

THE ROYAL
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
OF SCOTLAND



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From Penguins to Pandas - the conservation game

Armadillo Fact Files

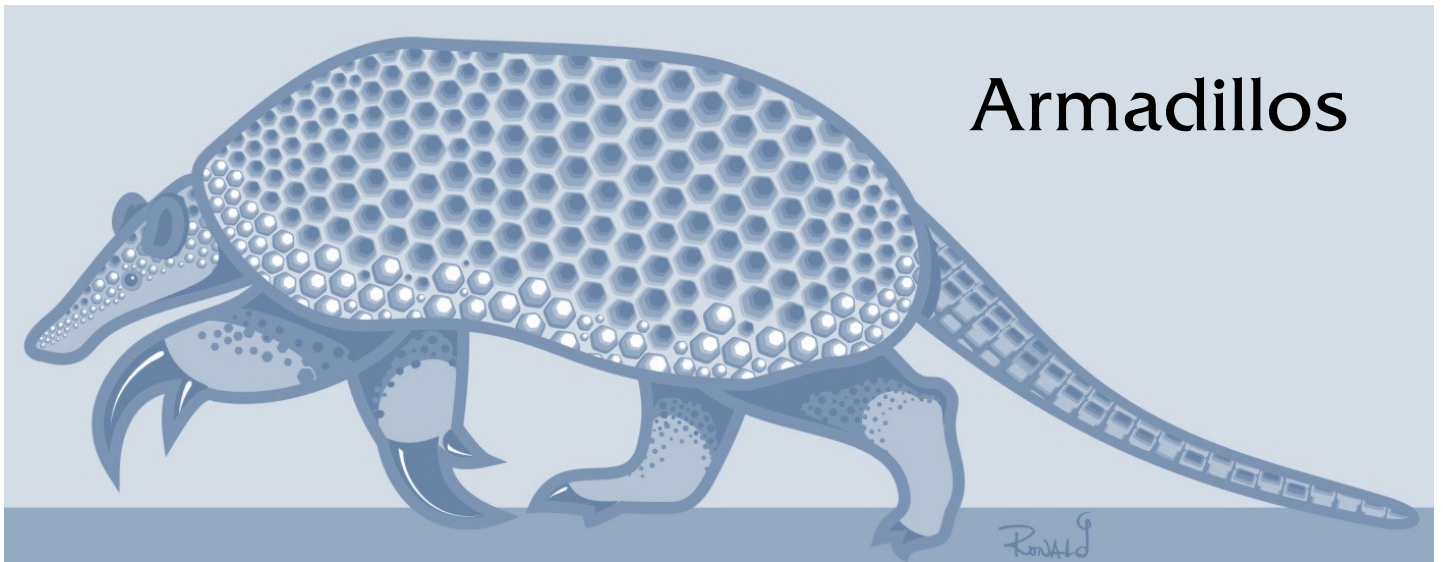
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SCILT Scotland's
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for Languages

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SCOTLAND CHINA EDUCATION NETWORK

Armadillos



There are 21 species of armadillo.

They are divided into 8 groups:

- dwarf
- fairy
- giant
- hairy
- long nosed
- naked tail
- three banded
- yellow banded

All armadillos have an outer covering of strong bony plates and horny skin. Most of the species can bring their legs in under this covering to protect themselves but it is only the three banded armadillos that can roll up into a tight ball.

Most are active at night (nocturnal) and have poor eyesight but very good hearing and sense of smell. They all have large claws on their front feet to dig for insects and for burrowing.

There is little known about some species of armadillo. At the time of writing (*May 2014*), the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) are studying four species - giant, southern naked tail, nine banded and yellow banded. Edinburgh Zoo, owned by RZSS holds 2 species, the larger hairy and the southern three banded. These animals are not on show but are sometimes seen in our animal presentations, such as 'Animal Antics'.

