

The Amazon Rainforest

Rainforests that grow in places where it is hot and wet all year round are called evergreen because the trees can grow all the time and never lose their leaves. The Amazon is the Earth's largest rainforest with nearly two-thirds of it found in Brazil. It is mainly evergreen and is home to a huge and diverse range of species such as red howler monkeys, pink river dolphins, blue tree frogs, pink toed tarantulas, yellow poison dart frogs and birds and butterflies of every colour of the rainbow. Plants from the rainforest are used to treat or cure many illnesses.

People started to colonise the Amazon about five decades ago creating logging yards, farms and cattle enclosures by setting fire to the land, and the forest started to disappear. This is known as deforestation. Since Brazil elected a new president in 2018 deforestation has soared according to satellite imaging as more and more of the forest is being destroyed to make way for farming palm oil. Illegal logging is a routine occurrence as huge tractors transport the timber (to be used for furniture) across specially constructed bridges, much to the dismay of the large number of forest dwellers who have fought to keep the forest as their home and can only stare aghast at the horrible devastation.

- What are plants from the rainforest used for?
- Does the Amazon rainforest get much rain?
- Do many people live there?
- What might happen to the animals if deforestation continues?
- Is it a good idea to cut down trees for farming? (Justify your answer.)



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