

Sagui

From *ça-coi*, restless eyes. The smallest of them all, which inhabits the upper Amazon, measures 16 cm, not including its tail—which measures the same in length. American explorer Victor Wolfgang von Hagen (1908–1985) wrote about it: “The *saguis* are classified among the most beautiful animals in the world. Some of them are black, with fingers seemingly inside orange gloves. There are the *leonardos*, as they are called (a name such as this for such a small animal!) for possessing a mane of sorts, similar to a lion. There is also the golden *sagui*.”



Secrets of the forest

Using a multidisciplinary approach, a book recovers legends and records of naturalists to reveal little-known aspects of the Amazon

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PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER 2018

Despite the first “scientific” expedition to the largest tropical forest in the world having been recorded in the 18th century, the Amazon is shrouded in mystery. However, if we consider its size, this could not be any different. It measures approximately 7,000,000 km², covering land that belongs to nine countries. With 60% of the forest occurring in Brazilian territory, the biome is located in the North, Northeast and Central-West regions of the country. While science is still not able to describe or explain a significant part of what exists there, there is considerable accumu-

lated knowledge about the forest, as indicated by the library collection at the Emílio Goeldi Museum of Pará. This is where library technician Olímpia Reis Resque hunted for treasures that comprise *Amazônia exótica: Curiosidades da floresta* (Exotic Amazon: Rarities of the forest; Empíreo), which allows for a somewhat better understanding of the region that in 2000 was named a Natural Heritage Site by the United Nations for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO).

According to a book from a trilogy initiated in 2011, the 57 entries that comprise the book are the result of the efforts of the researcher of Ama-



Pirarara

The pairing of *pi'ra* (fish) + *a'rara* (macaw). An Amazonian fish that can reach 1.3 m in length. "Pirarara means thief of the fish, or fish thief, suggesting that the name comes from the many fish it eats as its prey," as the Portuguese Jesuit priest João Daniel (1722–1776) defined, dedicating the last years of his life, while in prison, to recording his memories and reflections on the 16 years he lived in the Amazon. The material was published in 2004 in the book *Tesouro descoberto no máximo rio Amazonas* (Treasure discovered in the great Amazon River).

Paricá

Taken from *pari'ka*, a species of tobacco. Also known as *angico* and *niopó*, the tree of the family of leguminous plants has good wood. Its fruit, if prepared appropriately, can be used as snuff. In the above image, from the work *Viagem filosófica pelas capitânicas do Grão-Pará, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso e Cuiabá (1783-1792)* (Philosophical travels by the captaincies of Grão-Pará, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso, and Cuiabá [1783–1792]), by Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira (1756–1815), a Mura Indian inhales the *Paricá*.



zonian history to reveal details about the species most used by the local population. "It was a way I could communicate not only about our fauna and flora but also our collection," she says. As the librarian of the institution for 35 years, Resque began her professional career in the museum itself, as an intern, when she was still studying at the Federal University of Pará. It did not take her long to realize that there was no lack of information for her there. With 300,000 volumes, including magazines and books available to the public, and more than 3,000 rare works, the Domingo Soares Ferreira Penna Library, founded in the 19th century, holds the country's largest collection on the Amazon. "After 40 years of visiting the museum on a daily basis, I am still surprised by the collection, which is extremely diverse. I go into the library looking for a book, and I find another that I have never seen before," she recounts.