Armadillo in different languages

Portuguese:	tatu
Spanish:	armadillo (it means ' <i>little armoured one</i> ' in Spanish)
French:	tatou
Mandarin Chinese:	犾狽 (qiu yu)

Dwarf armadillo

1 species

dwarf or pichi (*Zaedyus pichiy*)

Distribution Argentina and Chile

Diet insects, spiders and plants

Breeding

gestation 60 days

litter size 1 - 2

Size

Length: 26 - 33cm

Tail length 10 - 14cm

Weight 1 - 1.5kg

Interesting facts comes out in daytime
unlike most other species, it hibernates over winter

IUCN Red List Status: Near Threatened

Main threats over-hunting for food
habitat loss

Fairy armadillos

2 species

greater (*Chlamyphorus retusus*)

lesser or pink (*Chlamyphorus truncatus*)

Greater fairy armadillo

Distribution Bolivia, Paraguay and northern Argentina

Diet worms, insects, snails, roots and seeds

Breeding

gestation unknown

litter size unknown

Size

Length: 14 - 17cm

Tail length ~ 4cm

Weight ~ 1kg

Interesting facts unlike most other species the greater fairy and pink fairy's bony plates are completely attached to the skin of the back and head

IUCN Red List Status: Data Deficient (not enough information)

Main threats Data Deficient

Fairy armadillos

2 species

greater (*Chlamyphorus retusus*)

pink or lesser (*Chlamyphorus truncatus*)

Pink fairy armadillo

Distribution Bolivia, Paraguay and northern Argentina

Diet worms, insects, snails, roots and seeds

Breeding

gestation unknown

litter size unknown

Size

Length: 9 - 11cm

Tail length 3 - 4cm

Weight ~ 0.8kg

Interesting facts it is pink and mole-like

it is the smallest armadillo and their size is about the same size as the giant armadillo's claw

IUCN Red List Status: Data Deficient (not enough information)

Main threats Data Deficient

Giant Armadillo

1 species

giant

(*Priodontes maximus*)

Distribution

Columbia, Venezuela, Paraguay, Bolivia, southern Brazil, northern Argentina

Diet

ants and termites

Breeding

gestation

150 days

litter size

1

Size

Length:

85 - 100cm

Tail length

50 - 55cm

Weight

30 - 50kg

Interesting facts

80 to 100 teeth - which is more than any other mammal
largest of the armadillos
is an ecosystem engineer¹

IUCN Red List Status:

Vulnerable

Main threats

over-hunting
habitat loss

¹Ecosystem engineer means that the animal creates or changes the habitat. Giant armadillos do this by creating homes for many other animals. They dig new burrows almost every night which means many empty burrows are left behind and other species makes use of them.



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Hairy armadillos

3 species

Andean	(<i>Chaetophractus nationi</i>)
small	(<i>Chaetophractus vellerosus</i>)
larger	(<i>Chaetophractus villosus</i>)

Andean hairy armadillo

Distribution Bolivia, northern Chile and northern Argentina

Diet insects, spiders, fruits and roots

Breeding

gestation unknown

litter size 1 - 2

Size

Length: 22 - 40cm

Tail length 9 - 17cm

Weight 1 - 1.5kg

Interesting facts lives in open high altitude grasslands

IUCN Red List Status: Vulnerable

Main threats over-hunting for food
over-hunting to make instruments and traditional medicines
habitat loss

Hairy armadillos

3 species

Andean	(<i>Chaetophractus nationi</i>)
small	(<i>Chaetophractus vellerosus</i>)
larger	(<i>Chaetophractus villosus</i>)

Small hairy armadillo

Distribution Bolivia, western Paraguay and Argentina

Diet insects, lizards, birds, mice and plants

Breeding

gestation 65 - 70 days

litter size 1 - 2

Size

Length: 26 - 40cm (*although females smaller*)

Tail length 8 - 13cm

Weight ~1.5kg

Interesting facts it is also called the screaming hairy armadillo because of the sound it makes when threatened

IUCN Red List Status: Least Concern

Main threats over-hunting for food
over-hunting to make instruments and traditional medicines
habitat loss

