

Colophon

The animal on the cover of *Cloud Native Go* is a member of the tuco-tuco family (*Ctenomyidae*). These neotropical rodents can be found living in excavated burrows across the southern half of South America.

The name “tuco-tuco” refers to a wide range of species. In general, these rodents have heavily built bodies with powerful short legs and well-developed claws. They have large heads but small ears, and though they spend up to 90% of their time underground, their eyes are relatively large compared to other burrowing rodents. The color and texture of the tuco-tucos’ fur varies depending on the species, but in general, their fur is fairly thick. Their tails are short and not particularly furry.

Tuco-tucos live in tunnel systems—which are often extensive and complicated—that they dig into sandy and/or loamy soil. These networks often include separate chambers for nesting and food storage. They have undergone a variety of morphological adaptations that help them create and thrive in these underground environments, including an improved sense of smell, which helps them orient themselves in the tunnels. They employ both scratch-digging and skull-tooth excavation when creating their burrows.

The diet of the tuco-tucos consists primarily of roots, stems, and grasses. Today, tuco-tucos are viewed as agricultural pests, but in pre-European South America they were an important foodsource for indigenous peoples, particularly in Tierra del Fuego. Today, their conservation status is contingent upon species and geographic location. Many species fall into the “Least Concern” category, while others are considered “Endangered.” Many of the animals on O’Reilly covers are endangered; all of them are important to the world.

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