

Activity Pack



Monkeys in the
wild and captivity

What is a Woolly Monkey?

About 60 million years ago, Africa and South America began to drift apart—a process known as continental drift. The monkeys isolated in South America radiated into the tropical rainforest. These monkeys in South America became known as “new world monkeys” whilst the African monkeys became known as “old world monkeys”. Woolly monkeys are a species of new world monkey inhabiting the Amazon basin.

The first woolly monkeys were discovered and recorded by the German explorer Alex van Humbolt in the early 1800's.

Woolly monkeys live in groups of 10-40 animals in the canopy between 100-200 feet above the ground. Many monkeys will spend their entire lives in the trees, never venturing down to the forest floor.

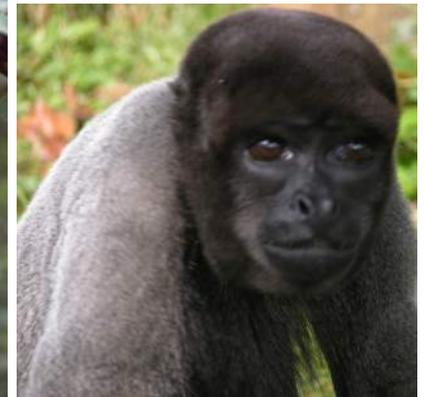
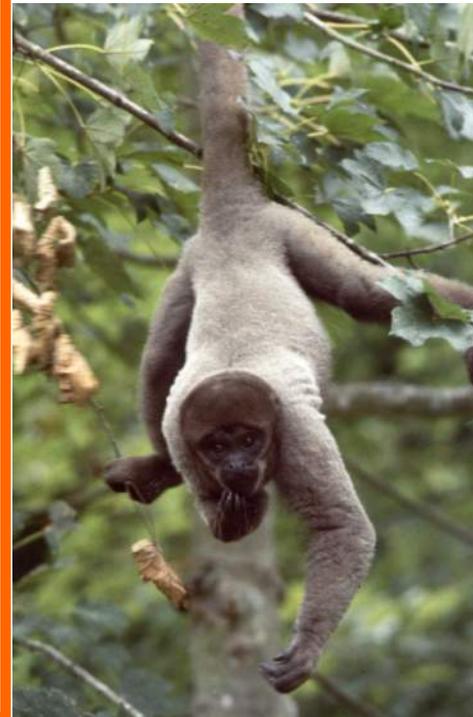
There are usually twice as many adults than infants in a group.

The role of the male woolly monkeys is to protect the colony from predators. The females take a maternal role and care for the young, also taking care of any injured monkeys by tending their wounds.

