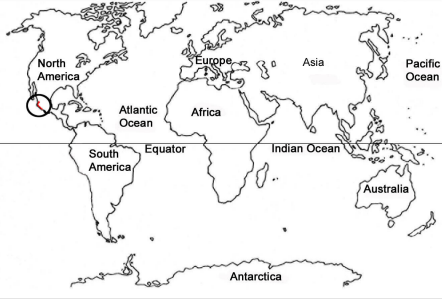


San Blas Jay

Native Range Map



Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Subphylum: Vertebrata
Class: Aves
Order: Passeriformes
Family: Corvidae
Genus: *Cyanocorax*
Species: *sanblasianus*



Photo courtesy of Karen Marzynski

Habitat

- **In the Wild:** The San Blas jay is found only along the Pacific coast of northern Mexico from sea level up to about 3900 feet above sea level in mangrove swamps, dry scrubby woodlands, thickets and coconut groves.
- **Exhibit Location:** Social Animals (Rainforest Exhibit)

Characteristics

- Length: 13 inches
- Plumage (feathers) is black on the head and under parts and dark blue on the wings, back and tail. Their legs, feet and eyes are yellowish, and they have a small crest on their forehead that can be flattened to seem invisible.
- In juveniles the crest is longer, the bill is yellow, and their eyes are dark brown.
- **Lifespan: In the Wild** 6 – 8 years; **In Captivity** 10 – 15 years

Behaviors

- San Blas jays are almost exclusively found in small flocks of 15-30 birds. They forage in the canopies of trees as well as on or near the ground.
- San Blas jays are sedentary, have an established territory, and are not migratory.
- They communicate with calls; the most common being a rapid, harsh chatter.
- **Enrichments at the Zoo:** insects

Reproduction

- San Blas jays do not usually breed until they are 3 years old.
- A pair of San Blas jays usually mates for life. They are communal or cooperative breeders; 3-6 individuals tend the nest during the breeding season. They share the responsibility of building and maintaining the nest, defending the territory, and feeding the young. They build a nest of sticks, twigs and coarse plant matter.
- The female lays 2-4 pinkish eggs with dark spots or blotches in the spring. The young are nearly full grown by autumn.

Diet

- **In the Wild:** insects, lizards, fruit
- **At the Zoo:** Bird of Prey diet (meat), paradise pellets (source of protein), fruit, insects

Conservation Status

- **IUCN status:** LC (Least Concern); **CITES:** not listed
- Predators: humans, birds of prey, snakes

Did You Know?/Fun Facts

- San Blas jays mate for life and there is usually no aggression between members of a cooperative group.
- Male San Blas jays court females by singing to them with quiet whistles.

Sources:

- Terres, John K. (1987). *Audubon society encyclopedia of north american birds*. New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- VN(C), (2003). VN the world of mexican nature. Retrieved May 1, 2006, from VN The World of Mexican Nature Web site: <http://www.vivanatura.org/Cissilopha%20sanblasiana.html>