviare:

5.1 Ecolodge Naturlog Playa Guio (<https://naturlogplayaguio.com/>, +57 315 5478297)

This place is about 7 km (as the crow flies) west of San José del Guaviare. There are a few cabins and according to the owner primates frequently visit the grounds. To get to the ecolodge you have to park your car at one side of a small river and they will pick you up with a canoe to bring you to the other side. The setting is idyllic, but be aware of a few things:

- There is no electricity in the cabins, so no fan/airco and no possibility to charge batteries etc. There is electricity (and a fan...) in the main building, about 100 meter away from the cabin.
- On the site itself it's not too bad with mosquitoes, but in the forest you will be eaten alive.....
- There is no wifi and hardly any phone signal.

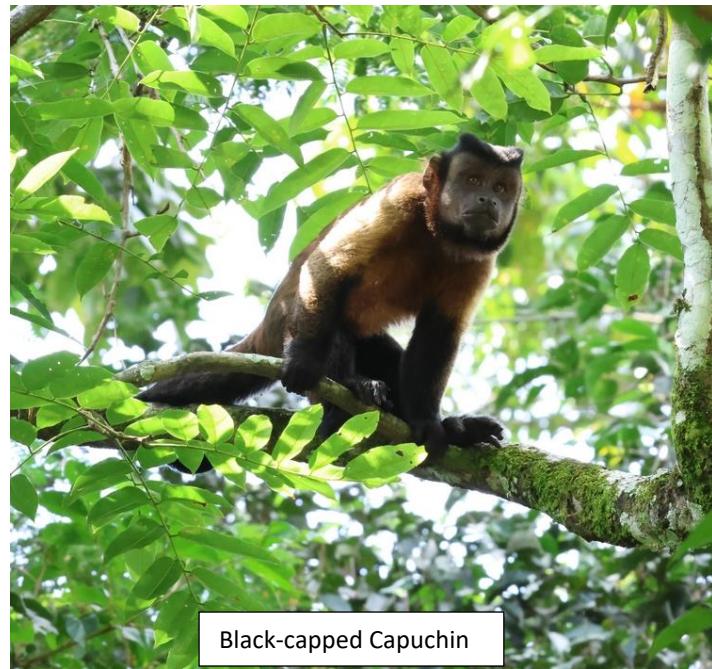
When we visited this place around the middle of November it was very hot. Too hot for us to survive without a fan in the cabin. So we left after 1 night and didn't stay 3 nights (as planned). We walked the trail from the property in the direction to the Guaviare river (about 700 meter of forest) a few times and were not disappointed. We saw 4 species of primate on the trail: the **Humboldt's Squirrel Monkey**, the **Black-capped Capuchin**, the **Colombian Howler Monkey** and **Golden-backed Uakari**. The first afternoon we

saw a glimpse of the latter one, but not enough to be 100% sure. The next morning the sighting was just 2 seconds on the same spot, but it was just enough for a positive ID. A difficult primate to spot because of its secretive behavior. Squirrel monkeys and capuchins traversed the grounds of the lodge a few times. With somewhat lower temperatures this is a very nice place for primates, especially as you can walk the trail without a guide and without paying a fee.

5.2 Cerro Azul

Cerro is a famous archeological site in Colombia and normally visited by tourists on a day tour from San José del Guaviare. It's located about 25 km west of the city (as the crow flies), but with a car it's a drive of 45 km of which 15 km is tarmac (route 65). This is the most difficult site to visit during our trip for some reasons:

