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Armadillos

FAMILY | **Dasypodidae**

The IUCN Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group recognizes 22 species of armadillo, all of which occur in South America. Feijó *et al.* (2018) proposed treating Southern Long-nosed Armadillo *Dasypos hybridus* as a subspecies of Seven-banded Armadillo *D. septemcinctus*, and Feijó *et al.* (2021) proposed that subspecies *squamicaudis* of Southern Naked-tailed Armadillo should be treated as a full species, **Cerrado Naked-tailed Armadillo** *Cabassous squamicaudis*, but neither proposal had been adopted by IUCN at the time of writing and consequently this treatment is not followed here.

Armadillos are covered by a protective, bony shell, or carapace, which has movable bands in the middle to enable the animal to bend. The underparts are soft and either naked or lightly furred. The feet have long, broad claws for digging. They are terrestrial and largely solitary animals. Many are predominantly nocturnal, although some species are active also by day. They feed primarily on insects, particularly ants and termites, but will occasionally feed also on vertebrates and plants.

Dasypos armadillos (9 species) have a long, slender nose that is normally more than half the length of the head, plus long naked ears, and a long tail more than half the combined length of the head and body. The final two-thirds of the tail are encased by narrow rings of two or more rows of scales, and the tail tapers to a slender tip. The carapace is generally smooth, the exception being Hairy Long-nosed Armadillo, on which it is covered by a dense coat of hairs. The carapace consists of scapular and pelvic shields separated by between 6 and 11 movable bands. The front feet have four long claws and the hind feet five claws.

Chaetophractus armadillos (2 species) have prominent hairs on the upperparts which range in color from tan to buff and black. They can resemble Six-banded (Yellow) Armadillo *Euphractus sexcinctus*, but have a proportionately broader head shield, shorter ears, and a separate movable band on the front edge of the scapular shield.

Cabassous armadillos (4 species) are medium-sized armadillos with dorsal plates arranged in transverse rows across the length of the carapace. They have a short, broad snout, small eyes and moderately large, funnel-shaped ears. The distinctive naked tail is slender and lacks the armor of other armadillos, but it may have small, thin, widely spaced plates.

Tolypeutes (2 species) are small to medium-sized armadillos with a distinctive rounded carapace and normally three movable bands. They have an elongated flat head shield. They also have conspicuous hair below the carapace. The only armadillos that roll into a ball.

The remaining five species are from the monotypic genera *Calyptothractus*, *Chlamyphorus*, *Euphractus*, *Zaedyus* and *Priondotes*.



Six-banded Armadillo (LEFT); Southern Three-banded Armadillo (RIGHT)

NT Southern Long-nosed Armadillo

Dasypus hybridus

Description: One of the smallest of the long-nosed armadillos, this species has a narrow snout and long ears. The upper surfaces of the head, body and tail are covered by a dark gray carapace of bony scales, with very little hair. The central part of the carapace is divided into 6–8 movable bands. The scales on the scapular and pelvic shields are hexagonal, while those on the bands are rectangular and marked with a ‘V’-shaped groove that divides them into three triangular sections. The scales on the head are variable in shape. The tail is ringed for about two-thirds of its length and has a slender tip. The underparts are dark brown and sparsely haired. There are four toes on each front foot and five on each hind foot.

Similar species: Nine-banded Armadillo (p. 45) is much larger, has fewer movable bands, a proportionately longer tail and much longer ears. Seven-banded Armadillo (p. 49) is smaller and darker, with a proportionately longer tail and much longer ears.

Habitat: Usually found from sea level up to 2,300 m in grassland habitats and Pampas, and less commonly in forested habitats. Occurs also in some degraded habitats (arable land, pastures and plantations). Normally burrows in sandy soils.

HB:	26–31 cm
Tail:	15.0–19.1 cm
Wt:	1.09–2.40 kg



Distribution: S Brazil, Uruguay and south to the province of Buenos Aires, in Argentina. There are two records from Paraguay. Not so widespread as previously thought, as reports from farther west, close to the Andes, are now known to be the result of misidentifications.



NE Kappler's Long-nosed Armadillo*Dasypus kappleri*

Description: Like Pastaza and Beni (p. 44) Long-nosed Armadillos (with neither of which it overlaps in range), distinguished from other *Dasypus* armadillos by the enlarged downward-projecting scales at the knee, its wide tail base, and the lighter skin color on the part of the head that is not covered by the head shield. Appears elongated, with a long, narrow and conical head. The ears are long, funnel-shaped and close together, almost joining at the base. The long, totally armored tail is broad-based and more than 80% of the length of the combined head and body; the scales on the proximal tail rings are keeled. The carapace is divided into a scapular shield, a pelvic shield with a unique pattern of smooth, uniformly sized scales, and 7–8 movable bands between the two shields. The face is pink and the upperparts dark gray-brown. The underparts are paler, and the belly has no protective armor. The species has characteristic skull features that can be observed on museum specimens but not on live animals.

Similar species: Nine-banded Armadillo (p. 45) is much smaller, with a proportionately longer tail.

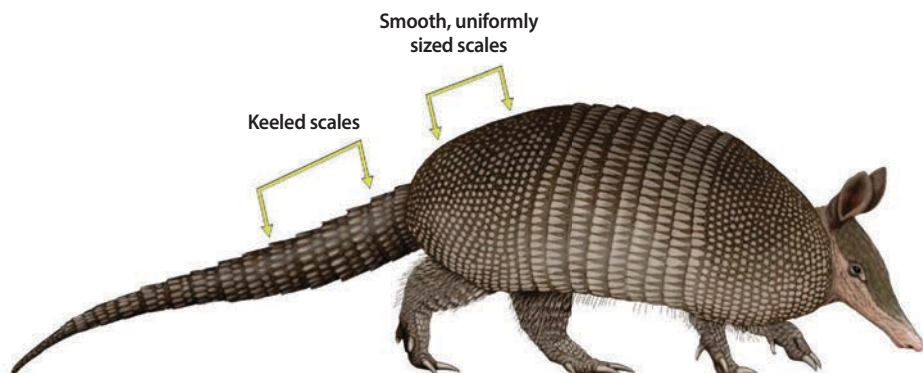
Habitat: The Orinoco and Amazon River Basins, where restricted to tropical moist

HB:	51–58 cm
Tail:	30.5–45.6 cm
Wt:	8.5–11.8 kg



lowland forests. In savanna areas generally confined to forest patches.

