

Common Squirrel Monkey

Scientific Name: *Saimiri sciureus*

Class: Mammalia

Order: Primates

Family: Cebidae



The head and body length is 10.4 to 14.4 in.; tail length is 14 to 17 in; and weight is 2.5 to 3.7 lb. The tail is not prehensile. These diurnal monkeys are arboreal and only occasionally descend to the ground. Movement is quadrupedal with relatively little leaping. Ranges are often ill-defined and troops may number into the 40-50 range. During the mating season males establish a dominance hierarchy through fierce fighting with the higher-ranking individuals then interacting with the females. The females establish a dominance hierarchy during pregnancy. After the birth of the young, females exclude the males. The newborn cling to their mothers back for the first few weeks of life. Independence is achieved at 1 year.

Range

East of the Andes from Colombia and northern Peru to north- eastern Brazil

Habitat

Primary and secondary forests, cultivated areas, usually along streams

Gestation

152-172 days

Litter

1

Behavior

These diurnal monkeys are arboreal and only occasionally descend to the ground. Movement is quadrupedal with relatively little leaping. Wild troops are most active from early to mid-morning and mid- to late afternoon, usually resting an hour or two at midday. Ranges are often ill-defined, and troops may number into the 40-50 range. Groups are known to split during the day into subgroups of pregnant females, females with young and adult males.

Reproduction

During the mating season males establish a dominance hierarchy through fierce fighting with the higher-ranking individuals then interacting with the females. The females establish a dominance hierarchy during pregnancy. After the birth of the young, females exclude the males. There is a 2-4-month breeding period during the dry season with births occurring from late June to early August. The estrous cycle is believed to be 7-13 days with estrus lasting 12-13 hours. The newborn cling to their mother's back for the first few weeks of life. Independence is achieved at 1 year. Reproductive maturity is reached by females at 3 and by males at 5.

Wild Diet

Fruits, berries, nuts, flowers, buds, seeds, leaves gum, insects, arachnids and small invertebrates