The Jaguar

The Jaguar, Panthera onca, is the third largest feline after the tiger and the lion. This spotted cat most closely resembles the leopard physically, although it is usually larger and of sturdier build, while its behavioural and habitat characteristics are closer to those of the tiger.

What are its physical characteristics?

The base coat of the jaguar is generally a tawny yellow, but can range to reddish-brown and black. The cat is covered in rosettes and the spots on the head and neck are generally solid, as are those on the tail, where they may merge to form a band. The un-derbelly, throat and outer surface of the legs and lower flanks are white. They normally weigh in the range of 56–96 kilograms and stand about 67–76 centimeters tall at the shoulders.

Where do Jaguars live?

The jaguar is a very adaptable animal. While it is usually found in dense rainforests, the jaguar also prefers forest habitats and areas close to water sources such as wetlands, rivers, lakes, etc. as it loves water and is a great swimmer.

What do they eat?

A carnivore, the jaguar hunts for prey mostly during the dark hours of the day. Jaguars prefers large prey - deer, dogs, foxes, and sometimes even anacondas, but at times they also eat small species like rats, monkeys, etc.

Which is the most unique feature?

The head of the jaguar is robust and the jaw extremely powerful. It has been suggested that the jaguar has the strongest bite of all felines. It prefers a killing method unique amongst cats i.e. it pierces directly through the temporal bones of the skull with its canine teeth, piercing the brain.

How symbolic is the Jaguar?

The jaguar is the national animal of Brazil and Guyana. Synonymous to strength and power, it is widely used as a product name and symbol, most prominently for a luxury car brand - Jaguar and a sports franchise - Puma.