

Golden Bellied Mangabeys

(Cercocebus galeritus chrysogaster)

Kingdom: *Animalia*
Phylum: *Chordata*
Mammalia
Order: *Primates*
Family: *Cercopithecidae*



Class:

HABITAT:

Seasonally flooded or swampy forests

DESCRIPTION:

Male: Back and outer portions of limbs are agouti-banded with an overall olive-brown coloration. Abdomen color varies from yellow to bright orange with the neck and underside of limbs cream colored. Skin of face, hands and feet are dark brown.

Female: Smaller than male

LIFESPAN

In the wild: Unknown

In captivity: Up to 30 years

DIET

In the wild: Fruit, leaves, buds, insects, eggs, nuts, bark, and birds

In the zoo: Fruit, vegetables and monkey chow

GESTATION: 5 1/2 months

Sexual Maturity: Male: 5 years of age **Female:** 2 1/2 - 5 years of age

Predators: Thought to be birds of prey and cats

Population Status Endangered

CONSERVATION

Due to the lack of field studies for this species, the exact number of golden bellied mangabeys in the wild is unknown. They are considered endangered. Loss of habitat caused by roads leading into the interior of the Congo is the main threat to this and many other primate species. The increase in human populations in these previously uninhabited areas continues to threaten the mangabeys' chances for survival.

BEHAVIOR

Golden-bellied mangabeys have not been studied in the wild. From observing other similar mangabey species in the wild and this species in captivity, we have learned they are semi-terrestrial. They are thought to spend about one-half of their time feeding in the trees and the other half foraging through the leaf litter. They live in multi-male and multi-female groups as seen with other semi-terrestrial mangabey species. The dominant male in each group announces his dominance by shaking the trees and emitting loud vocalizations. These warnings alert other mangabey groups of his location.

These primates are *very facially expressive*. This is an effective method of communication because they live in less dense forests and are able to see each other's faces clearly. Arboreal mangabey species communicate more vocally since it is more difficult to see through the tree foliage.

Reproduction and Breeding

Mangabey females have perineal sexual swellings. At peak size these swellings are a visual advertisement to males that the female is ovulating and ready to conceive. The single infant is born with partial coat differences: The head is black and all skin is pale. A gold band appears across the forehead, and, over the next few months, the gold color moves back over the head creating adult coloration. At age five, males develop their secondary sexual characteristics of larger body size, larger canines and accentuated fur around the face, shoulders and rump. At this time, they are driven from their natal group (the group they are born into) and forced to form a new group or join others.