Hairy armadillos

3 species

Andean	(<i>Chaetophractus nationi</i>)
small	(<i>Chaetophractus vellerosus</i>)
larger	(<i>Chaetophractus villosus</i>)

Larger hairy armadillo

Distribution Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Brazil

Diet insects, spiders and other invertebrates

Breeding

gestation 60 - 75 days

litter size 2

Size

Length: 26 - 34cm

Tail length 9 - 17cm

Weight 1 - 3kg

Interesting facts much hairier than the other hairy armadillos

IUCN Red List Status: Least Concern

Main threats over-hunting for food
over-hunting to make instruments
habitat loss

Long nosed armadillos

7 species

southern lesser	(<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>)
greater	(<i>Dasypus kappleri</i>)
nine banded	(<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>)
hairy	(<i>Dasypus pilosus</i>)
Brazilian lesser	(<i>Dasypus septemcinctus</i>)
northern	(<i>Dasypus sabanicola</i>)
Yunga's lesser	(<i>Dasypus yepesi</i>)

Southern lesser long nosed armadillo

Distribution eastern Paraguay, southern Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay

Diet insects, small vertebrates and fruit

Breeding

gestation ~ 120 days

litter size 2 - 8

Size

Length: 26 - 34cm

Tail length 13 - 19cm

Weight 1 - 2kg

Interesting facts

the young are all identical in the long nosed armadillos because the female produces a single egg which divides after being fertilised. This species can have up to 8 identical twins.

IUCN Red List Status: Near Threatened

Main threats habitat loss

Long nosed armadillos

7 species

southern lesser	(<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>)
greater	(<i>Dasypus kappleri</i>)
nine banded	(<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>)
hairy	(<i>Dasypus pilosus</i>)
Brazilian lesser	(<i>Dasypus septemcinctus</i>)
northern	(<i>Dasypus sabanicola</i>)
Yunga's lesser	(<i>Dasypus yepesi</i>)

Greater long nosed armadillo

Distribution Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Peru, Bolivia and Brazil

Diet insects, small vertebrates and fruit

Breeding

gestation ~ 120 days

litter size 2

Size

Length: 51 - 57cm

Tail length 32 - 48cm

Weight 8 - 10kg

Interesting facts it has spurs on its hind legs that allow it to crawl on its knees into narrow burrows

IUCN Red List Status: Least Concern

Main threats habitat loss

Long nosed armadillos

7 species

southern lesser	(<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>)
greater	(<i>Dasypus kappleri</i>)
nine banded	(<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>)
hairy	(<i>Dasypus pilosus</i>)
Brazilian lesser	(<i>Dasypus septemcinctus</i>)
northern	(<i>Dasypus sabanicola</i>)
Yunga's lesser	(<i>Dasypus yepesi</i>)

Nine banded long nosed armadillo

Distribution central United States, Central America and South America

Diet mainly ants and termites

Breeding

gestation ~ 70 days

litter size 4

Size

Length: 38 - 58cm

Tail length 26 - 53cm

Weight 2 - 6kg



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Interesting facts most common armadillo with the largest range
being a long nosed armadillo the babies are all identical

IUCN Red List Status: Least Concern

Main threats over-hunting for food
persecution by farmers for stealing eggs from poultry

Long nosed armadillos

7 species

southern lesser	(<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>)
greater	(<i>Dasypus kappleri</i>)
nine banded	(<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>)
hairy	(<i>Dasypus pilosus</i>)
Brazilian lesser	(<i>Dasypus septemcinctus</i>)
northern	(<i>Dasypus sabanicola</i>)
Yunga's lesser	(<i>Dasypus yepesi</i>)

Hairy long nosed armadillo

Distribution	Peru
Diet	most likely invertebrates like the other armadillos

Breeding

gestation	unknown
litter size	unknown

Size

Length:	~ 32cm
Tail length	~ 25cm
Weight	~ 1.3kg

Interesting facts	little is known about this species
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IUCN Red List Status:	Vulnerable
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Main threats	habitat loss
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Long nosed armadillos