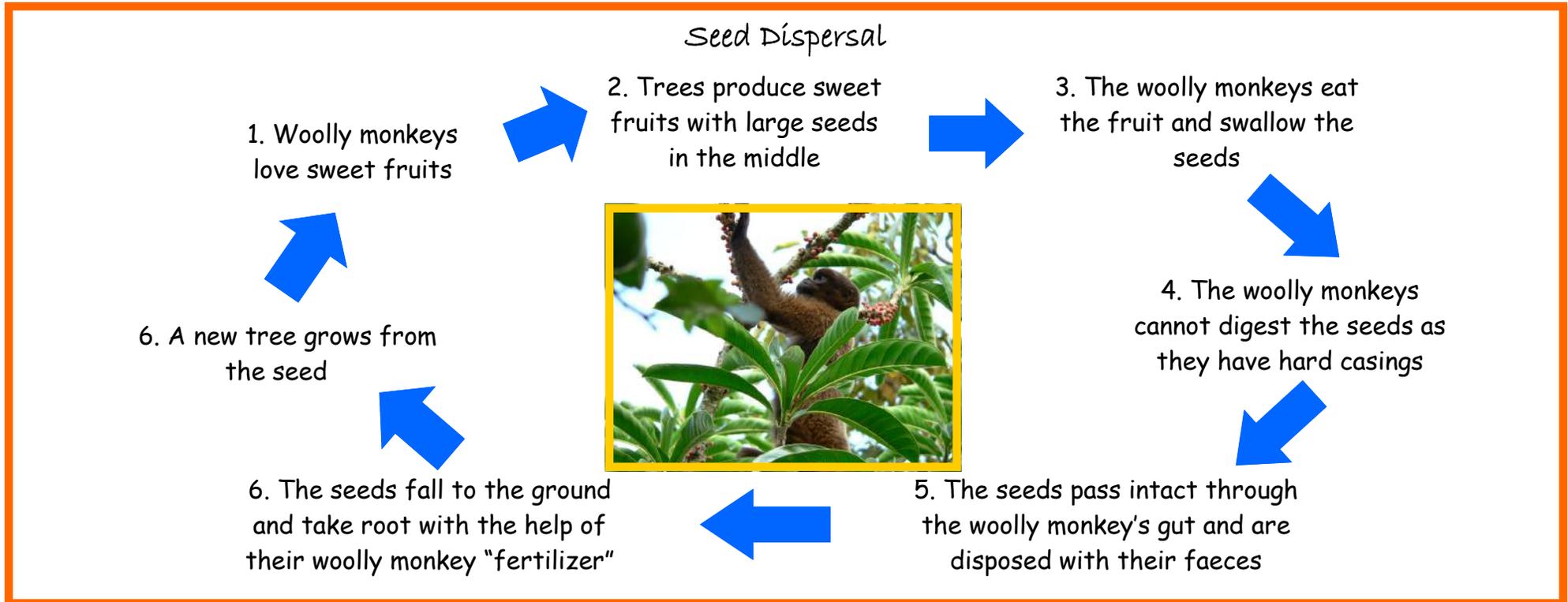
Woollies are perfectly adapted for life in the canopy with their amazing *prehensile* tail. The tail has a palm at the end for gripping and they use it as an extra hand, leaving their other hands free for feeding and climbing.

Woolly monkeys also have *opposable* thumbs on their feet and not their hands which makes it easy for them to hang upside down by their feet and get to hard-to-reach branches.

Their silvery coats reflect light and allow them to blend in with their surroundings.



How do Woolly Monkeys Fit into the Rainforest Ecosystem?



As well as being very effective seed dispersers, woolly monkeys are also important for other animals in the rainforest. The way in which they eat is extremely messy—they will eat the juiciest and sweetest part of a fruit and often discard the rest, letting it drop to the forest floor.

It is common for capuchin or squirrel monkeys to follow behind the wake of a woolly monkey feeding spree at a lower level of the forest and pick up those fruits that have been dropped. Land-dwelling animals such as peccaries will then pick up what is left and what they leave will be absorbed into the ground and the nutrients sucked back up in to the trees and plants.

This is known as a nutrient cycle and all creatures in the rainforest will contribute to this cycle in some way or another.

Monkey Talk

Woolly monkeys communicate by using their own language. Here are just some examples of the ways in which they tell each other what they are doing and how they are feeling...

Eolk!

This is the noise the monkeys make to find out where their friends are. It means "I'm here, where are you?"

Trill!

Means "I'm happy, I've just found some lovely food!"

YOK YOK YOK!
Means "I'm afraid, somebody help me!"

SCREAM!

The noise monkeys make when they are arguing, or if they have just been told off!

Snuffle

A quiet noise made by monkeys to make friends, or to say sorry. They cover their mouths while they make the noise so their teeth are not showing and they are not seen as a threat

Chuckle!

The noise that monkeys make when they play. It sounds like a human laughing quietly. Young monkeys use this noise to show grown-ups that they are not fighting, but simply having a game



What is a Capuchin Monkey?

Capuchins are smaller than woolly monkeys and are thought to be more intelligent; they are known as the "chimpanzees of the monkeys world"

Capuchins are the only monkey that we are aware of that use tools. They have developed an anvil system which allows them to crack open hard-shelled nuts. Apart from capuchins, only man and the great apes are known to use tools.

Capuchins have a semi-prehensile tail so, unlike the woolly monkeys, they cannot hang from it for any length of time and just use it for support and balance.

Capuchins live in the Amazon rainforest, at a slightly lower level than the woolly monkeys.

They require more protein in their diet than the woolly monkeys and so eat more insects and even small animals if they can catch them.

Capuchins live in groups of up to 40 monkeys and there will be a dominant male and female in each group.

