

News

WE HAVE A NEW WEBSITE!



Thanks to a grant from the Species Survival Commission (SSC) we have completely redesigned our Specialist Group website (www.xenarthrans.org) and included plenty of beautiful pictures of xenarthrans. The texts in English, Spanish, and Portuguese have been updated to reflect, among others, the recent taxonomic changes. Its responsive design ensures that the content is automatically adjusted to different display sizes, such as smartphones and tablets.

Huge thanks to the IUCN SSC for the financial support; to all colleagues who have helped update and review the texts; to the fabulous photographers who donated their pictures; and to Sofia Silveira Lauz and her team at Tecnomunay for the beautiful design!

OUR CHAIR AND RED LIST AUTHORITY COORDINATOR ATTENDED THE 4TH IUCN SSC LEADERS' MEETING

Our Specialist Group Chair Mariella Superina and our Red List Authority Coordinator Agustín M. Abba attended the 4th IUCN SSC Leaders' Meeting,



which was held from October 6 to 11 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. During four very productive and intense days, they attended training sessions, discussions, and symposia about a wide range of topics that will help our Specialist Group to improve its effectiveness and impact in conservation. This conference, organized by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) in alliance with the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD), brought together more than 350 conservation experts, so Mariella and Agustín also had the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences with many other Specialist Group leaders. Huge thanks to Environment Agency Abu Dhabi for making this incredibly inspiring and motivating meeting possible!

IUCN CALLS FOR HALT TO SPECIES DECLINE BY 2030

IUCN has issued an urgent call to massively scale up species conservation action in response to the escalating biodiversity crisis. The Abu Dhabi Call for Global Species Conservation Action appeals to the world's governments, international agencies and the private sector to halt species decline and prevent human-driven extinctions by 2030, and to improve the conservation status of threatened species with a view to bringing about widespread recovery by 2050. For additional information, please visit <https://www.iucn.org/news/species-survival-commission/201910/iucn-calls-halt-species-decline-2030>. The Abu Dhabi Call for Global Species Conservation Action can be found here: https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/the_abu_dhabi_call_for_global_species_conservation_action_adopted_01112019.pdf

OUTSTANDING CAREER AWARD FOR SERGIO F. VIZCAÍNO

Specialist Group Member Sergio F. Vizcaíno received this year's Outstanding Career Award from the Argentinean Society for the Study of Mammals (SAREM by its Spanish acronym). Sergio obtained

his degree in biology from La Plata University, Argentina. In 1990 he successfully defended his doctoral thesis on the anatomy, systematics, and evolution of extant and fossil armadillos. During his career he has carried out numerous research projects, mainly on the paleobiology of South American mammals. His findings have advanced our understanding of the biology of extant and extinct mammals from a biomechanical, morphofunctional, and ecomorphological viewpoint. The Xenarthra have always played a special role in Sergio's research. Among others, studying the biomechanical aspects of extant Xenarthra allowed him to infer the life-style of extinct species.



Sergio has inspired, encouraged, and trained a whole generation of mammalogists and paleontologists (including several Specialist Group members) through an important number of undergraduate and graduate courses and as advisor or co-advisor of more than a dozen graduate students, seven postdocs

and five early-career researchers. He is the author of a long list of scientific publications, books and book chapters. Among others, he is one of the editors of the X-book (Vizcaíno, S.F. & W.J. Loughry (2008): *The biology of the Xenarthra*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville).

Sergio has been a member of our Specialist Group since 1997. His ample knowledge of the biological aspects of the Xenarthra throughout their evolutionary history allowed him to build a bridge between paleobiology and mammalogy, which has widened our vision of the conservation of extant xenarthrans.

¡Felicitaciones, Sergio!

IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS 2020

Held once every four years, the IUCN World Conservation Congress brings together several thousand leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, indigenous peoples, business, and academia, with the goal of conserving the environment and harnessing the solutions nature offers to global challenges.

The Congress, which will take place on 11–19 June 2020 in Marseille, France, aims to improve how we manage our natural environment for human, social, and economic development, but this cannot be achieved by conservationists alone. The IUCN

World Conservation Congress is where the world comes together to set priorities and drive conservation and sustainable development action. IUCN's 1300+ government, civil society, and indigenous peoples' Member organizations vote on major issues, action which guides humanity's relationship with our planet for the decades ahead.

The IUCN Congress is the place to put aside differences and work together to create good environmental governance, engaging all parts of society to share both the responsibilities and the benefits of conservation.

