



2022 CALENDAR

“Rainforests are great because...”

Rainforest Appreciation Artists

Our mission is to raise awareness of the vital importance of the rainforests; to increase appreciation of their stunning wildlife; to bring together like-minded people; to create intriguing and engaging artwork; to provide accessible and appealing information about our impact upon the natural world; and to inspire and motivate people to help protect the world's remaining rainforests.



www.raauk.org

Facebook: Rainforest Appreciation Artists

Image: 'Wild Thing' by Felsa Marie T. Hortiza-Barut



January

Image: 'Guardians of Energy' by Victor Raul Ramirez Davila of the Choskomaimato Gallery, Pucallpa, Peru

Jaguars and black panthers live in the rainforests of Central and South America. These powerful, athletic creatures move quietly on padded paws. They can travel 6 metres forward in a single leap.

The jaguar has been a cultural icon in Latin America for thousands of years. Mayans believed that the jaguar 'God of the Night' helped the sun travel under the Earth at night, ready to rise again in the morning.

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February

Image: 'Pineapple' by Matthew Evans

Rainforests are treasure troves of food and natural remedies. Many familiar fruits were first found in the Amazon rainforest, including bananas, avocados, mangoes and pineapples.

Pineapples are neither pines nor apples. They are a type of bromeliad belonging to the genus *Ananas*. Like all species of *Ananas*, they are native to Central and South America.

Rather than growing on trees, pineapples grow on a leafy plant, which produces up to two hundred flowers. A pineapple plant can continue to produce fruit for fifty years.

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March

Image: 'Monkey in rainforest'
by Nina Bensley

There are two families of monkeys, known as Old World monkeys and New World monkeys.

One species of Old World monkey is the guenon, found in the tropical rainforests of southern and central Africa. Guenons have cheek pouches that can hold almost as much food as their stomachs and they fill these pouches with food to eat later. Their diet includes fruits, nuts, seeds and leaves, insects, small birds and reptiles.

New World monkeys include howler monkeys, spider monkeys, capuchin monkeys, marmosets and tamarins.

Howler monkeys are one of the largest of the New World Monkeys. They are native to South and Central American rainforests. Howler monkeys are the world's loudest land mammal. Their howls can reach up to 140 decibels.

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April

Image: 'Gibbon' by Pardis Ghasemi

In Southern China, the gibbon was a common subject for painters. It was believed that gibbons lived for hundreds of years and could change into humans.

Gibbons have been called 'Spirits of the Trees'. They can perform incredible acrobatic feats as they swing and leap through the rainforest canopy. They can cover distances of up to 50 feet (15 metres) in a single leap and change direction in a split second. They can catch birds in mid-air.

Gibbons pair for life and sing duets with their partners. Each species has a distinct song and each pair develops their own recognisable variation.

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May

Image: 'Sun Bear' by Pavlinka Burnell, age 14

Sun bears, also known as honey bears, are the smallest species of bear and one of the rarest in the world. These shy, nocturnal creatures live in tropical forests in Southeast Asia. They like to sunbathe or sleep in trees, high above the ground.

Strong and agile, they can climb trees with ease. They eat a lot of honey, which they extract from bee nests using their long tongues. They also eat lizards, small birds, rodents, insects, termites and fruit.

These bears have no need to hibernate because they can find food at any time of year.

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June

Image: 'Tiger' by felt artist Henry Morris

These charismatic creatures are among the most easily recognisable and popular of the world's large animals. Each individual has a unique pattern of distinctive stripes. They live in a diverse range of habitats, including rainforests.

There are fewer than 3,200 of these magnificent creatures in the wild. To survive, they need an area of around 20 square miles (50 square kilometres) with plenty of prey and fresh water available.

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July

Image: 'Toucan' by Savannah Lucy Hirst, age 15

Toucans live in Central and South America. They have huge bills, which may even be as long as the bird's body. The bill is hollow and surprisingly light. It helps the toucan access food that other birds cannot reach, such as the ripest fruit on the thinnest branches. Some toucans are able to hang upside down on branches and pluck fruits with their long bill.

Unlike most birds' beaks, the toucan's bill is rather soft and spongy inside. It is ineffective for biting, fighting or digging but is very useful as an 'air conditioning' unit. By controlling the flow of blood to its bill, the toucan can regulate its body temperature.

The toco toucan is the largest and probably the most familiar species in the toucan family. These birds tend to hop more than they fly.