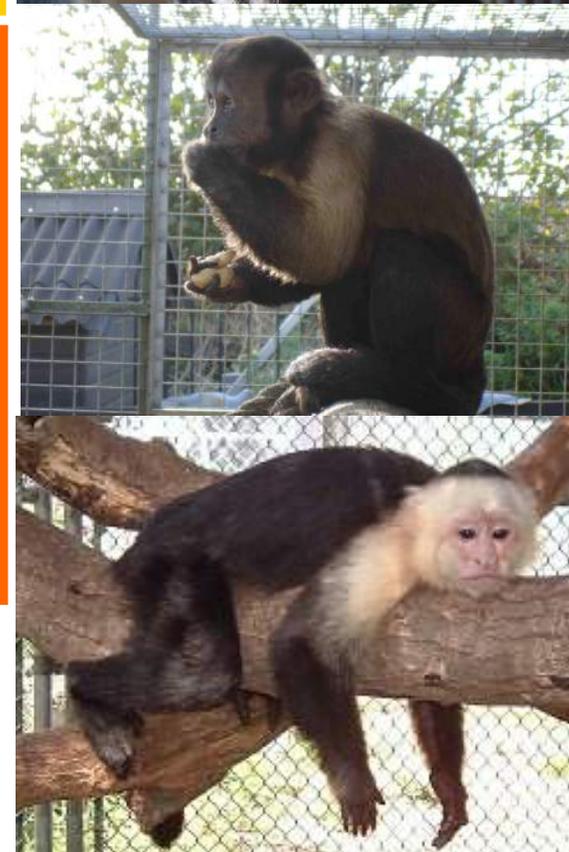
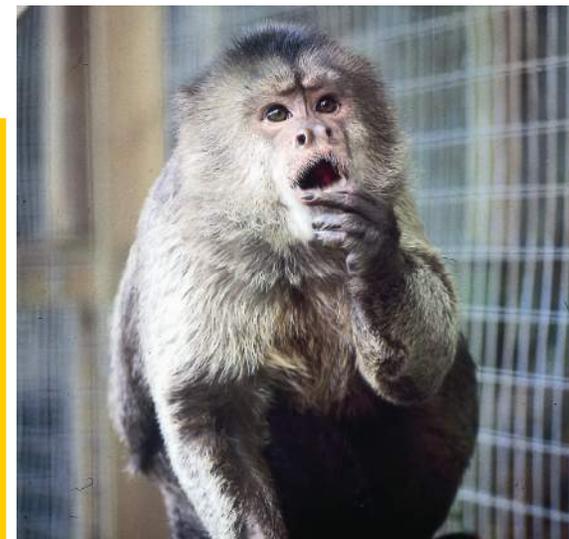
Capuchin monkeys are very popular in the pet trade because they are so clever and are also used a lot in the entertainment industry. It is likely that if you have ever seen a monkey in a film, it was a capuchin.

Sadly for the monkeys, this means a life in isolation and misery for the sake of human entertainment.

There are eight known sub-species of capuchin and those are:

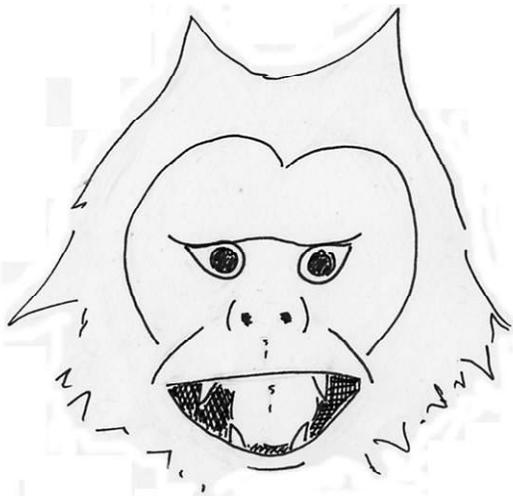
1. The White Faced
2. The White Fronted
3. The Weeper
4. The Ka'apor
5. The Brown or Tufted
6. The Bearded
7. The Yellow-Breasted
8. The Black or Black Capped

Pictures: (from top) Gary; a weeper capuchin, Charlie Brown; a black capped capuchin, both from the Monkey Sanctuary in Cornwall and **Stinky**; a white faced capuchin from Jungle Friends in Florida.