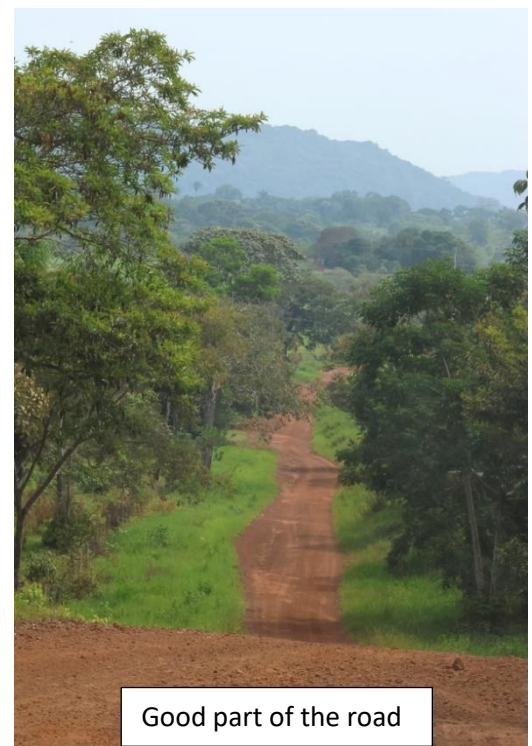
- There is no decent accommodation close to Cerro Azul. When we planned this trip I booked a room close to Cerro Azul (called Casa Piedra) through booking.com. But a few weeks before our departure it was cancelled. The property changed ownership and the new owner didn't want to have guests any more. At the time of writing this report (April 2024), the accommodation cannot be booked through booking.com or AirBnB and I do not know whether it will become a hotel again in the future. The only alternative not too far from Cerro Azul is Raudal Guayabero at the bank of the Rio Guayabero. We haven't checked this place ourselves, but we spoke some people who stayed there and told us it's safe, very simple but noisy as they also have a bar and restaurant. But it may be worth the 'gamble' because it saves a lot of travel time. We decided to stay at the beginning of the dirt road in the accommodation with the name 'Entre el Llano y la Selva') a 27 km drive to Cerro Azul. You can book it through booking.com and Airbnb and we can recommend it.
- The road to Cerro Azul is not bad, but don't expect a smooth ride either. About 3 km of the 27 km dirt road to Cerro Azul was sealed in November 2023 and work is in progress. So maybe the road is now been paved over a greater length. On the first day we went to Cerro Azul we decided to take a taxi as we had conflicting reports about the quality of the road. The owner of the accommodation also didn't know whether the road was doable with our Suzuki Vitara. Well, the taxi turned out to be a Hyundai i10... So not a sturdy 4x4... But the driver was able to do the trip in 1 hour and 10 minutes without any trouble. So the next day we drove the road ourselves, although it took us about 20 minutes longer....



Black-capped Capuchin



Bad part of the road



Good part of the road

- Nearly all the visitors come to Cerro Azul and are just interested in the paintings and not in the primates. As you are not allowed to walk on your own in the reserve you have to give notice of your visit in advance through the 'Asociación Fantasías de Cerro Azul' (+5731239446343). The first day it worked well as a guide was waiting for us at the entrance ([2.521814, -72.872187](#)), but the second day no guide was there.

