

THE AMAZONIAN MANATEE

This species of Manatee is only found in the Amazon River.



An Amazonian manatee in its habitat



HABITAT

Manatees, like the Boto river dolphin, live in the warm, fresh waters of the Amazon River in South America. During the wet season, they feed in the main part of the Amazon, but when the water levels decrease, they stay in deep pools or lagoons until the next

APPEARANCE

Manatees can range in colour from grey to brown and have leathery feeling skin. Their size is ten to twelve feet in length with no hind flippers and small front ones which they either use as paddles or to punt along the river-bed. Manatees have a huge, flat, horizontal tail, which they pump up and down to propel themselves through the water. They have whiskered faces

BEHAVIOUR

Because Manatees are very slow swimmers and gentle grazers, they are harmless and often get struck by boats. When they are playing they barrel-roll and body-surf but when they're not, they are gliding gracefully through the water with



DIET

Manatees have a simple diet. They are under-water herbivores so they eat marine and fresh water plants. They feed only in the wet seasons and live on fat reserves when it is dry. Manatees have a very strong upper lip which they use to grab onto leaves and plantation, rip it up and push it into their mouths. In the course of one

DID YOU KNOW?

As Manatees' teeth are worn down by all the vegetation, new ones erupt from the back jaw and push through to the front