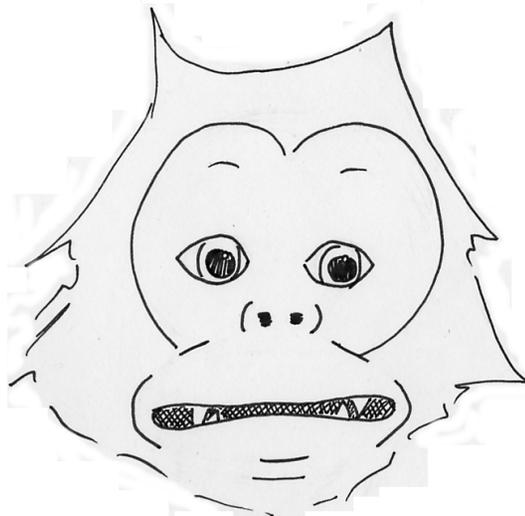


How do Capuchins Communicate?

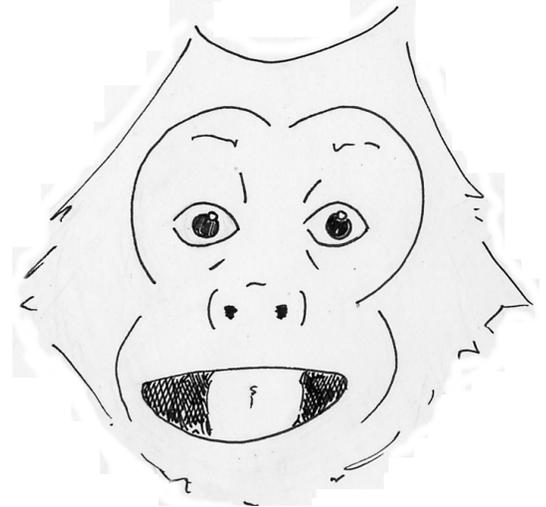
Perhaps because of their increased intelligence, the different species of capuchin have very different ways of communicating verbally and here at the Monkey Sanctuary we are learning new sounds all the time and would need an entire book if we were to document all their elaborate signals and noises. Despite their differences in *vocalisations*, capuchins use a vast number of facial expressions to convey their mood to others and to us and some of these are shared across more than one sub-species. Here are just three of the most commonly seen expressions:



"Attack Face" - Mouth open, teeth bared.



"Appeasing/ Nervous Face" - Mouth partly open, eyebrows raised. Monkey backs away to show submission and makes quiet grunting noises.



"Play Face" - teeth hidden, mouth and eyes wide, eyebrows raised

Not only do capuchins communicate by sounds and facial expressions, they also use body language like the woolly monkeys. Sometimes they might position themselves alongside another monkey to "gang up" on a third party. This is a way of showing that they are both "on the same team" and use this tactic to intimidate other monkeys, or keepers. If they are being introduced to a new monkey and they are trying to be gentle, they might crawl quietly up to their new friend backwards so as not to seem aggressive.

Not only this but they use scent mark their territory by urinating on their hands and feet and spreading their scent as they walk along branches. This is to warn other capuchins off their area of forest.

Monkeys in Captivity - At the Sanctuary

The monkeys that we care for at Wild Futures' Monkey Sanctuary are either directly from, or descended from the pet trade. The woolly monkeys have all been born at the Sanctuary and were part of the first ever successful breeding programme for this type of monkey. They are now in their third and fourth generation and their great-great-grandparents were part of the popular pet trade in the late 50's and 60's in the UK.

The reason that we were able to breed the woolly monkeys was not down to any great expertise on our part, but to one monkey that we were lucky enough to rehome in the late sixties—Lulu, who taught the rest of the Cornish colony how to behave as real monkeys.

Lulu

Lulu was a woolly monkey discovered by the founder of the Monkey Sanctuary, Len Williams, in a pet shop. The unusual thing about Lulu was that she was about 5 years old, which is strange because most woolly monkeys sold as pets would be just a few months old, having been taken from their mothers at a few weeks old. The problem for these monkeys is they simply don't know how to be monkeys as they have never had a chance to learn from their elders.