7 species

southern lesser	(<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>)
greater	(<i>Dasypus kappleri</i>)
nine banded	(<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>)
hairy	(<i>Dasypus pilosus</i>)
Brazilian lesser	(<i>Dasypus septemcinctus</i>)
northern	(<i>Dasypus sabanicola</i>)
Yunga's lesser	(<i>Dasypus yepesi</i>)

Brazilian lesser long nosed armadillo

Distribution	Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and northern Argentina
Diet	most likely invertebrates like the other armadillos

Breeding

gestation	unknown
litter size	7 - 9

Size

Length:	24 - 30cm
Tail length	12 - 17cm
Weight	1.5 - 1.8kg

Interesting facts	mainly lives in grassland areas
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IUCN Red List Status:	Least Concern
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Main threats	no major threats
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Long nosed armadillos

7 species

southern lesser	(<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>)
greater	(<i>Dasypus kappleri</i>)
nine banded	(<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>)
hairy	(<i>Dasypus pilosus</i>)
Brazilian lesser	(<i>Dasypus septemcinctus</i>)
northern	(<i>Dasypus sabanicola</i>)
Yunga's lesser	(<i>Dasypus yepesi</i>)

Northern long nosed armadillo

Distribution	Venezuela and Columbia
Diet	most likely invertebrates like the other armadillos

Breeding

gestation	~ 90 days
litter size	4

Size

Length:	~ 29cm
Tail length	unknown
Weight	~1.5kg

Interesting facts	little is known about this species
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IUCN Red List Status:	Least Concern
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Main threats	over-hunting habitat loss
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Long nosed armadillos

7 species

southern lesser	(<i>Dasypus hybridus</i>)
greater	(<i>Dasypus kappleri</i>)
nine banded	(<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>)
hairy	(<i>Dasypus pilosus</i>)
Brazilian lesser	(<i>Dasypus septemcinctus</i>)
northern	(<i>Dasypus sabanicola</i>)
Yunga's lesser	(<i>Dasypus yepesi</i>)

Yunga's lesser long nosed armadillo

Distribution	Argentina and possibly Bolivia
Diet	most likely invertebrates like the other armadillos

Breeding

gestation	unknown
litter size	unknown

Size

Length:	~ 31cm
Tail length	unknown
Weight	~1.5 - 2kg

Interesting facts	little is known about this species
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IUCN Red List Status:	Data Deficient (not enough information)
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Main threats	Data Deficient
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Naked tail armadillos

4 species

northern	(<i>Cabassous centralis</i>)
Chacoan	(<i>Cabassous chacoensis</i>)
greater	(<i>Cabassous tatouay</i>)
southern	(<i>Cabassous unicinctus</i>)

Northern naked tail armadillo

Distribution southern Mexico, western Columbia, north western Ecuador and north western Venezuela

Diet ants and termites

Breeding

gestation unknown

litter size 1

Size

Length: 31 - 40cm

Tail length 13 - 18cm

Weight 2 - 3kg

Interesting facts it is not hunted for food because it has a horrible smell

IUCN Red List Status: Data Deficient (not enough information)

Main threats Data Deficient

Naked tail armadillos

4 species

Northern	(<i>Cabassous centralis</i>)
Chacoan	(<i>Cabassous chacoensis</i>)
greater	(<i>Cabassous tatouay</i>)
Southern	(<i>Cabassous unicinctus</i>)

Chacoan naked tail armadillo

Distribution western Paraguay and north western Argentina

Diet mostly ants and termites

Breeding

gestation unknown

litter size 1

Size

Length: 30 - 36cm

Tail length 9 - 10cm

Weight 2 - 3kg

Interesting facts little is known about this species

IUCN Red List Status: Near Threatened

Main threats habitat loss

Naked tail armadillos

4 species

Northern	(<i>Cabassous centralis</i>)
Chacoan	(<i>Cabassous chacoensis</i>)
greater	(<i>Cabassous tatouay</i>)
Southern	(<i>Cabassous unicinctus</i>)