Distribution: Found in E Venezuela (south of the Orinoco River), Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, and Brazil east of the Negro–Branco Rivers and north of the lower Amazon River.



NE Pastaza Long-nosed Armadillo

Dasyurus pastasae

Description: Like Kappler's and Beni (*p. 44*) Long-nosed Armadillos (with neither of which it overlaps in range), distinguished from other *Dasyurus* armadillos by the enlarged downward-projecting scales at the knee, its wide tail base, and the lighter skin color on the part of the head that is not covered by the head shield. Appears elongated, with a long, narrow and conical head. The ears are long, funnel-shaped and close together, almost joining at the base. The long, totally armored tail is broad-based and more than 80% of the length of the combined head and body; the scales on the proximal tail rings are flattened. The carapace is divided into a scapular shield, a pelvic shield with rough-textured, irregularly sized scales, and 7–8 movable bands between the two shields. The face is pink and the upperparts dark gray-brown. The underparts are paler, and the belly has no protective armor. The species has characteristic skull features that can be observed on museum specimens but not on live animals.

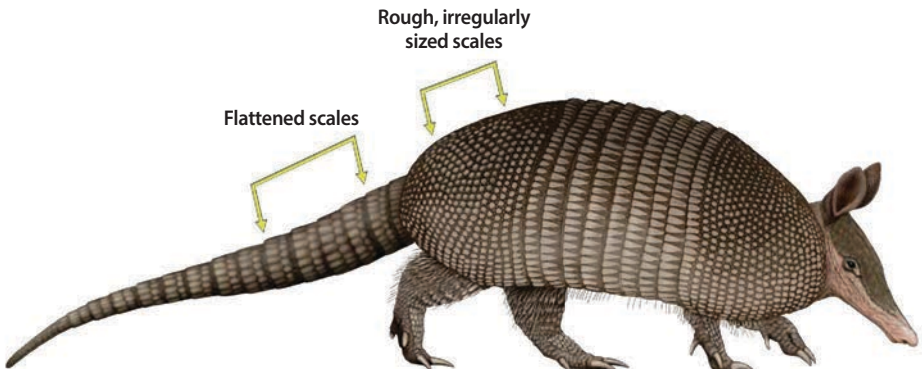
Similar species: Nine-banded Armadillo (*p. 45*) is much smaller and has a proportionately longer tail.

Habitat: Found exclusively in lowland tropical rainforest.

HB:	51–58 cm
Tail:	33–48 cm
Wt:	8.5–10.5 kg



Distribution: Occurs in the foothills of the eastern Andes in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela south of the Orinoco River, and extends into W Brazil between the Madeira and Branco Rivers. It appears to be sympatric with Kappler's Long-nosed Armadillo in E Venezuela.



NE Beni Long-nosed Armadillo*Dasybus beniensis*

Description: Like Kappler's (p. 42) and Pastaza (p. 43) Long-nosed Armadillos (with neither of which it overlaps in range), distinguished from other *Dasybus* armadillos by the enlarged downward-projecting scales at the knee, its wide tail base, and the lighter skin color on the part of the head that is not covered by the head shield. Appears elongated, with a long, narrow and conical head. The ears are long, funnel-shaped and close together, almost joining at the base. The long, totally armored tail is broad-based and more than 80% of the length of the combined head and body; the scales on the proximal tail rings are flattened. The carapace is divided into a scapular shield, a pelvic shield with rough-textured, irregularly sized scales, and 7–8 movable bands between the two shields. The face is pink and the upperparts dark gray-brown. The underparts are paler, and the belly has no protective armor. The species has characteristic skull features that can be observed on museum specimens but not on live animals.

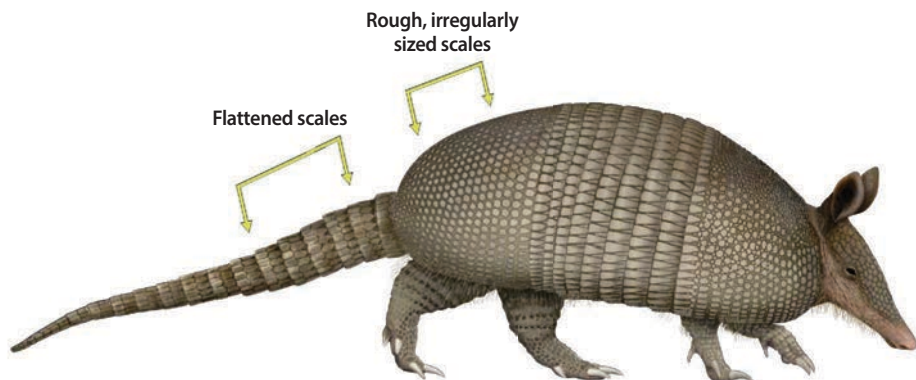
Similar species: Nine-banded Armadillo is smaller, with a proportionately longer tail.

Habitat: Restricted to tropical lowland rainforest.

HB:	51–58 cm
Tail:	33–48 cm
Wt:	8.5–10.5 kg



Distribution: Occurs to the south of the lower Amazon and Madeira Rivers in Brazil and south of the Madre de Dios River in Bolivia. The southern limit of its range is to the north of the dry Chaco forests and savannas in Bolivia and the Caatinga and Cerrado in Brazil.