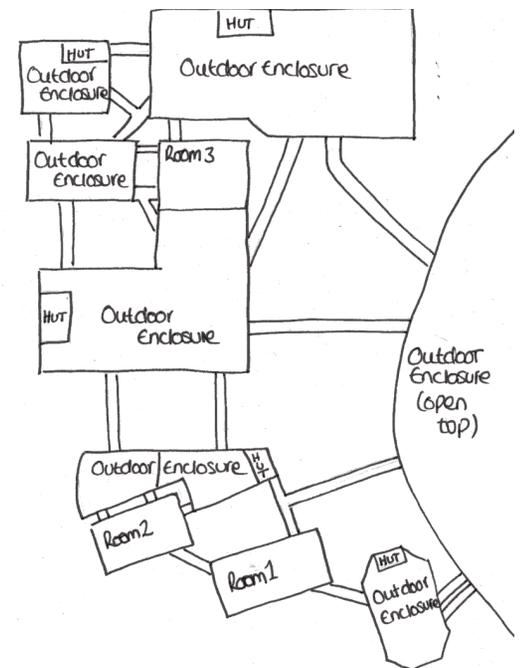
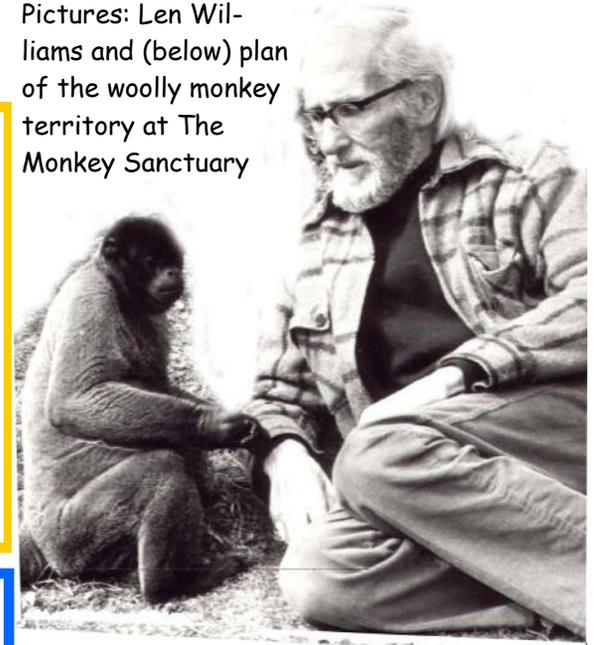
Because Lulu spent her early years as a wild monkey, probably with a family and natural troop, she was able to teach a huge amount to the other members of the colony. Soon after her arrival, she gave birth to the first woolly born in captivity.

We continued to breed the woollies in the hope that, one day, they might be able to be released and sent back to the Amazon where they could live out their days as nature intended.

Unfortunately for a number of reasons, release was impossible and so we stopped the breeding programme in 1999.

It was shortly after this we began to focus back on the pet trade which is still thriving in the UK. Frosty, our first capuchin monkey was rehomed in 2001.

Pictures: Len Williams and (below) plan of the woolly monkey territory at The Monkey Sanctuary



Where do They Live?

The woolly monkeys and capuchin monkeys occupy different areas of the site as we cannot risk putting the two groups together because of the risk of fighting and *cross-contamination*.

Both the woollies and the capuchins have a large and varied area to live in and the space is broken up into different enclosures which can be linked together or blocked off from one another at any one time. This means that the monkeys are not confined to just one space but can move around and meet monkeys in different groups and different spaces. This is one of the ways in which we try to make their lives more interesting here.

Each enclosure has something different about it; whether it be "The Trees" area, which has an open top and allows free-climbing, or the "Gym", which has an abundance of ropes and branches to leap and swing from for the woollies; or "Room 4", which is the social meeting place for the capuchins, where four groups can meet together, and the "Vegetable Patch" enclosure, with its high roof and views over the entire Monkey Sanctuary grounds.

Each day every part of the monkey territory has to be cleaned. This involves moving the monkeys from one space to another and locking them out of the space that is being cleaned so that we can safely enter. This process can take up to 3 hours and sometimes we have to bribe monkeys to move with grapes!