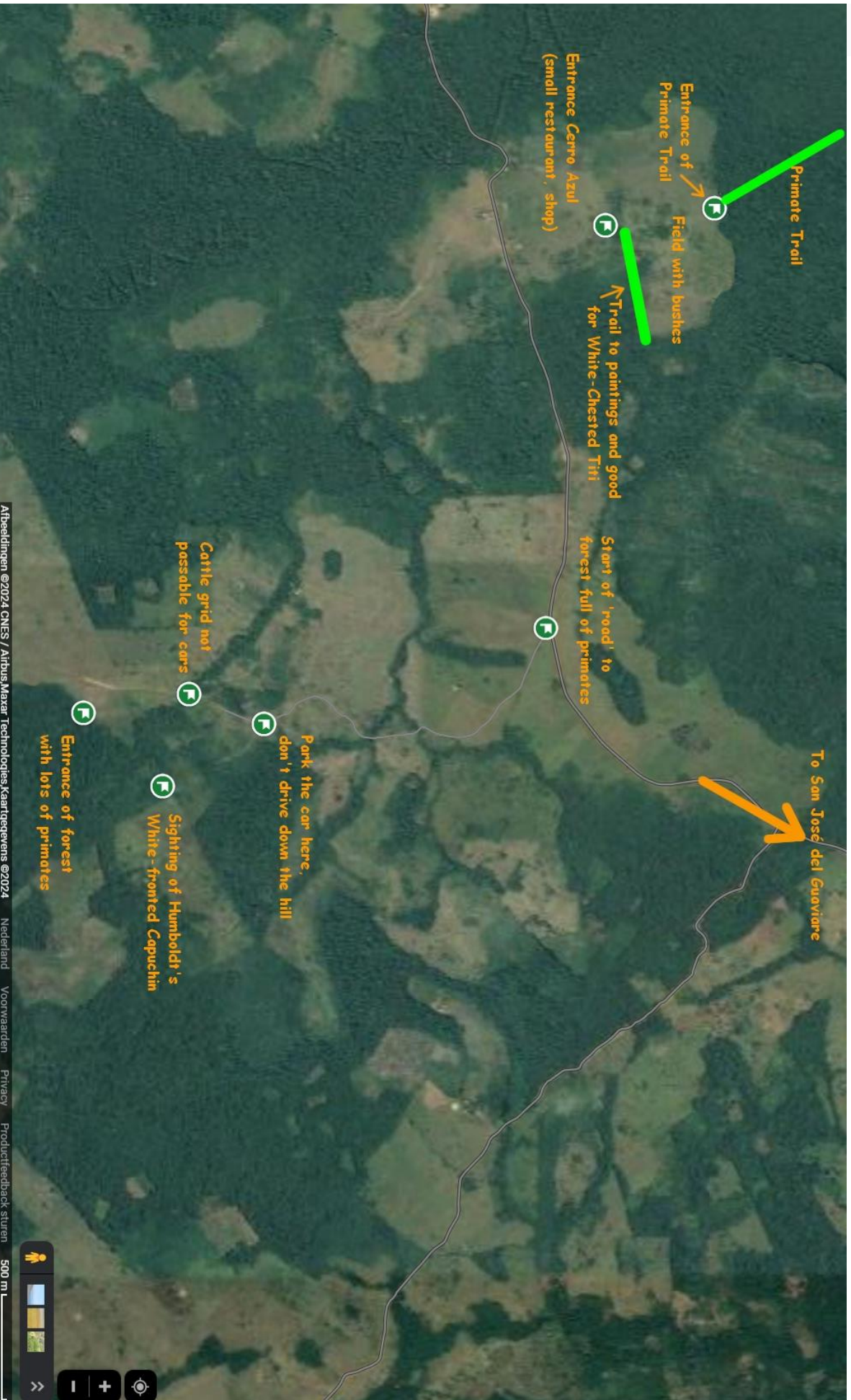
How did we fare at Cerro Azul?

On day 1 a guide was waiting at the entrance of Cerro Azul. She wanted to take the normal path to the rock paintings, but we told her we want to take the 'primate track' into the forest. Well, it was clear she was not familiar with that track and asked directions to some other rangers. To get to the path you first have to cross an open area with bushes. On the other side of the field is a path of approximately 1 km through good forest. The guide could not find the beginning of the path (there is a gate that you have to open). Because we had received the coordinates of the gate from Rob and Romy, we were able to lead the guide to the gate (2°31'35.0"N 72°52'22.4"W). The forest was not as rich in primates as we had hoped for. After 1,5 hour of searching we only saw **Humboldt's Squirrel Monkeys** and **Colombian Red Howlers** and heard **Woolly Monkeys**. But in the end the effort paid off and we had good views of a nice group of **Woolly monkeys**, the first ones of our trip. Unfortunately no signs of the **Golden-brown Uacari**, who had been seen by others on the track. Around 11 am we were back at the car. One of the local guides, Alex, invited us to come to his house to try for the **Mottle-faced Tamarin**. The taxi driver agreed, but the road to the house of Alex is more intended for a motorcycle than for a car... We had to stop at cattle grids a few times to check if they were strong enough for a car. At the last cattle grid we saw some movement in the trees and heard some noise. And yes, we had a good look for a few seconds at an **Humboldt's White-fronted Capuchin**! Guide Alex was not really surprised and confirmed that he occasionally sees that species near his house. Unfortunately, the search for the tamarins in the heat of the day yielded nothing. We decided it was enough for today and went back to our accommodation.



