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# Tití Times

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The Tití Times provides an update on the work of Proyecto Tití

Please visit our website at: <http://proyectotiti.com>

## **Babies, Babies Babies!!!**

Get ready for some birth announcements! Once a year, cotton-top tamarin females give birth. Generally births are timed to occur at the beginning of the rainy season so that there is plenty of fruit available for everyone to munch on as the infants develop. This year, the babies in our study groups were born in April-July. All of the moms had twins (Cuca, Maria, Narda, Tamara, Yamit, Claudia, and Isabella) except for Suzy who had a singleton. Here's the amazing thing about cotton-top tamarins, these one pound females give birth to twins that weigh about 15% of their body weight. That's equivalent to a human female giving birth to two ten pound infants! But, the social organization is designed to give

moms some help! In fact, dads, brothers and sisters all help to carry the new babies on their backs. Mom is there primary for nursing her babies and she lets everyone else in the group carry them. It will be at least 5 weeks before the babies take their first steps off their caregivers and at 10 weeks of age they will be more independent. We won't know the sexes of the babies for a few months. So far, all of the babies are healthy and thriving in their families!



## **August 15<sup>th</sup> – The Day of the Cotton-top Tamarin**

The village of Los Limites celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and to demonstrate their commitment to cotton-top tamarin conservation they want their “founder’s day” and patron saint celebration to be joined with a day of celebration to highlight cotton-top tamarins. They truly believe that the cotton-top tamarin is their regional conservation icon and have decided to incorporate it into local community cultural celebrations and have created “The Day of the Cotton-top Tamarin” celebration. August 15<sup>th</sup> has been chosen as the day of the festival and it was an amazing success. Neighboring villages came to the celebration and even though it rained there were more than 500 people joining in the activities! There was an eco-mochila making contest, cotton-top tamarin dances, and a cotton-top tamarin “queen” was crowned. This celebration has now been registered as an official “conservation celebration” with the Ministry of the Environment. We received a significant amount of national press for the event and our plan is to expand the celebration to neighboring cities next year.



**Cotton-top Tamarin Queen YERALDIN DEL CARMEN MARTINEZ 10 years old, 5<sup>th</sup> grade**

## **Eco-Mochilas in the News!**

Our eco-mochila program was featured in On Earth magazine of the National Resource Defense Council “How to Save A Monkey”  
<http://www.nrdc.org/onearth/07fal/frontlines.asp>



## **MBA's Without Borders**

Welcome Michael Grifka from MBA's Without Borders! Michael is working with us to develop a business plan for our eco-mochila program and is helping us find additional vendors interested in selling eco-mochilas!



## **Cotton-top Tamarins featured on National Geographic's Wild Chronicles!**

*Wild Chronicles* looks at the human relationship with nature, highlighting breakthrough science that offers real hope for the future. *Wild Chronicles* is presented on public television stations by National Geographic Society Mission Programs—the arm of the Society that supports pioneering research and field expeditions. Check your local PBS listings for episode #232 to see the segment on Proyecto Titi's conservation program in Colombia.



## **Tamarin Tales: It's Tough Being a Cotton-top in a Crowded Forest!**

We have been studying 8 groups of cotton-top tamarins for several years. One of the challenges facing cotton-tops is that they are facing over-crowding in their forest home. As more and more forest disappears, cotton-tops are faced to live in smaller areas. That creates tension between neighboring groups and results in more fighting between groups. Territorial encounters are frequent. Typically, cotton-top tamarins vocalize frequently so that their neighbors know where they are. They generally avoid face to face interactions but as more monkeys move into the area, the tamarins need to defend their territories.

Cotton-tops are very protective of their infants. Imagine the field team's surprise when they observed 4 infants in Isabella's group! How did that happen when we know that she gave birth to two infants? Well, it appears that during a territorial encounter with a neighboring group, two young infants that were foraging were scared when they heard strangers in the area and jumped on the backs of the nearest cotton-top. The only problem was that the nearest cotton-top was one in Isabella's group!! Interestingly, Isabella's family adopted the infants and cared for them as if they were their own. However, two days later the infants returned back to their natal family much to Isabella's relief!

Tamara, our most habituated cotton-top, was injured in a fight with a neighboring group! She had quite a large gash in her foot but we are happy to say that she has healed and is moving well through the forest.

Sadly, we can't say the same for Jerry. He received serious injuries to his face, hands, and head. He faithfully tried to remain with family but succumbed to his injuries after 3 days. We will miss him!



**Check back next time for more Tamarin Tales!!**