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Alessandra A. Silva

Washington University in St. Louis

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VOCAL COMMUNICATION TO FACILITATE DISPERSAL IN *SAGUINUS IMPERATOR* AND *SAGUINUS WEDDELLI*

Alessandra A. Silva

Mentor: Mrinalini Erkenwick Watsa

Emperor (*Saguinus imperator*) and saddleback (*S. weddelli*) tamarins live in groups of two to nine adult and subadult males and females. Since each group's primary (and only) breeding female tends to maintain her role in the group for many years, most offspring, upon reaching sexual maturity, must leave to find a group in which they stand a chance to become a breeder. We believe they do not encounter potential mates simply by chance, but rather through communication, such as vocalizations. The Los Amigos Biological Field Station in Peru has run an annual capture and release program for eight years, and is able to identify the age, sex, and reproductive status of every individual in the area. The primary breeding female of each group was fitted with a radio collar; by tuning, changing the gain, and adjusting the frequency on a radio telemeter receiver, we used an antenna to locate the group. Remaining individuals were identified by a bleaching pattern and unique bead collar. Researchers trekked on and off trails through primary and secondary forest for eight hours at a time following an assigned tamarin group, recording behaviors via focal and scan methods. Two-minute scans—regular behavior censuses—were run every five minutes; focals were also recorded regularly, in which one reported (into a voice recorder) a randomly selected individual's behavior continuously for 15 minutes. A more specialized voice recorder captured all vocalizations from the focal individual or any other identifiable members. We tracked the location of the group whenever possible with our GPS, and noted the coordinates of any feeding trees or sleep trees visited that day. Finally, detailed descriptions were noted for any observed scent-marking and mating. This data was collected in the hopes of revealing any trends in behavior within the group, especially in recently mature tamarins.