LC **Nine-banded Armadillo**

Dasyus novemcinctus

Description: A medium-sized elongated-looking armadillo with a long, narrow and conical head. The ears are long, funnel-shaped and close together. The long, totally armored tail is approximately two-thirds the length of the head and body combined. The carapace is divided into a scapular shield, a pelvic shield, and 8–10 movable bands between these two. The small plates which compose the scapular and pelvic shields are polygonal in shape and smaller than the rectangular plates on the mobile bands. The upperparts are dark gray-brown, while the flanks are yellowish. The belly is yellowish-pink and sparsely covered with white hairs. Easily separated from other *Dasyus* armadillos by the 8–10 movable bands and the long tail and ears; can be distinguished also by the blackish coloration with yellowish-white triangular scales on the posterior edge of the movable bands. Has proportionately the longest ears (just under half of head length) and tail (equal to or greater than body length) of all the *Dasyus* armadillos.

Similar species: Most closely resembles Seven-banded Armadillo (p. 49), but that species is much smaller and lacks pale edges to the 6–7 movable bands. The naked-tailed armadillos (pp. 60–61) lack armor on the tail and have more widely spaced ears.

HB:	36–57 cm
Tail:	26–45 cm
Wt:	3–7 kg



Habitat: A wide variety of habitats at up to 2,600 m (normally below 1,500 m), including degraded habitats such as arable land, pastures, rural gardens, urban areas, plantations, and heavily degraded subtropical and tropical forests.

Distribution: Widespread across South America, including Trinidad, as far south as central Argentina. Range extends through Central America and Mexico, and into S USA.



DD Hairy Long-nosed Armadillo*Dasypus pilosus*

Description: Poorly known but distinctive, with long, thick, yellow to light brown hair growing out of and covering the carapace. The same type of hair is present on the cheeks and the proximal portion of the limbs, and the underparts are covered by shorter, sparser hair. The long and slender snout is more than half the length of the head. The eyes are narrow slits, the ears are long, conical and hairless, and the slender tail tapers to a point. The front part of the tail is protected by rings of scales. The front feet have four strong claws and the hind feet have five.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Subtropical montane deciduous and evergreen forests, including sub-páramo habitats, from 2,600 m to 3,000 m. In areas with dense or shady cover and limestone formations.

Distribution: Restricted to the Peruvian Andes, where it is known from the departments of San Martín, La Libertad, Pasco, Huánuco, Junín and Amazonas.

HB:	32–44 cm
Tail:	23–31 cm
Wt:	1.0–1.5 kg



NT Northern (Llanos) Long-nosed Armadillo *Dasypus sabanicola*

Description: Long-eared, the ears being almost joined at the base. The carapace is dark, but paler on the sides, and normally has 8–9 movable bands with triangular scales. The underparts are yellowish-pink and are sparsely covered with pale hairs. The tail is covered with armored rings. The legs are short, and the four toes on the forefeet and five on the hind feet are long and have strong claws.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Mainly in flooded savannas, open lowlands and riparian forests at up to 500 m.

Distribution: The Llanos of Venezuela and Colombia.

HB:	25–31 cm
Tail:	17–21 cm
Wt:	1–2 kg



DD **Yungas Lesser Long-nosed Armadillo***Dasypus mazzai*

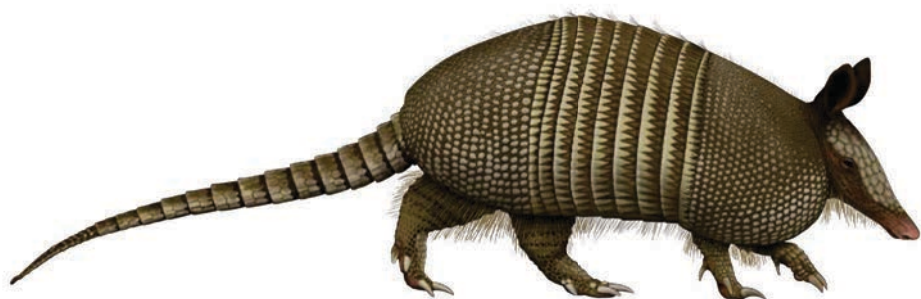
Description: Formerly known as *Yepes's Long-nosed Armadillo* *D. yepesi*. The carapace has 7–9 (usually 8) movable bands, the ears are roughly half the length of the skull, and it has a relatively long tail more than half the length of the head and body. The sides of the carapace are lighter-colored than those of other *Dasypus* armadillos.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: At 450–1,800 m in a variety of environments ranging from xeric habitats to humid montane forest.

Distribution: Known from nine locations in Jujuy, Salta and Santa Fe Provinces in Argentina, but thought likely to occur also in SW Bolivia and possibly Paraguay.

HB:	approx. 31 cm
Tail:	18–23 cm
Wt:	2.0–2.5 kg



Dasyus septemcinctus

LC **Seven-banded Armadillo**

Description: The smallest of the *Dasyus* armadillos and with a long, narrow, conical head and long ears that are relatively close together. The carapace is grayish-brown to dark brown, the sides being slightly darker than the dorsum, and with polygonal-shaped plates covering the pelvic and scapular regions: these are smaller than the rectangular plates found on the 6–7 movable bands. The tail is relatively long, being slightly more than half the length of the head and body, and the proximal half of the tail has 9–13 distinct rings each with two rows of scales.

Similar species: Nine-banded Armadillo (p. 45) is much larger and lighter-colored, with a longer tail, and has 8–10 rather than 6–7 movable bands.

Habitat: Generally a grassland and savanna species, but occurs also in gallery forest in SE Brazil. Appears to be adaptable to human disturbance and secondary habitats.

Distribution: Lower Amazon Basin of Brazil to the Gran Chaco of Bolivia, Paraguay, and

HB:	24.0–30.5 cm
Tail:	12.5–17.0 cm
Wt:	1.0–1.8 kg



possibly N Argentina, although its southern limit is unclear.



