

Golden Headed Lion Tamarin

Leontopithecus chrysomelas

Class: Mammalia **Superorder:** Haplorrhini monkeys, apes, and tarsiers

Infraorder: Simiiformes (monkeys and apes- Platyrrhini-New World monkeys)

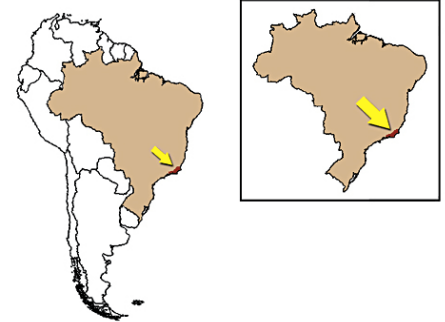
Order: Primates **Family:** Cebidae (marmosets, tamarins, capuchins and squirrel monkeys) **Subfamily:** Callitrichinae (**callitrichids** -marmosets and tamarins)

Other names:

Other subspecies:

Other Relatives: There are four species in *Leontopithecus*;

- Black-faced lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus caissara*)
- Golden-headed lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus chrysomelas*)
- Golden-rumped lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus chrysopygus*)
- Golden lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus rosalia*)



Zoo Golden Headed Lion Tamarins 1.1.0

'Seymour' 1.0 – male

Birth: 07/14/2004 AQ: 07/14/2004

About Seymour

Seymour was born at the Brandywine Zoo to parents Geoffrey and Fergie and is the older sibling to Gigi. He weighs about between 700-800 grams.

'Gigi' 0.1 - Female

Birth: 03/06/2007 AQ: 03/06/2007

About Gigi

Gigi was born at the Brandywine Zoo to parents Geoffrey and Fergie, and is the younger sibling to Seymour. She weighs about between 700-750 grams.

Status

Endangered [1]

Geographic Region

Golden-headed lion tamarins are found only in Brazil.

Habitat

Forest

Characteristics

Size: *length:* 200-366mm long (8-13in); tail length of between 315-400mm (12-15in) [2] *weight:* 654.5 g/23.07 oz

Longevity: **Wild** 15 years [2] **Captivity** up to ~25 in captivity has been reported [2]

Physical Description

The physical appearance of golden-headed lion tamarins are similar to other species of tamarins. It has relatively large canines with a small head and body. It is mostly black with a thick, long, golden mane. Males and females are quite similar in appearance.

- The tamarins have canine teeth longer than the incisors, and are called long-tusked marmosets. [3]
- The tail is not prehensile, or capable of grasping. Unlike many other [monkeys](#), marmosets and tamarins do not have an opposable thumb. Their sharp, curved claws allow these lightweight monkeys to hold onto [tree](#) branches. Only the great toe bears a nail instead of a claw. [3]

Dimorphism

Diet: Omnivore

Diet in the Wild: It eats spiders, snails, small lizards, eggs, plant exudates (gums), flowers, nectar, small birds, fruits and vegetables. They eat insects using their long, slender fingers to probe into crevices in the tree bark. This technique is called "*micromanipulation*." [4] [2]

Diet in the Zoo: commercial marmoset diet, banana, pear, eggs, primate salad, leaf-eater biscuits, grapes

Diet: Omnivore

Golden-headed lion tamarins are primarily insectivorous. However, they have been known to eat invertebrates such as spiders and snails. There are also records of this species eating lizards, bird eggs, and even small birds.

Behavior

- *Diurnal*, day-active
- **Behavior**
- Feeding Behavior
- Marmosets and tamarins feed on the gum and sap of trees, which they obtain by scraping the [bark](#) with their teeth. Marmosets and tamarins also eat fruit, flowers, and insects. [3]
- They [sleep](#) in tree holes or tangles of vines during the night. Tamarins and marmosets live in groups of up to 40 individuals, though 12-15 is more usual. They spend a great deal of [time](#) grooming each other. Their social groups can create a great amount of noise and commotion. [3]
- Golden-headed lion tamarins are diurnal and spend most of their time in tropical forests at heights of three to ten meters. They do not even come down to sleep at night. They sleep in tree holes, vines, or epiphytes. Also, they live in family groups of two to eight individuals, with an average size of three to four individuals, however they may form temporary associations of 15 to 16. Adults of the same sex are very aggressive toward one another for territorial defense purposes. Vocalizations among golden-headed lion tamarins are based on activity and behavior. Trills are used when activity is solitary. Clucks can be heard while an animal is foraging. Long calls indicate vigilance.

Reproduction

In tamarin society, males and females mate for life and take equal part in raising their young. They are seasonal breeders.

After a 140-145 day gestation period, a female (usually only one in a group at a time) produces two young (or sometimes one or three). The newborn babies are relatively large in comparison to those of other monkeys, although they are helpless. They ride on the back of a parent (usually the father) until they are about 7 weeks old. They become sexually mature at 12-18 months. The young are allowed to stay around the family even after they have reached sexual maturity, and after a new family is born to the parents. However, they do not produce their own offspring until after they leave the family unit. The young animals help their parents, often relieving the male in carrying his newer offspring. Otherwise, the male turns the young over to the female for short feeding periods every few hours. [3]

Conservation

- **Use & Trade:**
- **Threats:** Threats to Golden-headed Lion Tamarins come from socio-economic transformations resulting from the difficulties of the cocoa industry (low prices and disease epidemics), that have dominated the region over the last 15 years, resulting in the expansion of alternative crops, notably African palm oil and coconuts (Alger and Caldas 1994). In the west of its range, the forest is increasingly destroyed and fragmented as a result of cattle ranching (Pinto 1994; Pinto and Rylands 1997). [1]
- **Predators:**

Did You Know?/Fun Facts

The two groups of small, furry near-monkeys are extremely similar, but the marmosets (mostly in the genus *Callithrix*) and the tamarins (genus *Saguinus*) are located in different regions, overlapping in only one area near the mouth of the Amazon River [3].

References

IUCN 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.2. <www.iucnredlist.org>. 2009, December .

Lundrigan, B. and K. Kapheim. 2000. "Leontopithecus chrysomelas" (On-line), Animal Diversity Web. Accessed December 08, 2009 at http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Leontopithecus_chrysomelas.html.