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August

Image: 'Pitcher Plants' by René Thomas

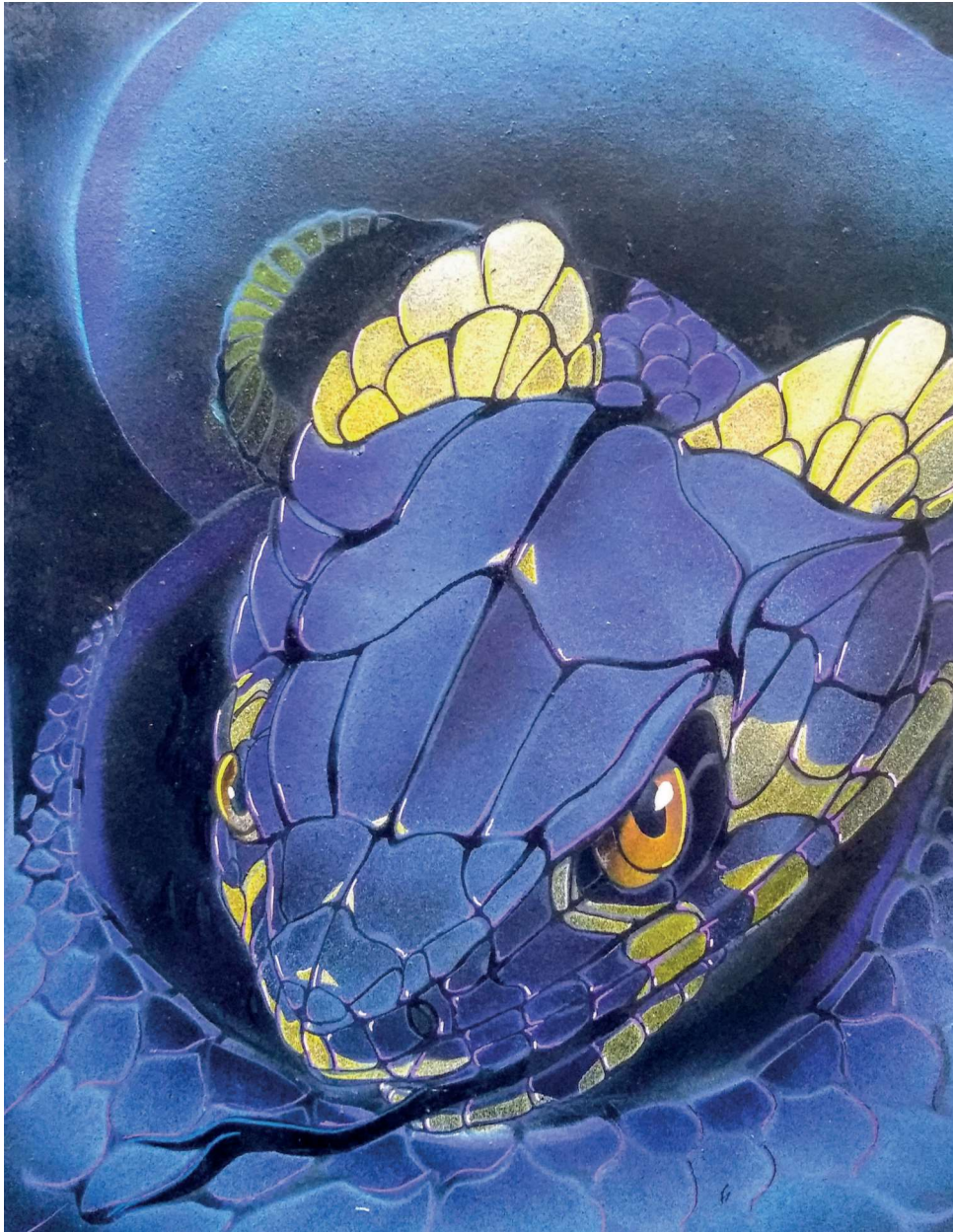
There are two large families of pitcher plants - New World pitcher plants, which live close to the ground, and Old World pitcher plants, which climb up tree trunks to reach the forest canopy. In the Old World pitcher plants, the pitchers are found at the end of tendrils.

These rare plants are also called 'monkey cups' because monkeys sometimes drink rainwater from them.

Pitcher plants are carnivorous. Growing in nutrient-poor soil, they get their nutrition from the small creatures they attract, such as ants, flies, wasps, beetles, and snails. The creatures are attracted by the plants' sweet fragrance. They slip on the smooth edge of the pitchers and fall inside, where they are digested. Some large pitcher plants may even eat small frogs or lizards.

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September

Image: 'Mr Snake' by Michal Frikus Handke

Although most tropical rainforest snakes live on the rainforest floor, there are also many types that live and hunt in the trees. Rainforest snakes include pythons, boas, anacondas, vipers, tree snakes and flying snakes.

One of the longest snakes is the anaconda, which is also the most common snake in the Amazon. Female anacondas are larger than males and can be over 5 metres in length.

The anaconda will continue to grow throughout its entire life.