Woolly Monkey

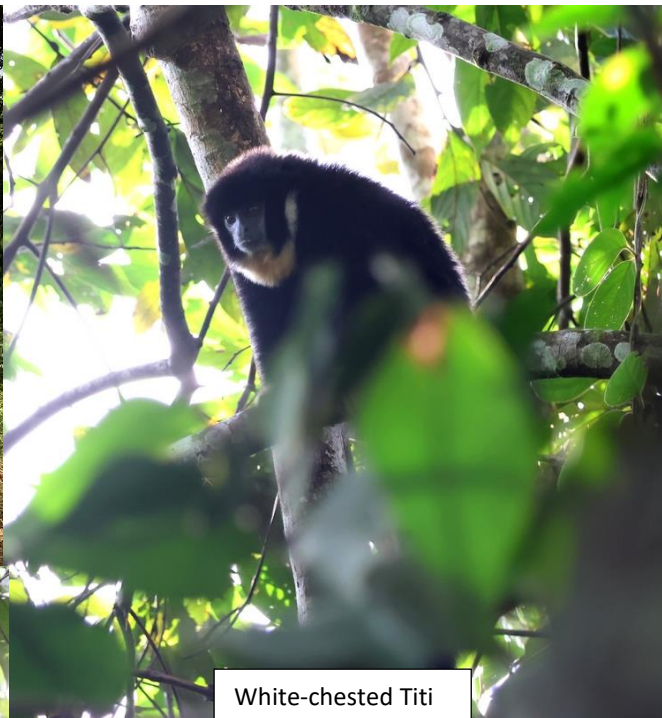
Day 2 was quite different from day 1. There was no guide waiting for us at the entrance station, but luckily a professor in archeology from the University of Bogota was willing to guide us to the paintings. That path also goes through good forest for a while, but considerably shorter than the primate path. Just before you cross a small stream is the best place to look for the **White-chested Titi**. It's more secondary forest, but it seems to be a reliable spot for them. A family of these nice primates was close to the path, although against the sun... Shortly after the bridge the forest was full of primates with a big group of **Black-capped Capuchins**, a family of **Colombian Red Howlers** and some **Woolly Monkeys**. So 4 species of primates within 250 meter of walking. Even the professor got enthusiastic about seeing so many primates, but I told him it was quite unusual to see 4 species so close in 15 minutes time... After a while we continued to the paintings, which are very beautiful! We were back at 9 am or so and decided to continue west on the main dirt road for a few kilometers. We stopped a few times and every stop yielded more monkeys. Then it was time to try a forest where Rob and Romy saw **Mottle-faced Tamarins**. Don't drive all the way to the forest as according to guide Alex the third cattle grid is not suitable for cars. We parked our car here 2.5075982441719615, -72.85101820882348 and walked the remaining 500 meter to the forest. In the forest we couldn't find the tamarin, but we have never seen so many primates in about 1 hour time: 3 groups of **woolly monkeys**, 2 families of **Colombian Red Howlers** and a few big groups of **Humboldt's Squirrel Monkeys** and **Black-capped Capuchines**. At least 150 to 200 individuals, a primates paradise. Hopefully the map on the next page will be helpful.



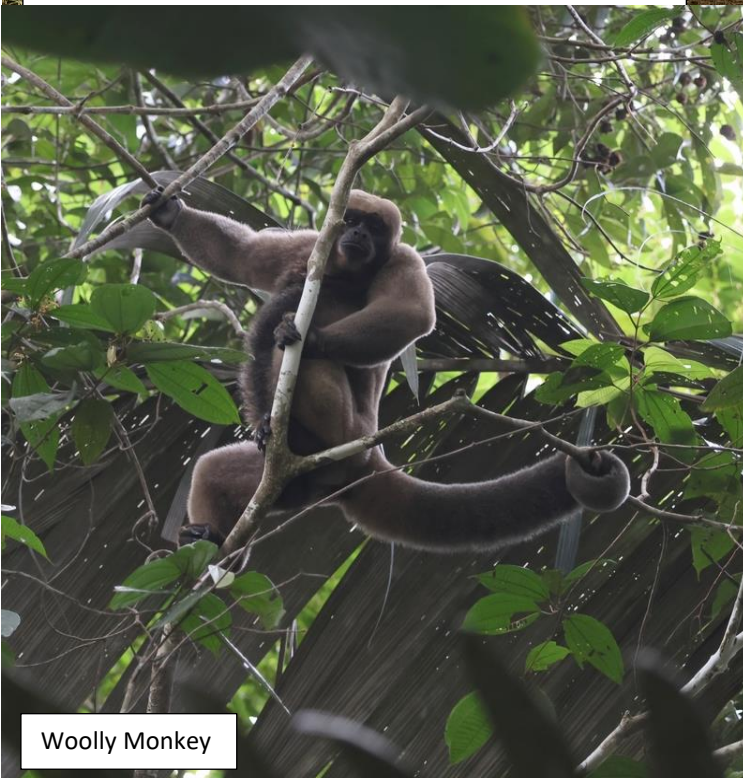
Afbeeldingen ©2024 CNES / Airbus Maxar Technologies Kaartgegevens ©2024 Nederland Voorwaarden Privacy Productfeedback sturen 500 m