LC Screaming Hairy Armadillo*Chaetophractus vellerosus*

Description: A smallish armadillo, similar in size to Pichi (*p. 52*). The upperparts are grayish with pinkish or yellowish edges to the scutes, and both the upperparts and the underparts are extensively haired. The long hair on the upperparts is tan-colored and the hair on the cheeks, throat, limbs and belly is whitish. The nose is pinkish. The large head shield is convex and curves over the eyes. The scapular shield is relatively small. The carapace is rounded, with 7–8 movable bands, and is covered with light-colored elongated bristly hairs, while the underside of the body is covered with close hairs.

Andean Hairy Armadillo *C. nationi* is no longer considered a valid species and is now considered synonymous with Screaming Hairy Armadillo.

Similar species: Pichi (*p. 52*) and Large Hairy Armadillo also have gray ears, but these are proportionately shorter and do not project above the head. Pichi also has a distinctive, sharply pointed serrated edge to the carapace.

Habitat: Occurs at up to 4,600 m primarily in xeric environments in lowland and upland areas, as well as in high-altitude grasslands with loose sandy soils. Found also in pasture and agricultural areas. In Buenos Aires

HB:	20–30 cm
Tail:	8.0–13.8 cm
Wt:	640 g–1.33 kg



Province found on sandy-calcareous soils in grasslands with low vegetation and high vegetation cover.

Distribution: Chaco region of Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina, with a disjunct population in eastern Buenos Aires Province, Argentina. The Andean form is found at high altitudes in Chile, Bolivia and Argentina.



LC Large Hairy Armadillo

ChaetophRACTUS villosus

Description: The largest *ChaetophRACTUS* armadillo. The head shield is broad, covering the dorsal part of the head and extending almost to the end of the thick snout. The carapace has 18 transverse bands, the central 7–8 of which are movable. The central portion of the carapace is divided by bands of skin that provide flexibility to the otherwise rigid upperparts. Hairier than most armadillo species, the underparts of this species are densely covered with whitish or light reddish-brown hairs, while long, coarse brown hairs project from the plates covering the upperparts.

Similar species: Six-banded Armadillo (p. 53) is usually larger and often more yellowish, with pale guard hairs on the carapace, but it can also appear more reddish-tan with dark brownish hairs. Pichi (p. 52) has a distinctive, sharply pointed serrated edge to the carapace. **Screaming Hairy Armadillo** has proportionately longer ears that project well above the head.

Habitat: Occurs at up to 1,500 m in a wide variety of grasslands (including Pampas and Chaco), savanna, and forest habitats. Found also in cultivated landscapes and some degraded habitats, such as arable land, pastures, rural gardens, and plantations. In Paraguay restricted to xerophytic areas of the

HB:	26.1–40.0 cm
Tail:	11.2–15.6 cm
Wt:	2–5 kg



Chaco, where it occurs in matorral, edges of Chaco woodland, ranch land and agricultural areas.

Distribution: Found in the Gran Chaco of Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina, and as far south as Santa Cruz, in Argentina, and Magallanes, in Chile. Also introduced to Tierra del Fuego Province, in Argentina.



Description: A rather small armadillo. The carapace has seven movable bands ranging in color from light yellow to almost black with a white dorsal line, but is most frequently dark brown, and yellower along the lateral edges of the body. Fine blackish hairs and long yellow, brown and white bristles protrude between the individual plates on the back, while coarse yellowish hairs cover the soft skin on the underside of the body. The bare skin on the face and limbs is almost black.

Similar species: Screaming Hairy Armadillo (p. 50) has proportionately longer ears that project well above the head, and it lacks the distinctive sharply pointed serrated edge of the carapace. Large Hairy Armadillo (p. 51) lacks the distinctive sharply pointed serrated edge to the carapace.

Habitat: Found up to 2,500 m in areas with sandy soils, including xeric grasslands and shrublands, as well as Patagonian steppe habitats.

HB:	22–31 cm
Tail:	8–13 cm
Wt:	700 g–1.5 kg



Distribution: Central & S Argentina and Chile, as far south as the Strait of Magellan.



LC Six-banded (Yellow) Armadillo

Description: A medium-sized armadillo with a large relatively flattened convex carapace and a triangular-shaped head with small ears and a row of plates on the top of the head behind the head shield. A row of scutes extends along the back of the neck. It lacks movable bands at the front edge of the scapular shield. The carapace is narrower towards the head and has 6–7 movable bands. It is pale yellow to reddish-brown and scantily covered by buff to white bristle-like hairs, whereas the hairy armadillos are covered by dense hairs. The tail is scaled. The front feet have five toes with moderately developed claws.

Similar species: Small individuals are most likely to be confused with larger individuals of the **Large Hairy Armadillo** (p. 51), which are generally darker, hairier and more reddish, especially ventrally, with conspicuous tufts of hair on the cheeks, legs and throat.

HB:	40–50 cm
Tail:	20–25 cm
Wt:	3–7 kg



Habitat: Inhabits open areas, savannas, Cerrado, shrubland and dry, semi-deciduous forest. Also in secondary forests, and may occur in primary Amazonian Forest.

Distribution: S Suriname and adjacent areas of Brazil south to Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay and N Argentina.



Additional photo p. 40

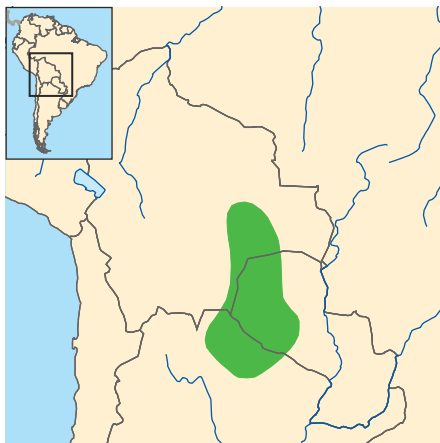
DD Greater (Chacoan) Fairy Armadillo*Calyptophractus retusus*

Description: An unmistakable small armadillo with a pinkish to yellowish-brown carapace. The carapace is thin and flexible and attached along the sides of the body, with a separate rounded pinkish plate over the rump. The lateral edge of the carapace is wavy, and it has 24 dorsal bands which are fused to the pelvis and the spine. The tail is pinkish, short, lightly armored, and flattened with a rounded tip. The underparts, including the legs and the sides of the head and the body, are covered with long, dense, fine white hair, and there are also sparse white hairs on the upperparts. The head shield is broad and the eyes and ears are small. Spends most of its time below ground: the front feet are scoop-shaped with large, curved claws for burrowing, and the hind feet have sharp claws.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Patchily distributed in areas with loose, sandy soils and absent from areas with clay soils. Occurs in disturbed habitats and may be encountered close to villages.

