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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Orinoco Crocodile

The **Orinoco Crocodile**, *Crocodylus intermedius*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is restricted to the middle and lower reaches of the Orinoco River and its tributaries in Venezuela and Colombia. It is a hole-nesting species and the females lay an average clutch size of 38 to 44 eggs. In 1800, the largest male ever was recorded measuring 6.5 metres in length.

The Orinoco Crocodile has an estimated wild population of 1,500 to 2,500 individuals. It was hunted to the brink of extinction for its skin during the 1930s to 60s. Today it is threatened by habitat loss, incidental deaths in fishing nets, illegal hunting for meat and by the collection of eggs and juveniles.

The export of this species is strictly controlled by CITES and individuals occur in several protected areas. There are six breeding/rearing facilities in Venezuela, which have released more than seven thousands of individuals into the wild. As a result, an established population of over 400 individuals, including 31 wild breeding females, is now found at the El Frío Biological Station.

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