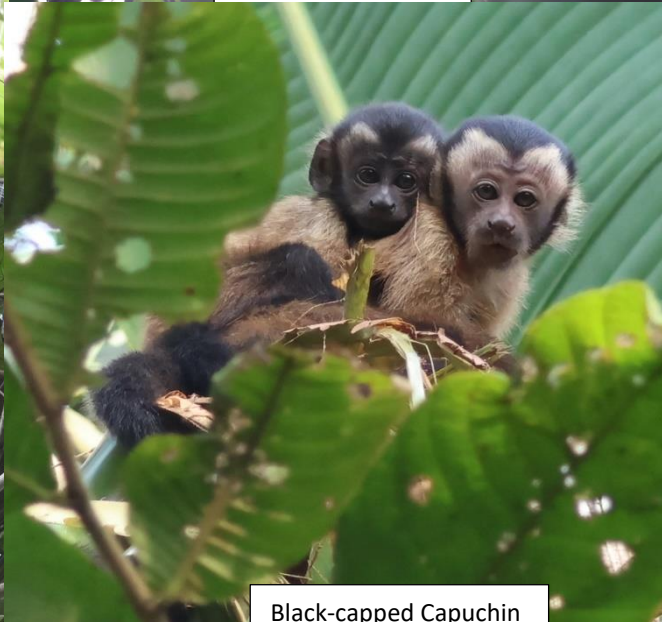
'Road towards the forest full of primates. It's drivable with a normal car, but maybe it's better to walk...



White-chested Titi

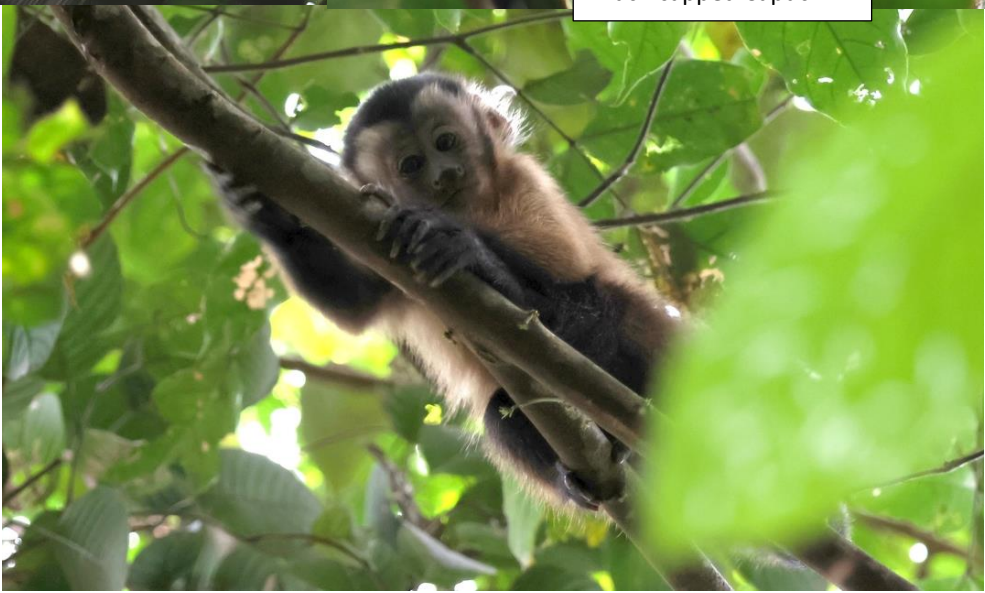


Woolly Monkey



Black-capped Capuchin

On the way back to civilization we saw woolly monkeys along the road twice. The area of Cerro Azul is one of the areas with the highest density of primates we have ever encountered during our travels.