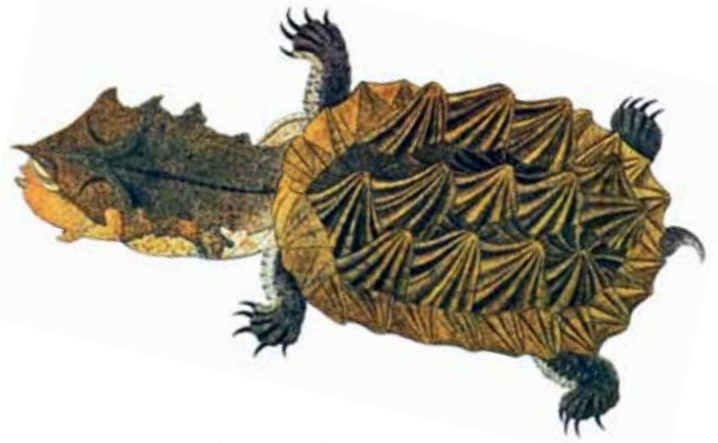
MULTIPLE VIEWS

As indicated by the brief records provided in this report, there is information from varying perspectives in the book. With the selected species organized in alphabetical order, they reveal the etymology of the words, prioritize naturalist reports, and share legends and treasures of the forest inhabitants. In addition to a literature review, which includes rarities such as *Pátria selvagem, a floresta e a vida, mythos amazônicos: Os escravos vermelhos* (Wild homeland, the forest and life, Amazon myths: The red slaves), published at the beginning of the 19th century by Alexandre de Mello Moraes Filho (1844–1919), the book includes a glossary of regional terms, such as *caruana* (good character) and *paul* (bog), and a short biography of approximately 50 travelers who have passed through the region, with a focus on a particular woman. Reading the book, one discovers that the English botanical artist Margaret Mee (1909–1988) started her first expedition to the Amazon at age 47 and maintained contact with the local population for the following three decades.

Some of the images that illustrate the book were taken from the museum's archive and from its own collection of rare works. Some of the watercolors were painted by local contemporary artists, and there are illustrations from websites, such as plant illustrations. Thrilled with the space reserved for the feminine in the minds of the indigenous peoples and riverside communities, in the last volume of the trilogy, Resque attempts to explore the mother figure. "In the Amazon, there is a mother for everything," she says. "Jaci is the mother of the moon, Coaraci, the mother of the sun. For the people of the forest, the jungle is the mother of the animals and must not be disrespected." ■

Pacova

Coming from *pac-oba*, a leaf that can be rolled or that rolls itself. Banana, *figueira-de-adão* and *pacobuçu* are a few of its varieties. "Banana trees are found in great abundance throughout the Amazon valley. In the municipality of Vila Bela, I saw bananas or *pacovas*, as they are called there, colossal in size," wrote Father Francisco Bernardino de Souza (1834–?) in *Lembranças e curiosidades do Vale do Amazonas* (Remembrances and rarities of the Valley of the Amazon) before numbering at least 10 varieties of the fruit, among them the big *pacova* "whose length varies from one to two palms, being 3 inches in diameter.



Matá-matá

In *O nome do jabuty matá-matá* (The name of the *jabuty matá-matá*), Goeldi wrote about the etymology of the word used to describe the tortoise that lives in still waters and feeds on small fish: "Meaning '*matá*' in Aruan, the word for 'leather, skin,' the repetition of the word simply gives more strength to the idea. Such repetitions are a characteristic of the childlike language on one hand, and of the many languages of the primitive peoples on the other."



Jenipapo

A variation of *yanipaba* or *nhandipab*, a fruit used for scrubbing and painting. The peel of the *jenipapo* has medicinal properties. Naturalist João Barbosa Rodrigues (1842–1909) recorded in 1894 that its roots are purgative and that "bathing with its peels can be used for ulcers and diarrhea." Its wood can be used to make canoes and furniture. Anthropologist Luís da Câmara Cascudo (1898–1986) said that the "*janipapeiro* houses ghosts within its branches and, for this reason, on some cattle farms, the herd does not reproduce."

An artistic illustration of three Araponga birds perched on a tree branch. The tree has large, vibrant leaves in shades of yellow, green, and red. One bird is blue with a black face and white belly, another is white with a black face and green throat, and a third is brown with a pinkish-red throat. The birds are shown in various poses, some facing left and some facing right.

Araponga

The combination of the terms *ará* + *ponga* = resonant bird. Found in the states of Pará and Amazonas, the bird is known for producing sounds similar to a bell, and for this reason, it is also called *ferrier* and *blacksmith*. It can also be found in the Guianas and Venezuela. The male (see image to right) is completely white. Naturalist Emilio Goeldi (1859–1917) wrote about the bird in 1894: "There the Araponga also chants its blacksmith nursery rhyme, resembling a hammer handled violently countless times, but with decreasing intensity, repelled and attracted by the anvil."