

NOTE

**Attempted predation on Brazilian rabbit (*Sylvilagus brasiliensis* -  
Lagomorpha: Leporidae) by tayra (*Eira barbara* - Carnivora: Procyonidae)**

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The tayra *Eira barbara* (Linnaeus, 1758) is a very common neotropical mustelid with a wide distribution. Although it usually lives in undisturbed primary forest it also occurs in disturbed habitats (Emmons and Feer 1997). I report here an observation of attempted predation by a tayra in the western Amazon, in Acre, Brazil.

The observation occurred about 25 km from the city of Rio Branco at Fazenda Experimental Catuaba (10° 4' S and 67° 37' W), with 820 ha of disturbed forest.

At 8:45 a.m. on 04 June 1998, I observed an adult Brazilian rabbit *Sylvilagus brasiliensis* (Linnaeus, 1758), running across the trail at a distance of about 4 m from the observing point. Five behind the Brazilian rabbit an adult of *E. barbara* came running in pursuit but retreated with observer presence. The local forest has an open canopy, there are many palms and the understory is closed.

Tayras are omnivorous, fruits and small vertebrates being the most important items of diet, based on the analysis of scats in Belize and Costa Rica (Konecny 1989, Sunquist *et al.* 1989) and stomach contents in Venezuela (Bisbal 1986). Galef *et al.* (1976) watched predation activity by tayra on medium-sized vertebrates: iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Iguanidae),

agoutis (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Dasyproctidae), squirrel monkeys (*Saimiri sciureus*, Cebidae), and red-handed tamarins (*Saguinus midas*, Callitrichidae). Rabbit furs were encountered by Janzen (1983) in only one scat of tayra in Costa Rica, but the species was not identified. Three species of rabbits exist in Costa Rica, including *Sylvilagus brasiliensis* (Wilson 1983).

*Sylvilagus brasiliensis* are nocturnal animals, and tayras are primarily diurnal (Emmons and Feer 1997). This could explain why it is hardly cited in literature as being part of the diet of tayras. Therefore, more research is necessary to affirm *Sylvilagus brasiliensis* as accidental item food in diet of *Eira barbara*.

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