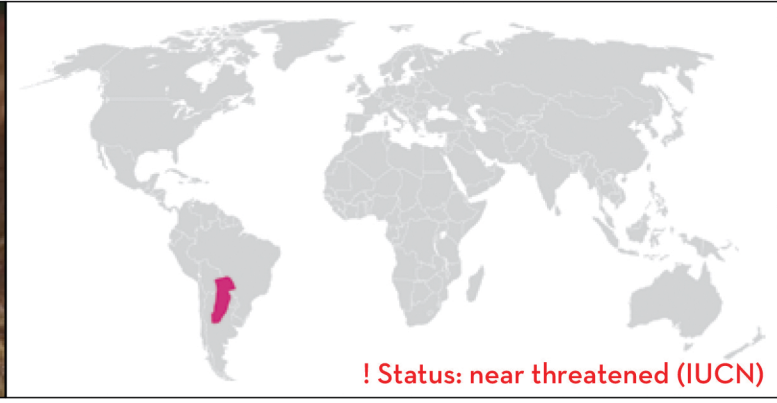


updated March 2017

## SOUTHERN THREE-BANDED ARMADILLO



! Status: near threatened (IUCN)

<b>Range</b>	South America: north Central Argentina, east central Bolivia and sections of Brazil and Paraguay
<b>Habitat</b>	Found in grassy or marshy areas between scattered forestland; do not dig burrows but use abandoned anteater burrows, or they make dens under dense vegetation
<b>Diet (wild)</b>	Beetle larvae, ants, termites, fruit
<b>Diet (captive)</b>	Crickets, fresh fruit, mealworms
<b>Description</b>	Length: 13–17 inches; weight: 4–7 pounds. Dark brown and heavily armored with a thick leathery shell with three bands; their “armor” is composed of a series of plates of ossified scutes covered with a leathery keratinous skin. Underside is covered with soft skin and fur. Tail is very stout and immobile. Middle three toes of the back foot are grown together and have a thick claw. Generally walk on the tips of the foreclaws, even when running.
<b>Lifespan</b>	Captivity: Over 20 years
<b>Reproduction</b>	One young is born per litter; gestation period is about 120 days. The young are born fully formed, resembling miniature adults, and can walk and roll into a ball immediately from birth. Young are born with soft leathery skin which hardens in a few weeks. Young are weaned at 72 days and are sexually mature at 9–12 months. Most of the young are born between November and January, but births have been reported throughout the year indicating that there is no distinct breeding season.
<b>Behavior</b>	They are primarily solitary, although groups of up to 12 have been observed sharing the same den site during cold spells. Southern three-banded armadillos roll themselves into a ball as a defense against natural enemies. This shell is also very efficient at trapping air, which is warmed by body heat, and thus conserves heat loss.
<b>Our animals</b>	1 male. Born: 05/1994. Donated from Chicago
<b>Cool stuff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word “armadillo” means “little armored one” in Spanish. The Aztecs called them “ayotochtli,” which means “turtle rabbit.”</li> <li>• Fuleco, a Brazilian three-banded armadillo, was the official mascot of the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil.</li> <li>• Southern and Brazilian three-banded armadillos are the only armadillo species that can roll completely into a ball. They usually leave a small space between a section of their armor, which can forcefully close on a finger or paw of a would-be predator. Other armadillo species cannot roll up because they have too many plates. North American nine-banded armadillos tend to jump straight in the air when surprised and consequently often collide with undercarriages and fenders of passing vehicles.</li> <li>• Armadillos have very poor eyesight and use their keen sense of smell to hunt for food.</li> <li>• Southern three-banded armadillos have a long, sticky straw-like pink tongue that allows them to gather up and eat many different species of insects, typically ants and termites.</li> <li>• All armadillo species are found in South America.</li> </ul>

Phylum  
ChordataClass  
MammaliaOrder  
CingulataFamily  
DasypodidaeGenus  
Tolypeutesspecies  
*T. matacus*