HB:	12.0–17.5 cm
Tail:	3–4 cm
Wt:	90–130 g



Distribution: Restricted to the Gran Chaco region of central & SE Bolivia, W Paraguay and extreme N Argentina.



DD Pink Fairy Armadillo

Chlamyphorus truncatus

Description: The smallest armadillo, with a highly distinctive pale pink carapace. Much of the body is covered in dense, smooth fine white hair, even under the carapace, which has 24 dorsal bands and is attached to the body only along the spine. The head shield is broad and the eyes and ears are tiny; the head has also a unique pair of tiny horns on both sides of the frontal bone. The tail is pink, short and rigid, becoming flat and pointed towards the tip. Spends most of its time in underground burrows, the front claws being especially well developed for digging.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Dry grassland and sandy plains with shrubby vegetation at up to 1,500 m.

Distribution: Restricted to the provinces of southern Buenos Aires, Catamarca, Córdoba, La Pampa, La Rioja, Mendoza, Río Negro, San Juan and San Luis, in central Argentina.

HB:	11–15 cm
Tail:	2.5–3.5 cm
Wt:	approx. 100 g



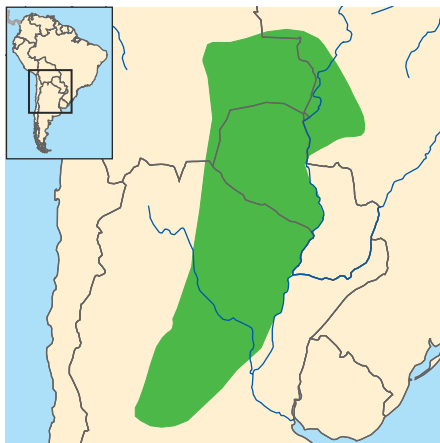
NT Southern Three-banded Armadillo*Tolypeutes matacus*

Description: A small armadillo with a steeply rounded carapace, which is able to roll itself into a tight ball when threatened. The head shield is triangular, and the armor-plating that covers the body is divided into two domed shells, with three armored movable bands in between. Generally sandy-colored, but blackish individuals occur in some parts of the range. Long, thick, pale sandy-colored bristles protrude along the lower edge of the carapace. The large ears are flattened and have a rough edge. The belly is quite heavily furred with dark brownish hair. Bare skin on the sides of the face is similarly dark brown, but the tip of the snout and the nose are pinkish. The legs are short and strong, armored but with a covering of thick brownish hair. Has sharp powerful claws on the front feet and blunter hoof-like claws on the hind feet.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Found mostly at up to 800 m in areas of thorny forest and scrub in the dry Chaco, but present also in palm savanna and gallery forest in the humid Chaco. Occurs also in Cerrado in Brazil.

HB:	20–25 cm
Tail:	5–8 cm
Wt:	800 g–2.2 kg



Distribution: E Bolivia and SW Brazil, south through the Gran Chaco of Paraguay to N & central Argentina as far south as San Luis Province.



Additional photo p. 40

EN **Brazilian Three-banded Armadillo**

Tolypeutes tricinctus

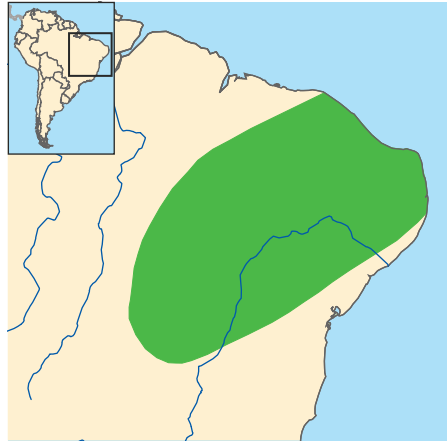
Description: A small armadillo with a steeply rounded carapace, which is able to roll itself into a tight ball when threatened. The carapace is hard and convex with three transverse armored movable bands. The head is triangular in shape, is flattened dorsally and is covered by a shield of approximately 30 plates. The ears are rounded, and can be folded in half when the animal curls up into a ball. The tail is short and completely covered by small round plates. The carapace is dark yellow and the abdomen has long yellow and white hairs.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Caatinga in NE Brazil and in the eastern parts of the Cerrado in central Brazil.

Distribution: NE Brazil, throughout the highlands around the middle course of the São Francisco River and on the eastern slope of the Parnaíba River valley, as well as on the western slope of the Borborema Plateau.

HB:	23–25 cm
Tail:	5–8 cm
Wt:	1.0–1.8 kg



LC Greater Naked-tailed Armadillo*Cabassous tatouay*

Description: The largest of the naked-tailed armadillos, with a brownish-yellow carapace. The muzzle is rounded and robust. The upper surface of the head is covered by a scaled shield, with smaller scales on the ears and on the cheek below each eye, and there are three bands of small plates on the back of the neck. The carapace has solid shields over the shoulders and hips, with 10–13 movable bands between these. The ears are large and funnel-shaped, and placed laterally on the head. The tail is conical, with a few small isolated scales on the underside.

Similar species: Chacoan Naked-tailed Armadillo is as much as 50% smaller, and has much shorter ears that do not extend above the top of the head. Southern Naked-tailed Armadillo (*p. 61*) is reliably distinguished from Greater Naked-tailed Armadillo only on the basis of measurements and scale counts (particularly of the head shield).