Monkey Menu

The woollies' diet has been adapted over the years to try to give them a nutritional intake similar to that which they have in the wild. We have a much more limited array of food here in England compared to their natural habitat so we ensure that we include lots of wild leaves and daily vitamin supplements to make up for any nutrients they might be lacking. A typical woolly monkey "menu of the day" might be as follows:

8.30am - Breakfast of 1kg of mixed fruit and veg (apples, leeks, celery, lettuce, chicory, pepper, cucumber, spring onion and other vegetables)

12.00pm - Baked apples - 1 per monkey

2.00pm - Lunch of more mixed fruit and veg, this time with pears instead of apples

3.30pm - A handful of wild leaves are given to each monkey

5.00pm - Dinner of mixed fruit and veg; apples again this time!

6.30pm - A piece of boiled root vegetable (beetroot, parsnip, sweet potato and others) for each monkey

8.00pm - 1 piece of "Monkey Cake" for each monkey. This is a cake made of oats or another carbohydrate, nuts or another type of protein and sweetened with apples and pears.

Group Living

Whilst wild monkeys live in large troops, this can be problematic for captive monkeys as many of them do not understand the politics of living in a troop because they are taken away from their mother at a very young age and have rarely had the chance to learn from their elders. For the woollies, this is not strictly the case because they were brought up by their parents and have had as close to a natural colony life as possible with 24 monkeys living as one group at one stage.

Since our non-breeding programme began, the number of woolly monkeys has gone into decline and has resulted in there being more males than females. This increases competition for female attention and can make the males fight. As a result, the monkeys are kept in smaller groups of up to 5 or 6 monkeys at any one time, often with members of the same family together as they are less likely to fall out.

For the capuchins, socialising is a challenging and frightening process. They will have been taken from their mothers at just a few weeks old and so have no idea how to behave around other monkeys. Games can turn into fights, body language can be misread and lead to squabbles and monkeys can be seriously injured if these squabbles go too far.

For this reason the *socialisation* of the capuchins is a long and slow process, with monkeys spending most of their time in pairs and gradually building up to spending time in larger groups. It can take months or even years for the monkeys to feel comfortable enough to spend more than a few hours with each other.



Problems...and Solutions

We have discussed two problems facing monkeys in captivity here at the Sanctuary and those are diet and socialisation but unfortunately, there are many more that we have to deal with and search for long-term solutions for. On this page are just some of them.

Space

If you consider that wild monkeys might travel a number of miles a day, it becomes clear that a small cage is not going to suffice for their needs. Add to this a group of big adult males who have the occasional disagreement and who have to be separated and the need for space becomes even more important.

Our enclosures are therefore large and high, allowing for as much movement as possible, which also enables monkeys that are not the best of friends to avoid each other.

We fill their enclosures with ropes, beams and foliage, allowing them to take different routes through the territory and adding interest to their surroundings.

The Great British Weather

The weather is, of course, very different to the tropical climate that the monkeys are supposed to enjoy and a problem that monkeys in captivity are prone to is the development of bone problems because of their lack of exposure to the sun, whose UV rays are a great provider of vitamin D.

To overcome this problem, we ensure that the monkeys are given a daily vitamin D supplement to help their bones grow strong, and all of their rooms have UV lighting and are heated to 21°C to compensate for the cold British weather.

Illness

Illness is always a worry for us as the monkeys can catch bugs and germs from us and vice versa. Because they are not native to the UK, they have little or no *immunity* to common illnesses that we might not consider serious, such as the common cold. As a result, we have to ensure that we wear protective gloves and overalls when we clean the monkeys' territory and we do not handle their food if we are the least bit ill. If we are ill with something serious, like chickenpox, we are not allowed within 100 metres of the monkeys at all!

Boredom

If you compare life in the rainforest to life in captivity, it is understandable that one of the biggest problems facing our monkeys is boredom and stress. Monkeys need constant stimulation and without it can develop stereotypical *behaviours* such as hand-clapping, head twisting, pacing or over grooming, among others. The best thing for this problem is to give the monkeys new and exciting things to do and play with. This can be anything from giving them access to a different part of the territory to new food or a new toy. We call this process *enrichment*.



This contraption is a "nut puzzle". The nut is placed by a keeper into the maze through a hole on the outside that the monkeys cannot reach. The capuchins are clever enough to guide a nut through the maze of wheels and slopes, to the hole at the bottom, from which they can take their reward!