IUCN World Conservation Congress

One nature, one future

Read more here: <https://www.iucncongress2020.org/>

NEW PAPER ON MANED SLOTHS IDENTIFIES THEIR HABITAT REQUIREMENTS IN FRAGMENTED AREAS

A recent study by Paloma Marques Santos and her colleagues assessed determinants of the occurrence of maned sloths (*Bradypus torquatus*) in the lower montane region of Espírito Santo, eastern Brazil. Based on the habitat variables they measured at 68 sites, along with presence and absence data,



they used occupancy models and model selection methods to identify the influence of different predictors and the existence of a habitat threshold for the occurrence of this endangered sloth. The occupancy probability of the maned sloth was very high (0.97), but it decreased abruptly at 35% of forest cover, reaching zero in areas with less than 20% of forest cover. Open areas negatively influenced maned sloth occupancy. The results of this study imply that the conservation of maned sloths will benefit from an increase in the amount of native forest at the landscape scale. Given the difficulties

in the creation of new public protected areas, this improvement could be achieved via restoration of areas located on private properties, which are protected by the Brazilian Forest Code.

Santos, P.M., L.L. Bailey, M.C. Ribeiro, A.G. Chiarello & A.P. Paglia. 2019. Living on the edge: Forest cover threshold effect on endangered maned sloth occurrence in Atlantic Forest. *Biological Conservation* 240: 108264. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2019.108264>

THE RED LIST OF THREATENED MAMMALS OF ARGENTINA HAS BEEN UPDATED



CATEGORIZACIÓN de los mamíferos de Argentina

After many months of intense work, the updated Red List of Threatened Mammals of Argentina was launched on 13 November 2019.

A total of 417 species of mammals were assessed, three of which are Extinct (EX); 2 are Regionally Extinct (RE); 98 are listed in a threatened category (VU, EN, CR); 40 are Near Threatened (NT); and 78 are Data Deficient (DD). One species, *Tremarctos ornatus*, was Not Evaluated (NE), and 16 species, including *Bradypus variegatus* and *Dasypus septemcinctus*, were deemed to be ineligible for assessment at a regional level and thus listed as Not Applicable (NA).

The re-assessment of the Xenarthra was coordinated by our Red List Authority Agustín M. Abba, who was also one of the general coordinators of the entire re-assessment, and our Chair Mariella Superina. The most threatened xenarthran in Argentina is *Priodontes maximus*, which is listed as Endangered. *Myrmecophaga tridactyla* is categorized as Vulnerable, and six xenarthrans (*Tamandua tetradactyla*, *Dasypus hybridus*, *Cabassous chacoensis*, *C. tatouay*, *Tolypeutes matacus*, and *Zaedyus pichiy*) are listed as Near Threatened.

The re-assessment process was coordinated by Argentina's Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development (SAyDS) and the Argentinean Society for the Study of Mammals (SAREM), and involved about 380 specialists. Thanks to its approval through an official resolution, the updated regional Red List will directly translate into public policies that favor the management and conservation of mammals at the state level.

The Red List of Threatened Mammals of Argentina is available at <http://cma.sarem.org.ar>

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE BRAZILIAN THREE-BANDED ARMADILLO CONSERVATION PROGRAM HAS CONCLUDED

Four years ago Associação Caatinga, in partnership with Fundação Grupo Boticário, launched the Brazilian Three-banded Armadillo Conservation Program. The project aimed to develop social and environmental initiatives for *Tolypeutes tricinctus* in regions where Conservation Units could be created. The first stage of the Program concluded this year, but there is still a lot of work to do to ensure the long-term conservation of this charismatic species!

The Armadillo Conservation Program is part of the National Action Plan for the Conservation of Three-banded Armadillos, a federal public policy created in 2014 with the support of Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade (ICMBio). The Action Plan establishes 38 actions to reduce the risk of extinction of *Tolypeutes tricinctus*. Six of them were addressed by Associação Caatinga thanks to the financial support of Fundação Grupo Boticário.

Among others, over 30 expeditions were made to document the area of occurrence of the species and to interview local communities about three-banded armadillos. Schools and communities were visited during these expeditions to raise awareness. Biological data on this rare species were collected during two scientific expeditions to the Poti River Canyon, a geological crevice located in the Ibiapaba mountain range, on the border of the states of Piauí and Ceará. The collected data helped to create the 6,872 ha Poti River Canyon State Park in Piauí state.



Although listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, more pessimistic projections conclude that *Tolypeutes tricinctus* may disappear within 50 years. Associação Caatinga, our Specialist Group, and other institutions will therefore continue working hard to save the Brazilian Three-banded Armadillo from extinction!