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October

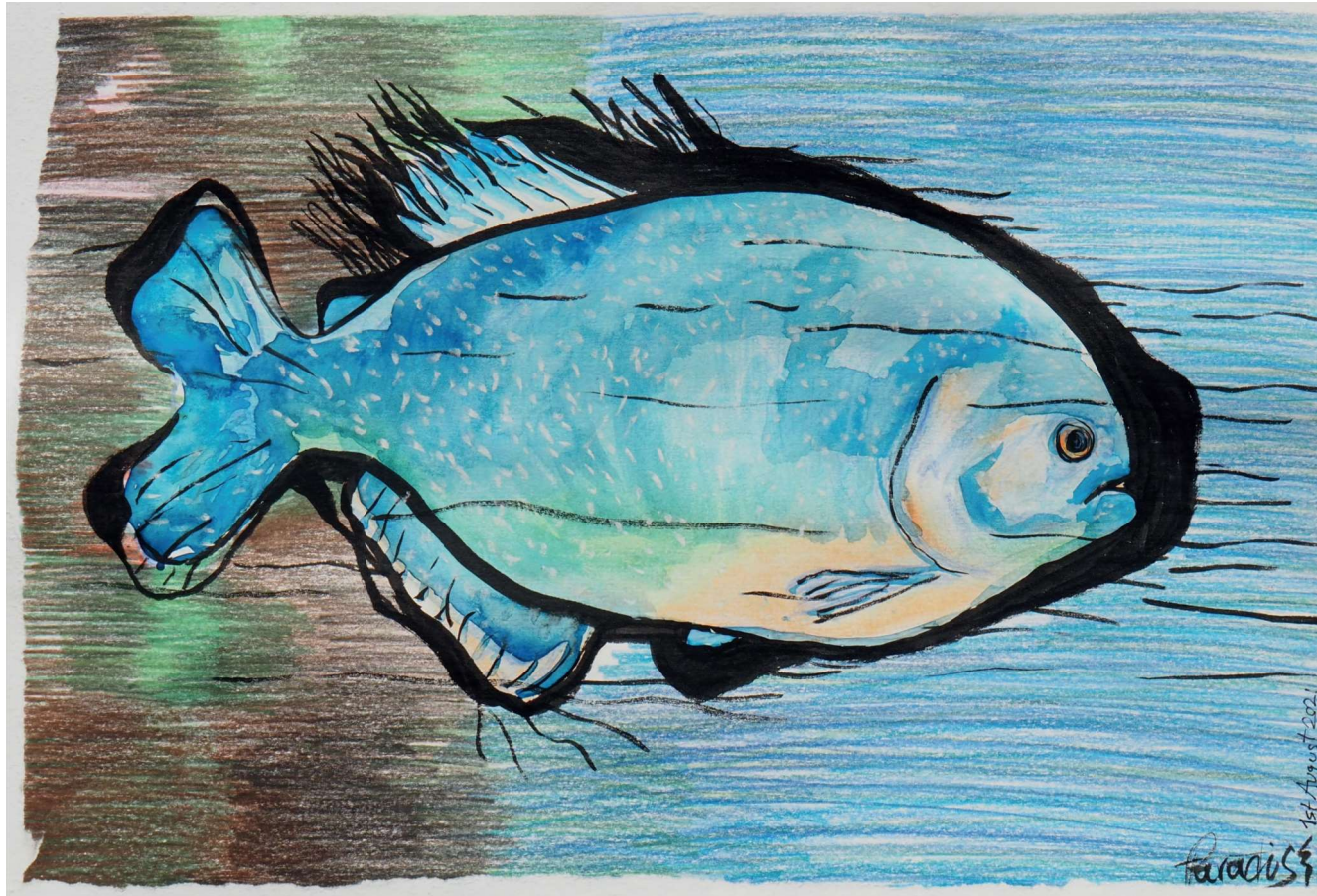
Image: 'Rainforest trees' by Matthew Evans

In the heart of the tropics, there are two seasons - a wet one and an even wetter one. The trees are mostly evergreen and there are so many leaves to fall through that a raindrop can take ten minutes to reach the ground.

Rainforests are great because... they help to maintain the world's water cycle by means of transpiration, which is the process by which water vapour flows from leaves into the atmosphere.

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November

Image: 'Piranha' by Pardis Ghasemi

Piranhas are native to the Amazon river and the Amazon basin. They have existed in South America for millions of years. There are believed to be around 20 different species of piranha. The fish may be yellow, grey, blue, red, or black.

These freshwater fish are famous for their sharp teeth. Tribal people use piranha teeth as tools - for example, to carve wood, cut hair or sharpen other tools.

Piranhas eat meat, seeds and freshwater seaweed. Giant otters like to eat piranhas.

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December

Image: 'Rainforest truth teller' by Marcus Harvey

Scarlet macaws, like all parrots, are highly sociable and very noisy. They communicate over long distances, using a range of throaty squawks, squeaks and screeches. They can fly at speeds of up to 35 miles (56 km) per hour.

One of the most uplifting sights in Mexico and Central and South America is a flock of macaws bursting out from the forest canopy and taking flight.

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