Habitat: Tropical lowland and sub-montane forest, possibly including secondary forest. Occurs also in more open areas, including agricultural habitats.

HB:	36–49 cm
Tail:	15–20 cm
Wt:	3.4–6.4 kg



Distribution: E & S Brazil, Uruguay, NE Argentina and SE Paraguay.



NT Chacoan Naked-tailed Armadillo

Cabassous chacoensis

Description: The smallest of the naked-tailed armadillos. The upper surface of the head, body and limbs is armored with thick bony plates, separated by flexible bands of skin. The head is wide, tapering to a short, broad snout, and it has small ears with distinctive fleshy borders. The upperparts are brown or blackish, while the underparts are a dull yellowish-gray. The claws of the forefeet are long and powerful, particularly the middle claw, which is especially large and shaped like a sickle. The tail is poorly armored with a sparse covering of small, thin scales.

Similar species: Greater Naked-tailed Armadillo is up to 50% larger, with much longer ears extending well above the top of the head.

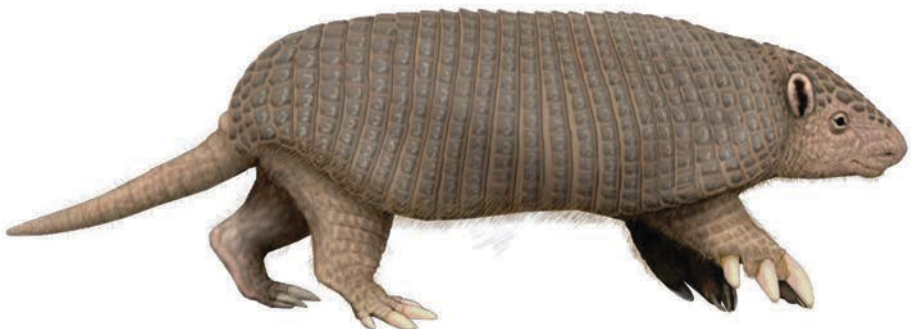


HB:	30–35 cm
Tail:	9.0–9.6 cm
Wt:	1.0–1.5 kg



Habitat: Restricted to Chaco thorn forests and not found in cultivated areas.

Distribution: Restricted to the Gran Chaco of W Paraguay and north-central Argentina.



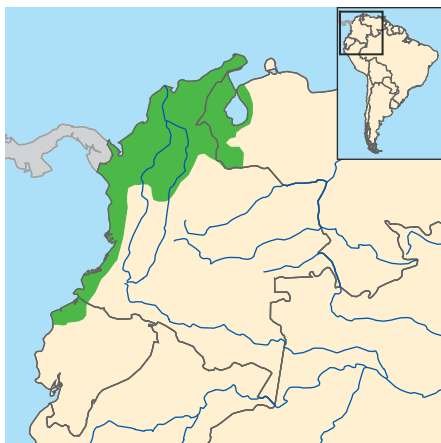
DD Northern Naked-tailed Armadillo*Cabassous centralis*

Description: A broad, relatively flattened armadillo, this species has a short (less than half of the head-and-body length), pinkish-gray tail that appears naked. The carapace is dark gray-brown with a clear pinkish band around its lower part. The scales are large and square-shaped, and it has 10–13 inconspicuous, movable bands on the back. The head is broad, with widely spaced and moderately large, funnel-shaped ears. The eyes are extremely small.

Similar species: Southern Naked-tailed Armadillo is larger. Nine-banded Armadillo (p. 45) has ears set closer together and also has an armored tail.

Habitat: Lives at up to 3,000 m in dry to moderately moist deciduous and semi-deciduous forests, at forest edges in rocky terrain, and in open habitats such as dry savanna. Found also in secondary forest habitat including a mix of forest and agricultural land. Occurs in tropical moist montane forests and in the sub-páramo of the central Andean highlands in Colombia.

HB:	30–38 cm
Tail:	13.0–18.3 cm
Wt:	2.0–3.5 kg



Distribution: West of the Andes in NW Ecuador, W & N Colombia and NW Venezuela. Range extends through Central America and into SE Mexico.



LC Southern Naked-tailed Armadillo

Cabassous unicinctus

Description: Medium-sized armadillo, but with considerable variation in size. The carapace is dark gray, normally with a bright yellow border to the lower edge, and it extends over the base of the legs. It also extends up between the ears and has dorsal plates arranged as bands over its entire length, including 10–13 movable bands. The scales are small, inconspicuous and square. The underparts are tan-colored and unscaled. The head is broad, with a blunt nose, and the large rounded, funnel-like ears are set widely apart. The head shield extends between the ears. The gray tail is long and narrow, and lacks protective scales; it can be pale-tipped.

Similar species: Northern Naked-tailed Armadillo is smaller and does not have a uniform pale-tipped tail. Greater Naked-tailed Armadillo is reliably distinguished from Southern Naked-tailed Armadillo only on the basis of measurements and scale counts (particularly of the head shield), but it tends to be more brownish-yellow rather than dark gray.

Habitat: Tropical lowland and sub-montane forest, possibly including secondary forest, gallery forest and Cerrado savannas.

HB:	29.0–44.5 cm
Tail:	8.7–20.0 cm
Wt:	1.6–3.6 kg



Distribution: East of the Andes from N Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and N & E Bolivia through to Venezuela, Guyana, French Guiana and Suriname in the north and to Mato Grosso do Sul (Brazil) in the south. Recently discovered in Paraguay.



NT Giant Armadillo*Priodontes maximus*

Description: Unmistakable: the largest armadillo, having enormous legs and feet with a greatly enlarged claw on the front feet. The head is covered by protective scales and is relatively small and conical, and the small ears are set widely apart at the back of the head. The carapace can be gray or reddish to dark brown, with a wide yellow stripe along each side. There are 11–13 movable bands on the back and a further 3–4 on the neck. The carapace does not cover the lower sides or legs. The tail is long and tapered, and covered with small scales. The underparts are unscaled and pinkish.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Occurs at up to 500 m, often close to water within undisturbed primary rainforest habitats, but also in more open Cerrado habitats in parts of Brazil.

