

Vervet Monkey (green monkey)

The Vervet Monkey, which is sometimes known as the green monkey, is a medium sized primate that is actually a member of the Old World monkeys. The Old World monkeys make up six different species and the Vervet Monkey makes up the whole genus Chlorocebus.

These monkeys are quite unique, having dorsal fur colorings that range from yellow to grey, to green to brown, yet the hair around the face is usually white in color. The monkeys are generally covered in fur except around the hands, face, and feet and it can be seen that the abdomens of these monkeys are blue in color. Sexing the species is simple as the males are bigger weighing four to four and a half kilograms and they also have a bright blue scrotum and dark red penis. The females are smaller and weigh just two and a half to three and a half kilograms.

A Female Vervet Monkey with her baby



Habitat

The Vervet Monkey is found in sub-Saharan areas of Africa and they are seen from Senegal to Ethiopia and then down to South Africa. There are some of this species found in Barbados, the Caribbean, Saint Kitts, and Nevis though these animals actually started out as pets of people, and the same can be said for a population of the monkeys that is found in Florida. These monkeys live in very large groups of up to 80 members and include males, females, and the young of many of them.

Diet

Because the Vervet Monkey lives in large groups feeding is based on a hierarchy. Dominant males as well as dominant females are given priority when feeding. The species eats grasses, fruits, small vertebrates, and even insects. In tourist areas the monkeys are known to steal drinks and even food that has been left behind by the tourists! Though they often live near humans they can and will bite if they feel threatened.



Baby Vervet Monkey

Reproduction

Members of this species are not monogamous, as the males mate with several females at a time and have no part in the rearing of young. When a female becomes pregnant she will remain this way for about 160 days and will usually give birth to one baby. Most births take place during the most plentiful time of the year, which is during the rainy season in the region. The young will be fed by their mother until they are six months old and then they will be weaned. These monkeys are mature in about four to five years and they will live 10-12 years in the wild and up to 25 years when in captivity.

Interesting Facts

The Vervet Monkey has been the focus of quite a bit of scientific research dating back to the 1950s. The tissue of these species is actually still used today in the production of the polio and smallpox vaccinations. There is also ongoing research involving the cells of the Vervet monkey kidney in relation to immunology and infectious diseases.

Information retrieved from

<http://www.itsnature.org/trees/mammals-trees/vervet-monkey/>