



Prehensile-tailed porcupine

Coendou prehensilis



Stella

My birthday is **June 2, 2021**

I am a **cautious** and **curious** lady. I may move **leisurely**, but I am **deliberate** about my actions.

I am an **ambassador animal**, and you can find me on **educational programs**. However, when I am off, I like to **sleep** in my den full of straw to keep me warm and comfy.

PORCUPINE AT A GLANCE



- My body is covered in specialized hairs called **quills**. They are **semi-hollow** and **hard**.
- My quills are a **defense** I use to protect myself from danger.
- My quills are made of **keratin**, the same substance that human fingernails are made out of.



- I have a **long tail** that I use to help me climb trees. It helps me **grasp** and **stabilize** myself when I'm climbing.
- My tail is usually as long as my body. It can range between **13 to 19 inches long**.

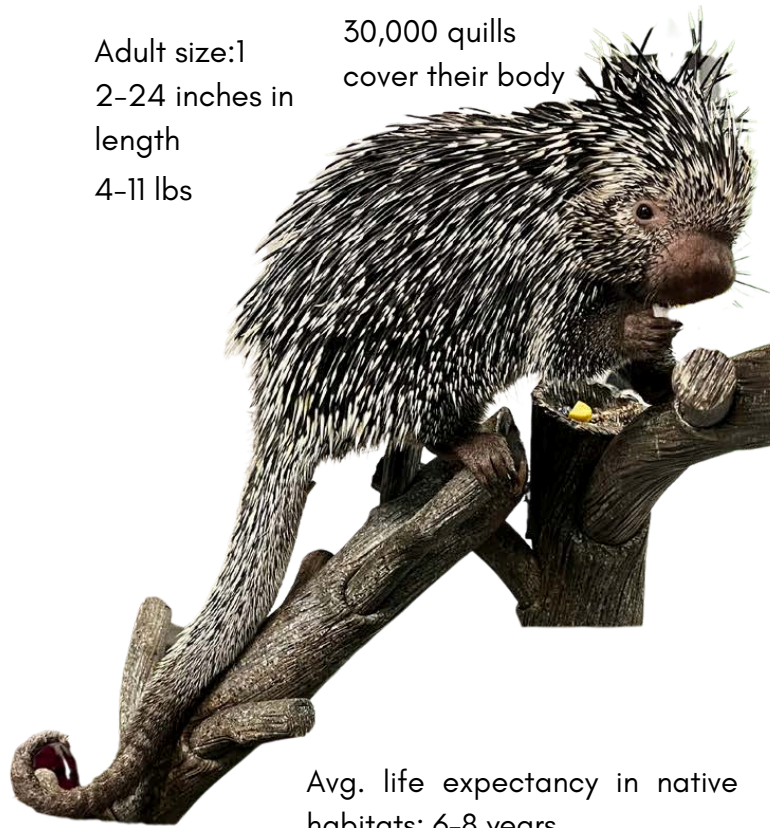


- I have front teeth called **incisors** that **never stop growing**.
- I constantly need to chew on food, trees and branches to maintain their size.
- My incisors are a **reddish-orange** color because it is rich in **iron-oxide**.

Adult size: 1
2-24 inches in
length

4-11 lbs

more than
30,000 quills
cover their body



Avg. life expectancy in native habitats: 6-8 years

Avg. life expectancy in human care: 12-17 years

WHERE ARE NATIVE PREHENSILE-TAILED PORCUPINE HABITATS LOCATED?



Prehensile-tailed porcupines are arboreal and spend most of their time in trees. They rarely come down unless it is to move to a new tree each night. They reside in the tropical rainforests of eastern South America. Their range includes Venezuela, Guiana, Brazil, Paraguay, Trinidad, and Argentina.

Porcupine Behavior

SHAKING QUILLS

When I feel threatened, I will lift my quills so they stick out. I will get on my haunches and shake my quills to make noises.

If I do this, I may be feeling uncomfortable about my surroundings. Please give me space!



LOSING QUILLS

Just like humans lose hairs, I lose and drop my quills from time to time. It is a myth that I can shoot my quills.

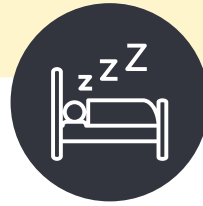
If you see my quills fall out, it is completely natural. I will have new quills grow.



SLEEPING

I'm naturally nocturnal, so I tend to be active during the evening hours and sleepy during the day.

I may be sedentary when you see me. I will need time to wake up and get comfortable before being seen



HANGING AROUND

I use my prehensile tail to help me climb trees and hang from branches. My tail is really strong and curls around branches.

I like to hang around when being presented, and I use my tail to help me balance.

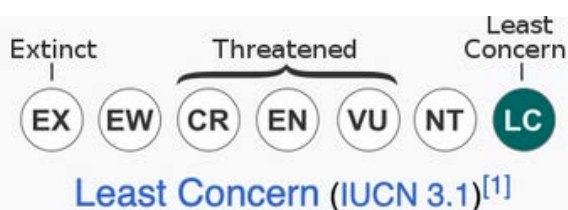


- Prehensile-tailed porcupines tend to live a solitary lifestyle; however, they may spend time together in pairs.
- During the day, they rest in tree hollows or on high branches or forks or shaded parts of the canopy, coming out at night to forage.
- When excited, porcupines stamp their hind feet and if caught, they will roll into a ball.
- A female will usually give birth to a single offspring. The baby porcupine is hairy, reddish-orange.. It is born with its eyes open and can climb almost immediately. Its spines will harden within about one week and in time the baby porcupine will change color.

Porcupine Conservation

There are no significant threats to this species worldwide; however, they are occasionally hunted for food by humans. They are also threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation.

Chinchillas are currently listed as **Least Concern**. However, rainforests in the Amazon as a whole face the threat of deforestation and fragmentation. These dangers put all animals at risk for habitat loss, reduced food availability, and increased predation.



How can we help?

We can help reduce the rainforest destruction by researching and buying products with sustainable ingredients. Finding sustainable coffee and soy products, and limiting the amount of meat we eat are just some ways to decrease our footprint on South American deforestation.