This is one of our capuchin enclosures. It is full of interesting and exciting things for the monkeys to explore and discover. We hide their food in baskets and boxes so that they have to spend time finding it.

Favourite games include swinging the buoy, jumping in baskets and hiding in hammocks.



Their intelligence means that, like humans, monkeys sometimes play just to have fun.

This young woolly monkey discovered that a coffee pot makes a great "gong" if you put it on your head and hit the top.



This "drawbridge" is another puzzle for the capuchins. Food is put into the holes in the wood, out of reach unless the monkeys pull the drawbridge up using the rope. It didn't take long for the clever capuchins to figure this one out!



Monkeys in Captivity - Primates as Pets

Keeping a monkey as a pet in the UK is perfectly legal, despite years of research showing that monkeys are extremely intelligent, sentient and wild animals.

It is thought that there are up to 5,000 primates kept as pets in the UK alone, and this figure could far exceed that because of the limited knowledge we have on private owners.

The present law states that it is legal to keep a monkey as a pet as long as the owner holds a Dangerous Wild Animal License (DWA for short). This excludes the smallest monkeys; marmosets and tamarins, as these species are not deemed dangerous enough to be licensed and so can be kept by anyone with no limitations of the level of care.

Where do They Live?

We have had arrivals here at The Monkey Sanctuary that have been kept in garden sheds, caravans and small cages, to name but a few, and when this is meant for an animal that might travel up to 15 miles per day in the wild, it becomes clear why most of the monkeys we have rescued showed some form of *stereotypical behaviour* or are mentally traumatised. Some enclosures are better than this but a lack of knowledge about the animals are caring for means that a vast number of owners keep their monkey in unsuitable housing.

Many times, a monkey will begin by having free reign of the house until they reach adolescence and become aggressive when they are usually confined to a permanent cage to prevent them doing any further damage to the house or owner.

Monkey Menu

Because capuchins will eat almost anything, we have found that privately-owned monkeys have been given a bizarre diet. One of our monkeys was fed jam sandwiches, crisps and even given cigarettes to chew. Another was so overweight that he found it difficult to climb without wheezing heavily.

Most of the ex-pet capuchins we take in arrive with dental problems and have had to have teeth removed due to the bad diet they have been fed over the years.



Problems....and More Problems

In the opinion of Wild Futures' Monkey Sanctuary, monkeys do not make good pets and we have been campaigning for a number of years to see the trade outlawed in the UK. Here are just a few reasons why we want to see this happen:

Attack!

When a monkey reaches adolescence at about 5 years old, a natural process begins to take its course whereby the monkey has to discover where it sits in the "pecking order" of its colony.

This is very important in the wild, as monkeys have to live in large groups and get along and the monkey will apply the same logic to its colony, normally the family that it lives with.

The result is the monkey begins to challenge members of the family, starting with the weakest; often the family dog or youngest child. The injuries can be awful and there are a few common outcomes:

1. The monkey is put down because of the attack
2. The monkey has its teeth and nails pulled out
3. The monkey is put into a confined space where it can do no more harm
4. The monkey is sent somewhere like the Monkey Sanctuary or, simply abandoned

It doesn't matter if the monkey has been meek and mild up until this point, this process is instinctive and unavoidable.

HOW MUCH??!

Most vets have little or no experience in caring for monkeys and so if a monkey does get sick either there is nowhere for the owner to take it or, provided they are able to find a vet specialized in primate care, the costs can run to thousands of pounds. Some pet monkeys never receive any veterinary care, even for their most basic of needs. All too often, these monkeys sadly die at a very young age.

A Lifetime's Work

Few people are aware that monkeys can live into their 40s. If owners manage to get through the aggressive adolescence, they will have 40 years of round-the-clock care to give their pet. Many monkeys outlive their owners and are rehomed numerous times in a lifetime.

Lonely Life

A life in isolation or with one or two other individuals in a climate and surroundings, so far removed from their incredible rainforest home, could never be enough to fulfill a monkey's needs. No matter what level of care they receive, there is simply no comparison to a life of freedom in the wild and this can only be overcome by a change in the law in this country.

Activities

Your teacher or group leader will help you to work your way through the following monkey-related activities:

Animal Welfare Bill Forum

You have been invited to a discussion forum for a new bill (piece of law) that is due to be passed by Parliament this year. It is in its very initial stages and the discussion aims to take into account as many different views as possible ahead of the bill being officially drafted.