6. Finca Macondo in Humadea (+573203461510)

This is not a typical primate destination. We stayed for 3 nights in Finca Macondo in the countryside to relax after the intense days in Cerro Azul. It's a nice accommodation with lots of birds on the property. To our surprise we found 3 species of monkey along the last km of the entrance road from the main road (number 65) to the finca:

- **Ornate Titi**
- **Colombian Squirrel Monkey**
- **Black-capped Capuchin**

7. Cumeral

As we had seen the Ornate titi already twice, we didn't try at the location east of Cumeral mentioned in the trip report of Rob and Romy. We just focused on the Brumback's Night Monkey who is resident at the Reserva El Manantial, located a few kilometers west of Cumeral. The farmer, José Alfredo (+57 17 3692 987), had two groups of Brumback's Night Monkeys living on his property. You have to contact him beforehand, otherwise he may not be able to show you the night monkeys. The price was 70.000 CoP for the guidance (early morning and late afternoon, including a check at another spot at the other side of the road). The pictures of the night monkeys in the trip report of Rob and Romy are mouth-watering beautiful. Unfortunately, the photogenic family left the property a few months before we arrived. The remaining family was resting in very dense vegetation, so no good pictures of this species of Night Monkey.



Ornate Titi

8. Reserva Naural El Porvenir www.reservanatural.ch +41762271506 (Tatiana)

This was the biggest gamble of our trip. Other than a brief note on mammalwatching.com we had no information about this place. The finca is a working farm (cows and horses) run by the couple Fransisco and his wife Gladys. Much of their land is still forested. On the flatter areas the forest is partly gone, but on the slopes the forest looks healthy.

Their daughter Tatiana lives in Switzerland and speaks fluent German, English and Spanish. Through her we received sufficient information about the accommodation, the access road and the monkeys in the area. RN El Porvenir is located in the hot and humid Magdalena Valley near Puerto Araujo. The entrance road is about 20 km and leaves highway 45 about 15 km west of Puerto Araujo. But... after about 6 km on this road we decided it was too tough for our (rented) Suzuki Vitar. The road is not very steep or rocky, but the ground clearance was not enough to make it to the finca. So we decided to leave the car at another finca and called Fransisco to pick us up. This worked well and our advise is not to try the entrance road in a rental car, unless it's a sturdy 4x4 with a high ground clearance. At the end of the afternoon we arrived at the finca. It can get extremely hot and humid in the Magdalena Valley and during our visit it was.... They only have 2 rooms for tourists, so not a place to go with a group of tourists.

Gladys is a fantastic hostess. She is very friendly, communicates well, is a good cook and also a good guide. To increase the chance of seeing the brown spider monkey (critically endangered), we hired a primate guide. The first morning we walked on foot from the finca to the forest. As soon as we entered the forest, we were eaten alive by the mosquitos. We managed to see **Varied White-fronted Capuchins** and **Colombian Red Howler Monkeys** but no brown Spider Monkeys yet. In the afternoon we went out with a horse to try for the **Grey-**





Colombian Red Howler Monkey



Grey-legged Night Monkey



Varied White-fronted Capuchin

legged Night Monkey and Gladys was successful in finding their sleeping tree. How beautiful and adorable the night monkeys in Colombia are.

The next day we went out by horse again to try for the spider monkeys. We heard and saw movements high in the trees, but not enough details for a positive ID. After we felt like acting as a blood donor and because of the extreme heat we gave up at 11 am and it was time to go back to the room's air conditioning. Change of plans. On a nearby finca, a few students had started a process of habituating a group of brown spider monkeys. So the last day we tried our luck at that finca. It was a drive of half an hour from RN El Porvenir and we were welcomed by the students. We drove for another 5 minutes and parked the car at the edge of the forest. We walked into the beautiful forest, where there were no mosquitoes and after 5 minutes we saw monkeys: **Colombian Red Howler Monkeys** and **Brown Spider Monkeys!!** Yesss!!! We could spent about 15 minutes with them at close range, before they went into an area of steep valleys



Brown Spider Monkey

where it was impossible to follow them. We walked further into the forest to a big salt lick, used by howler monkeys and spider monkeys. No animals were seen during our (short) visit.

Despite the extreme heat and the mosquitos we had a great time in El Porvenir. We saw 4 primate species of which 3 were new on this trip. Especially seeing the **Brown Spider Monkey** was a real highlight of the trip. We will never forget Gladys' warmth and hospitality. They deserve more visits from nature lovers, because it is a fantastic place!!

