

Potto

Scientific Name: *Perodicticus potto*

Class: Mammalia

Order: Primates

Family: Lorisidae



The head and body length of the Potto is 12 to 15". Tail length 1.5 to 4", and weight from .5 to .75 lbs. The index finger is a mere rudiment, and the thumb is opposable to the three remaining fingers, producing an excellent grasping organ. The great toe opposes the other toes, making the foot equally efficient for grasping.

Range

Guinea to western Kenya and central Zaire

Habitat

Tropical forests

Gestation

170 days

Litter

1

Behavior

The potto is nocturnal and arboreal, sleeping in foliage by day. It is generally slow, moving by climbing rather than by leaping, but it can make quick grasps with its hands and mouth. Females defend an area large enough to support themselves and their young. Older and larger males establish individual home ranges from which other males are excluded, but which overlap the home ranges of one or more females. The potto leaves urine trails about 3 feet long on branches, apparently as a means of communication.

Reproduction

After being carried on the belly for a few days, the young are left hidden during the mother's nightly forays. At 3 to 4 months of age the youngsters begin to follow the mother or ride dorsally. Adult weight is attained at 8 to 14 months, and sexual maturity at 18 months. Young males leave the mother's home range when 6 months old, and young females at 8 months, but share their mother's range.

Wild Diet

Fruit, gums and insects, small vertebrates (birds and bats)