

Social Structure and Mating Systems of Saki Monkeys in the ACRCTT
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Lauren Frisoli, a graduate student in the M.S. in Biology degree program at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina, carried out a preliminary study in 2008 on the Tahuayo River of the social structure and mating systems of saki monkeys living in the 420,080 hectare Área de Conservación Regional Comunal Tamshiyacu-Tahuayo (ACRCTT). One of our goals is to carry out long term studies of the primates in the area. My students and I also mapped habitat, food resources and locations of monkeys and will use this information to help establish a permanent data base on the study area which we hope can be used for long-term monitoring of the monkey populations and by other scientists studying plants or animals in the area.

Field guides list two species as being in the area, monk sakis (*Pithecia monachus*) and equatorial sakis (*Pithecia aequatorialis*), however, primatologists have recently raised questions about the identity of the species of saki monkey found in the reserve and, in fact, whether there is a single saki species in the area, or two and researchers are currently revising the taxonomy of the *Pithecia*, the genus to which sakis belong. In several surveys in the ACRCTT over the last few years my graduate students and I have sought to determine the current status of the primates in the reserve and to help resolve questions about exactly which species are represented. Lauren's fieldwork will help us determine whether there really are two species of sakis present or only one. In addition, her data should give us a good idea about the size and age-sex composition of saki groups in the area. Since different saki species have been thought to live in groups with different mating systems, Lauren's observations of group size and composition should help resolve the question of which species are present in the area.

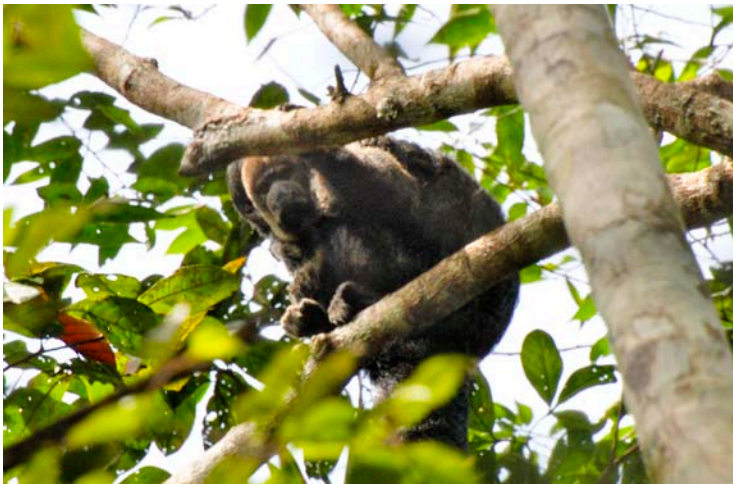


Photo by Derrick Brasington.

Dr. Chism serves as an advisor to the RCF Board of Directors.

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