Species not seen:

- **Caquetá Titi** (*Plecturocebus caquetensis*). Corentin organized this 2-day trip for us and joined us. With a taxi we went from RN Donde de Oculta el Sol to the town of Vda. El Jauno (1-1,5 hours of driving), crossed the river with a small ferry and drove to the town of Mirafior on the east side of the Caquetá river. There is a good accommodation in Miraflores: Hotel Tursan. They also have a few restaurants, which served a nice lunch for us and are open all days. Miraflores is in the middle of the distribution area of the rare and localized Caquetá titi. The first afternoon we checked the vegetation along a dirt road with Corentin and the local guide Alexis, but no success. The next morning we tried again at sunrise. And yes, a few families of Caquetá were calling, but none of these families were close to the road. They were on private property or on the other side of a swampy area which could not be crossed. So.... unfortunately no sighting of a Cacquetá titi. After conversations with Corentin, Rob and Romi and the local guide it became clear to us that you have to have a certain amount of luck to see the titis. Sometimes they are in bushes right next to the road, sometimes they do not sing at all and are impossible to find, sometimes they are on inaccessible private property, etc. etc. There are tourists who have already found them after 10 minutes of searching, but also tourists who couldn't find them after 4 days of searching. All with the same local guide.
- **Yellow-handed Titi** (*Cherocebus lucifer*). Every evening Corentin checked the tree where the titis regularly sleep, but each time they had chosen a different place to sleep. Except.... the night we slept in Miraflores to look for the Caquetá titi. That night someone else saw them in their 'permanent' sleeping tree and they sang the next morning. So... unfortunately no yellow-handed titi for us... Grrrr.....

- **Mottle-faced Tamarin** (*Saguinus inustus*). This species should be relatively easy in Cerro Azul, but we didn't see or hear it for some reason.

The **white-footed tamarin** (*Saguinus leucopus*) is endemic to the Magdalena Valley. It only lives on the west bank of the Magdalena river. Although we were quite close to the area where it can be seen (Río Claro Nature Reserve) we decided not to go there as it was near the end of our trip (a bit tired and we were extremely pleased with the number of species we had already seen).

Primate list Colombia nov 2023

1	Spix's Night Monkey	<i>Aotus vociferans</i>	LC
2	Brumback's Night Monkey	<i>Aotus brumbacki</i>	VU
3	Grey-handed Night Monkeys	<i>Aotus griseimembra</i>	VU
4	Lesson's Saddle-back Tamarin	<i>Leontocebus fuscus</i>	LC
5	Western Pygmy Marmoset	<i>Cebuella pygmaea</i>	VU
6	Miller's Saki	<i>Pithecia milleri</i>	VU
7	Black-capped Capuchin	<i>Sapajus apella</i>	LC
8	Varied White-fronted Capuchins	<i>Cebus versicolor</i>	EN
9	Humboldt's White-fronted Capuchin	<i>Cebus albifrons</i>	LC
10	Humboldt Squirrel Monkey	<i>Saimiri albigena</i>	??
11	Colombian Squirrel Monkey	<i>Saimiri cassiquiarensis</i>	VU
12	Ecuadorian Squirrel Monkey	<i>Saimiri macrodon</i>	LC
13	Colombian Red Howler Monkey	<i>Alouatta seniculus</i>	LC
14	Colombian Black-handed Titi	<i>Cheracebus medemi</i>	VU
15	Collared Titi Monkey	<i>Cheracebus lugens</i>	LC
16	Ornate Titi Monkey	<i>Plecturocebus ornatus</i>	VU
17	Common Woolly Monkey	<i>Lagothrix lagothrica</i>	VU
18	White-bellied Spider Monkey	<i>Ateles Belzebuth</i>	EN
19	Brown Spider Monkey	<i>Ateles hybridus</i>	CR
20	Golden-backed Uakari	<i>Cacajao melanocephalus</i>	LC

Final thoughts

There are not many countries in the world where you can see 20 species of primate in a few weeks time without having to make great efforts. Well, Colombia is one of them. Thanks to the trip report of Rob and Romy and the information provided by primate guide Corentin it was relatively easy to organize this trip ourselves. Most of the tourist go to the western or northern part of Colombia, but for primate lovers the southern and central part are the places to go. These areas are not touristic, the locals were very friendly and most of the primate species are not difficult to find. So this was one of the best primate travels we've ever made. The Putumayo, Cerro Azul, the Palmarum Lodge and Reserva Natural El Porvernira are top primates destinations and deserve more tourists!!

If you would like to have some information about our trip, please get in contact with us:

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