Greater naked tail armadillo

Distribution Brazil, Uruguay, south eastern Paraguay and northern Argentina

Diet mostly ants and termites

Breeding

gestation unknown

litter size 1

Size

Length: 41 - 49cm

Tail length 15 - 20cm

Weight 3 - 6kg

Interesting facts little is known about this species

IUCN Red List Status: Least Concern

Main threats habitat loss

Naked tail armadillos

4 species

Northern	(<i>Cabassous centralis</i>)
Chacoan	(<i>Cabassous chacoensis</i>)
greater	(<i>Cabassous tatouay</i>)
Southern	(<i>Cabassous unicinctus</i>)

Southern naked tail armadillo

Distribution Columbia, Venezuela, Brazil and northern Peru

Diet mostly ants and termites

Breeding

gestation unknown

litter size unknown

Size

Length: 34 - 44cm

Tail length 16 - 20cm

Weight 3 - 5kg



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Interesting facts

RZSS is conducting the first ecological¹ study on this species

they are highly fossorial² - they spend most of their time underground with an average of only 7 minutes a day above ground

IUCN Red List Status: Least Concern

Main threats no major threats

¹ecological - the relationship between animals and plants with their environment

²fossorial - adapted for burrowing.

Three banded armadillos

2 species

southern (*Tolypeutes matacus*)

Brazilian (*Tolypeutes tricinctus*)

Southern three banded armadillo

Distribution south eastern Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina

Diet mainly ants and termites but also invertebrates and fruit

Breeding

gestation 120 days

litter size 1

Size

Length: 21 - 27cm

Tail length 6 - 8cm

Weight ~ 1kg



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Interesting facts can roll into a ball where the head and tail tightly fit together

IUCN Red List Status: Near Threatened

Main threats over-hunting
habitat loss

Three banded armadillos

2 species

Southern (*Tolypeutes matacus*)

Brazilian (*Tolypeutes tricinctus*)

Brazilian three banded armadillo

Distribution south western Brazil

Diet mainly ants and termites but also invertebrates and fruit

Breeding

gestation 120 days

litter size 1

Size

Length: ~ 30cm

Tail length ~ 6cm

Weight ~ 1kg

Interesting facts

can roll into a ball where the head and tail tightly fit together

it has five toes on its front feet where the southern three banded only has four

Until 1990's it was believed to be extinct but was rediscovered

IUCN Red List Status: Vulnerable

Main threats over-hunting

habitat loss

Yellow banded armadillo

1 species

yellow

(*Euphractus sexcinctus*)

Yellow banded armadillo

Distribution

Suriname, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina

Diet

insects, small vertebrates, fruits and other plant material

Breeding

gestation

60 days

litter size

1 - 3

Size

Length:

34 - 44cm

Tail length

20 - 25cm

Weight

3 - 6kg

Interesting facts

it is yellowish in colour

also called the six banded armadillo

can be found scavenging dead animals

IUCN Red List Status:

Least Concern

Main threats

no major threats



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Please also see the following resources in this pack:

The Giant Armadillo

The Pantanal and its wildlife

To find out more about 'From Penguins to Pandas' and 'Giants' outreach programmes, contact:
Sandie Robb, Senior Education Officer, RZSS—srobb@rzss.org.uk

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Further Information and resources

Websites:

Royal Zoological Society of Scotland

<http://www.rzss.org.uk/conservation-programmes/projects/current-projects/pantanal-conservation-and-research-initiative>

Giant Armadillo Video Diaries

<http://www.rzss.org.uk/armadillodiaries>

Arkive

<http://www.arkive.org>

Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders (EWCL) - Giant Armadillo Project

<http://wildlifeleaders.org/projects/giant-armadillo/>

International Union for Conservation of Nature

<http://www.iucnredlist.org/>

The IUCN/SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group

<http://www.xenarthrans.org/>

Books:

Eisenberg, John F. & Redford, Kent H. ***Mammals of the Neotropics - Volume 3***. The University of Chicago Press, 1999

Smith, Paul. ***FAUNA Paraguay Handbook of the Mammals of Paraguay Vol 2: Xenarthra***. FAUNA Paraguay, 2009