

TREES OF LIFE

One rainforest tree can contain an entire ecosystem. The tree is slender, sometimes reaching up to 200 feet. The tree's branches are clustered near the top in an umbrella shape. The tree acts as a sponge collecting rainwater and slowly returning it to the forest. It constantly absorbs carbon dioxide and releases life-giving oxygen. The rainforest contains at least half and perhaps as many as 90 percent of the planet's species of plants, animals and insects. One tree can have over 40 ant species — or a species of beetle that lives only in that tree!

IF A TREE FALLS...

Preserving and restoring tropical forests

New Community Project



Orchids

These are the most common epiphytes in the rainforest. Orchids anchor themselves in the mosses, lichens and soil that accumulate on a tree. They have distinctive bulb-like bases that store water absorbed from the atmosphere. Insects, especially bees, pollinate these beautiful flowers.



Iguana

This large lizard is green when young and grayish black as an adult. It likes to sun in the canopy — which it shares with one-third of the world's 10,000 bird species that call the rainforest home.



Tree Frogs

The rainforest is home to a multitude of frog species. Many species are found only in very specific locations. Chemicals in some poisonous tree frogs could hold the cure for certain cancers.



Howler Monkey

These monkeys travel in troops, howl like jaguars, and can be heard two miles away. Although it may sound like a trip to a sporting event, they are really howling to stake out and protect territory.



Agouti

This burrowing rodent gets to be the size of a house cat and has a face like a squirrel. When startled, they stomp their feet and bark like a dog. They eat seeds, fruits and flowers. They like to bury seeds but tend to forget where they are buried — bad for the agouti but great for the forest.

Forest Floor

The typical rainforest soil is very poor in nutrients because decomposition occurs so rapidly. Cup fungus and other bacteria live by the trillions among the leaf litter. Special fungi, mycorrhiza, live among the roots of almost every tropical plant. They are essential for plants to absorb nutrients. If this fungus is completely destroyed during logging, the forest won't be able to make a comeback!



Native People

Native people have lived in and learned from the rainforest for thousands of years. They have a wealth of knowledge about medicinal plants, animal and bird life, and co-existence with the forest.

Going, going... almost gone...

The world's tropical forests are disappearing at a rate of some 45 million acres a year, and with them the plants, animals, insects, and people who call them home.

The causes? Farming and ranching, oil drilling, logging. Poor people needing land, corporations wanting money, governments looking the other way. (Clearing land for cattle is responsible for 80 percent of the six million acres of the Brazilian Amazon lost every year; in Ecuador, oil drilling has brought massive pollution and invasion by settlers.)

The consequences? The extinction of perhaps 50,000 plant, animal and insect species each year; increased global warming; loss of disease cures; and disrupted lives for 50 million forest-dwelling people.

The solutions? Be aware of your connection to the rainforest — what it does for us and what we do to it. Help poor people make a living without invading protected areas. Support groups preserving rainforest and promoting conservation.

What can you do?

- Refuse to buy rainforest products — including beef, petroleum, wood, and exotic pets.
- Support projects aimed at alleviating poverty and preserving the forest. *Through If a Tree Falls...*
 - o \$10 plants 100 forest trees
 - o \$20 purchases and preserves a tenth of an acre of rainforest
 - o \$81 provides a wood-conserving stove
 - o \$125 supports a sustainable development worker for a week
- Join an NCP Learning Tour to see the rainforest for yourself!

All contributions go directly to the project and are tax-deductible.

"Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden..."

Genesis 2:9



"...turning the world upside down..."

New Community Project
718 Wilder Street
Elgin, IL 60123
www.newcommunityproject.org
888-800-2985

printed on 100 percent recycled paper