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S P E C I E S P R O F I L E

Amazon Treeboa (*Corallus hortulanus*)

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The most geographically and ecologically widespread of the eight currently recognized species of the Neotropical treeboa genus *Corallus*, *C. hortulanus* ranges from Amazonian Colombia and Venezuela, through the Guianas, throughout Amazonian Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, and south into Brazil's Atlantic Forest to about 26° 08' south latitude, and on Ilha Grande (off southeastern Brazil). It occurs in diverse habitats, including primary and secondary rainforest, mixed forest, second growth, palm forests, swamp forest, cerrado, caatinga (where it is probably confined to gallery forests), and savanna/grassland with stands of trees. It is often associated with edge situations and may be especially common in trees at the margins of bodies of water (rivers, lagoons, lakes). It also exploits heavily disturbed situations, such as fruit orchards (bananas, cacao), and will enter human edifices (outbuildings, homes), likely seeking shade, a diurnal retreat, or a human commensal rodent. Altitudinal distribution is from sea level to about 915 m, although it is uncommon above 300 m.

Few snake species worldwide can compete with *Corallus hortulanus* when it comes to variation in color and pattern. Dorsal ground color of the boas may be various shades of yellow, orange, gray, taupe, and/or brown. They may be virtually patternless yellow or orange, or have an ellipse-like shape that may be a shade of the ground color or in sharp contrast to it, or it may appear extremely mottled (but close inspection usually reveals the ellipse shape).

Amazon Treeboas are nocturnal and, as the name implies, largely arboreal. Their bodies are laterally compressed, and snakes may attain snout-vent lengths (SVL) over 1.6 m, and can reach SVLs of 1.8–1.9 m. Both active and ambush foraging strategies are employed, and the diet consists almost entirely of endotherms. When young (<750 mm SVL), birds (and, to a lesser degree, bats) com-

prise a significant portion of their diet (likely captured via active foraging while the birds are at roost) but, with increasing size, mammals (especially rodents) become their principal prey. Frogs and lizards are taken infrequently by *C. hortulanus*.

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Although *Corallus hortulanus* demonstrates tremendous color and pattern variation throughout its range, this individual exhibits a much higher percentage of white scales than typically observed. It was captured in a small section of bamboo forest near the Rio Cristalino in northern Mato Grosso, Brazil. The habitat is transitional between southern Amazonian rainforest and the vast savanna-like Cerrado to the south. A second snake with similar coloration was found several days later. Whether these individuals are just variants of an extremely variable species or a color pattern anomaly is unknown.