The topic of discussion is whether it should be made illegal to keep primates as pets in the UK.

The following people will be attending:

- 1. A keeper from Wild Futures' Sanctuary*
- 2. A private owner who keeps a number of monkeys legally at his home*
- 3. A representative of a breeding centre which supplies the pet trade*
- 4. A Member of Parliament known for his interest in animal welfare*
- 5. A pet shop owner who sells monkeys in his shop*

Your teacher will give some of you a character from the list. These people must devise and present their argument to the rest of the class, who will act as Parliament and decide what the new law should be.

You can outlaw keeping monkeys as pets or you can allow it to continue. You have to give reasons for your decisions and take into account all of the factors you have been given.

Design a Campaign Poster or Leaflet

You have recently been informed that there is to be a new law passed which may make the keeping of monkeys as pets illegal in the UK. The law will be open to public debate (the public will have a chance to influence it).

You are a member of either an organisation that is against the keeping of primates as pets or you are a member of an organisation which is in support of the private ownership of primates (you can choose), and you have been asked to design a campaign poster or leaflet to outline the views of your organisation.

You will have to ensure that you put your argument across clearly and concisely and that your poster has the desired impact. You can use slogans, photographs and artwork to demonstrate your points.

You might want to consider:

- 1. Who your poster is aimed at?*
- 2. What is your message?*
- 3. What are your reasons for your view?*
- 4. How can these be put across in an eye-catching manner?*

Design a Monkey Enclosure

You are an architect commissioned with the job of creating a new enclosure, or series of enclosures for a new site recently acquired by Wild Futures' Monkey Sanctuary.

You can decide whether the enclosure will be for woolly monkeys or capuchin monkeys and design it using the information you have already learned about monkeys. The following are a few tips on what you might need to consider:

1. The monkeys move around a lot and so need as much space as possible
2. As well as outdoor space, the monkeys need some shelter to keep warm
3. The monkeys prefer to spend time high up rather than low down. Think about this when designing both inside and outside spaces
4. Both types of monkey are aggressive and territorial and will not allow people to go into the enclosures with them. This means you have to find a way of moving the monkeys so that you can go in and clean regularly in safety
5. You need to find a way of feeding the monkeys safely too - and it is good to be able to have more than one feeding space so that they don't compete with each other for the best bits!
6. There must be lots of interesting things to keep the monkeys stimulated. These things must be firmly fixed though, as the monkeys are very good at destroying things!
7. Finally, if a monkey is ill, there has to be a way of getting that monkey out of the enclosure without having to go in with them. Can you think of how you might do this?

This might seem like an easy task but there are lots of things to consider. You can make your design as detailed as you like. Try to think of all the things an architect would need to consider.



Plan a Fundraising Event for Charity

You work for a small event management firm called Eventful! and you want to raise your profile by doing some free work for charity such as Wild Futures' Monkey Sanctuary. You decide to hold a fundraising event for a charity (choosing the charity will be done as a group).

The first thing you will need to do is decide which charity you would like to benefit and find out more about them to give you some insight as to what event you might plan.

The next thing to decide is who should the event be aimed at? You could aim it at the people you think most likely to support the charity and then base your event on what you feel these people would respond to.

Finally, you should decide what you want to do for your event and begin planning.

Areas you might have to think about include:

1. Public Relations - this means getting some free publicity for your event, you might write articles for your local newspaper and write press releases for your local press. You could stage some radio or television interviews to talk about your event too!
2. Advertising - why not create some posters, flyers or leaflets to advertise your events. You could even plan a radio or TV advert if your firm has enough money!
3. Logistics - this means "what, where, when and how". What is your event, where will it be held, what is the capacity of the venue, when will you hold it and how will you go about organising all of the practical aspects? This is a big job and involves the whole organisation of the event itself, from the venue right down to the type of toilet paper you want your guests to have!! You don't have to go quite that far but you do need to try to remember all of the little things that need planning.
4. Budget - why not figure out how much it would cost to stage your event in real life? It might not be expensive or it might run into thousands, depending on what you have decided. One of the most important aspects of being a successful fundraiser is making sure as much money as possible goes to the charity and to do this means clever and careful budgeting.