Distribution: Widespread east of the Andes in Colombia, N Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil and N Argentina.

HB:	75–100 cm
Tail:	40–50 cm
Wt:	20–60 kg (exceptionally to 80 kg)



Anteaters

FAMILIES | **Myrmecophagidae & Cyclopedidae**

IUCN recognizes ten species of anteater, following the proposal by Miranda *et al.* (2017) that Silky Anteater should be treated as seven distinct species. Three of these seven are newly described species, while three are reinstated species.

All anteaters are largely solitary. Giant Anteater is terrestrial and also a good swimmer, and the two tamanduas are both terrestrial and arboreal. Silky anteaters are primarily arboreal and nocturnal, while Giant Anteater and tamanduas are both diurnal and nocturnal. They feed primarily on ants and/or termites, but tamanduas have been observed feeding also on bees, honey and palm fruit. Silky anteaters appear to feed exclusively on ants.

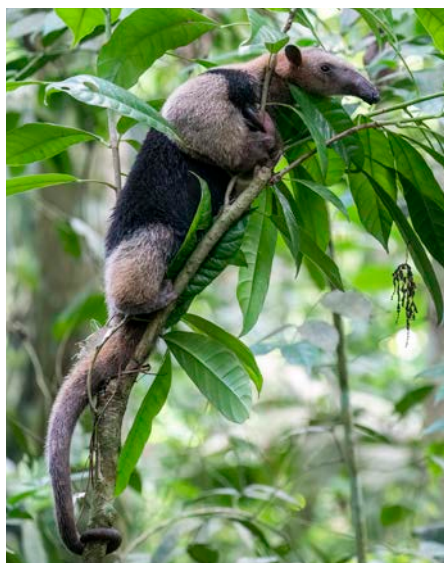


Southern Tamandua (TOP); Giant Anteater (with infant on back) (BOTTOM)

LC Northern Tamandua*Tamandua mexicana*

Description: A medium-sized anteater with a long, tapered nose and a blotchy, prehensile tail that is furred for a third of its length. The most common coloration is golden-brown, with a distinctive patch of black fur ('vest') over the flanks, back and shoulders, but it can also be cream-colored. Very similar to Southern Tamandua but appears not to overlap in range.

Similar species: None in range.



HB:	52–77 cm
Tail:	40.0–67.5 cm
Wt:	3–6 kg



Habitat: Tropical and subtropical dry and moist forest, including mixed deciduous and evergreen forests. Also in mangroves, in grasslands with scattered trees, and in secondary forest and disturbed habitats.

Distribution: West of the Andes from Colombia to W Ecuador, NW Peru and NW Venezuela. Range extends through Central America and into S & E Mexico.



LC Southern Tamandua

Tamandua tetradactyla

Description: Often very similar in appearance to Northern Tamandua and most 'vested' individuals cannot be safely separated in the field, although the two species appear not to overlap in range. Southern Tamandua can be highly variable in appearance, those in N Brazil, S Venezuela and the Guianas often being totally blond and without a 'vest'. Animals from western Amazonia may be 'vested', partially 'vested', blond or completely black. The dark parts of the body may be black, sooty-gray or brown, and the pale areas may range from blond to golden-brown.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Lives at up to 2,000 m in a variety of habitats, including gallery forest adjacent to savanna, lowland and montane moist tropical rainforest and mangroves.

Distribution: East of the Andes in Colombia, Venezuela, Trinidad and the Guianas, south through E Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Brazil to N Uruguay and N Argentina.

HB:	47–77 cm
Tail:	40–67 cm
Wt:	3.5–8.4 kg



Additional photo p. 63

VU Giant Anteater

Myrmecophaga tridactyla

Description: A distinctive tricolored anteater with a long, tapered nose and a long bushy tail, creating a unique elongated appearance. The overall coloration is brownish, with a black stripe banded by white or cream running from the throat and across each shoulder on to the middle of the back. The forelegs are cream, each with a black band on the wrist. There are four huge claws on the front feet and five on the hind feet. Walks on the knuckles, with the claws folded up into the palms for protection. Females are often observed to carry young on their back.

Similar species: None.

Habitat: Tropical moist forest, including upland forest in the Brazilian Amazon, dry forest, savanna habitats and open grasslands, and in the Gran Chaco and timber plantations. Easily located at long range in open grasslands, and can often be approached closely so long as the observer remains downwind.

Distribution: East of the Andes and south as far as N Argentina. Now thought to be extinct in Uruguay and in several states in

HB:	100–140 cm
Tail:	60–90 cm
Wt:	22–45 kg



S Brazil. Reported in Ecuador west of the Andes, but this requires confirmation. Range extends discontinuously through Central America as far as Honduras.



Additional photo p. 63

LC Common Silky Anteater

Cyclops didactylus

Description: A tiny woolly anteater. The nose is relatively blunt compared with that of other anteaters, and this species has a long, tapered, furry prehensile tail, although the underside of the final quarter and the entire tip are naked. It has brownish-yellow upperparts and gray underparts, legs, rump and tail. This species is the only silky anteater with clearly marked dark dorsal and ventral stripes. Some populations of Common Silky Anteater may have an indistinct ventral stripe or lack it entirely. Silky Anteaters could be confused with a small squirrel, but squirrels do not have a furry prehensile tail.

Similar species: Xingu Silky Anteater (p. 72) is generally gray, lacking yellowish tones. Rio Negro Silky Anteater (p. 68) lacks distinct dorsal and ventral stripes. Red Silky Anteater (p. 73) has a reddish appearance and lacks distinct stripes.

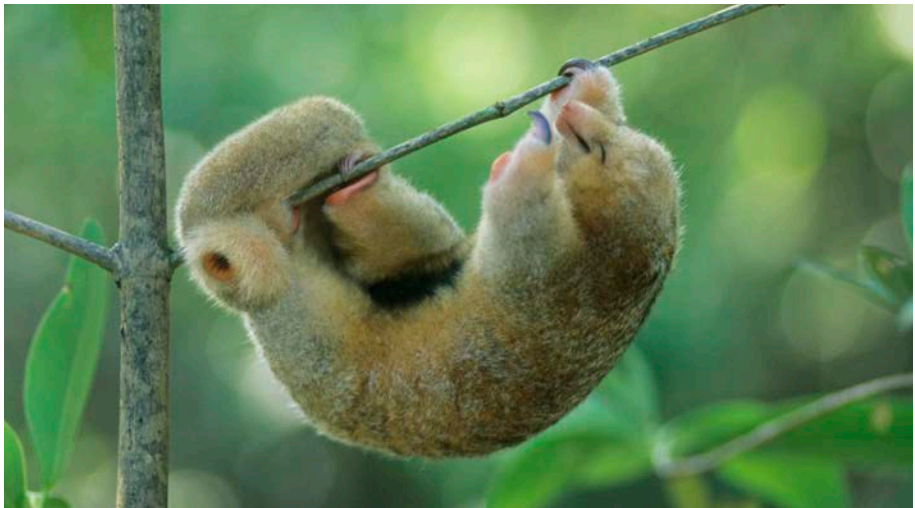
Habitat: Primary and secondary forests, including semi-deciduous and evergreen tropical moist lowland forest, gallery forest and mangrove forest. Most often encountered among small stems, vines and lianas.

Distribution: Occurs on Trinidad and from E Colombia, through E & S Venezuela and the Guianas, into N and NE Brazil,

HB:	20.1–20.5 cm
Tail:	16.5–29.5 cm
Wt:	approx. 300 g



as far south as the São Francisco River. Has a disjunct distribution in Brazil: one population occurs to the north-east of the Amazon River in the states of Pará and Amapá, towards Maranhão and Piauí; the other is found in the north-eastern Atlantic Forest, including the states of Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Pernambuco, and Alagoas.



NE Rio Negro Silky Anteater*Cyclopes ida*

Description: The upperparts, legs and tail are usually gray, sometimes with an indistinct dorsal stripe. The underparts are light yellow and lack a ventral stripe. The front of the head has a slightly concave profile.

Similar species: Red Silky Anteater (p. 73) is distinguished by its brighter reddish coloration and lack of dorsal and ventral stripes. Thomas's Silky Anteater (p. 71) tends to be yellower, with gray legs and tail. Common Silky Anteater (p. 67) has a distinct dorsal stripe, and Central American Silky Anteater is yellowish without any gray tones.

Habitat: Amazonian Forest, particularly in areas of seasonally flooded black-water forest, and along small tributaries and canals.

Distribution: Found in Brazil west and south of the Negro River, with its southern limit being the Amazon River. Also occurs in N Peru and E Ecuador. There is an additional record from the eastern Andean forests of Colombia, but the species' northern limit is unknown.

HB:	20.1–20.5 cm
Tail:	16.5–29.5 cm
Wt:	approx. 300 g



NE Central American Silky Anteater

Cyclopes dorsalis

Description: Distinctly yellow throughout, with no grayish parts. The dorsal stripe is irregular but distinctive. A ventral stripe is generally lacking, but, when present, it is weakly marked. The front of the head has a straight rather than slightly concave profile.

Similar species: Rio Negro Silky Anteater is grayish with an indistinct dorsal stripe.

Habitat: Tropical rainforest and mangrove swamps.

Distribution: Pacific coast of Ecuador and N & NW Colombia, and also in the inter-Andean valleys of Colombia. Range extends through Central America and into SE Mexico.

HB:	18.5–21.5 cm
Tail:	17.0–22.5 cm
Wt:	155–275 g



NE **Amboro (Yungas) Silky Anteater**

Cyclopes catellus

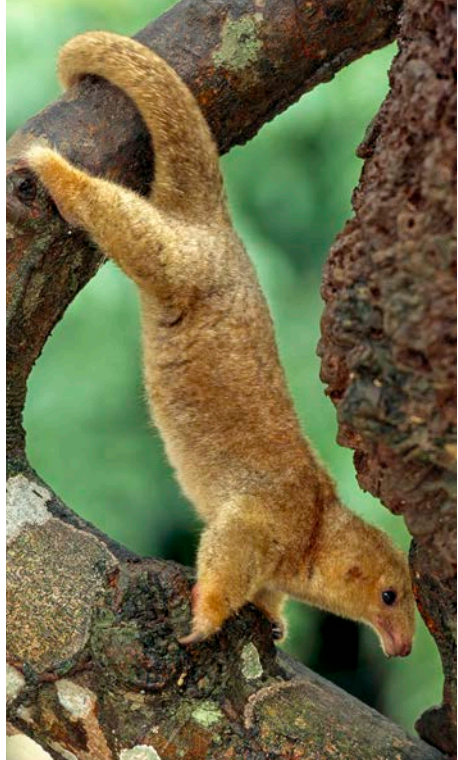
Description: Overall brownish-yellow, the tail and limbs appearing more yellow than the rest of the body. Lacks a dark dorsal stripe but has an extensive well-developed ventral stripe. The front of the head has a straight profile.

Similar species: None in range.

Habitat: Andean-slope forests and Yungas forests.

Distribution: Forests on the Andean slopes of central Bolivia and in Bahuaje-Sonene National Park in Peru.

HB:	20.1–20.5 cm
Tail:	16.5–29.5 cm
Wt:	approx. 300 g



Index

This index includes the English and (in *italics*) scientific names of all the mammals referred to in the book. **CAPITALIZED** text is used for ‘types’ of mammals; **bold text** highlights families or subfamilies and those species that are the subject of a main species account or are illustrated; regular text is used for alternative English names and other species that are mentioned but not subject to a full account. *Italicized* numbers indicate other pages where is a photograph or illustration.

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