

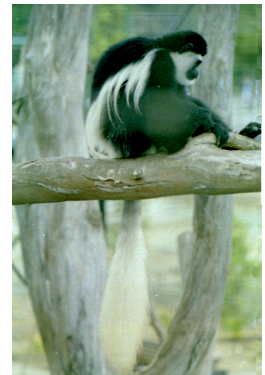
# BLACK AND WHITE COLOBUS

PRIMATA

Family: Cercopithecidae

Genus: *Colobus*

Species: *guereza*



**Range:** equatorial Africa from Nigeria, east and west of the Niger river and Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, N Congo, E Gabon, Central African Republic, NE Zaire, W Kenya, NW Rwanda, and S Sudan

**Habitat:** lowland tropical rainforest to the upper reaches of the Montane forests up to 10824 ft.

**Niche:** crepuscular, arboreal – mid and upper canopies, herbivorous

**Wild diet:** 58% of young leaves, 12.5% mature leaves, 13.5% fruits, 4% leaf buds, 2% blossoms. Distribution varies seasonally / geographically; so mature leaves may account for 34% of the diet.

**Zoo diet:** fruit, bread, vegetables, greens and monkey chow

**Life Span:** (Wild) 20 yrs

(Captivity) 29 yrs

**Sexual dimorphism:** M can weigh up to 1.19 times more than F

**Location in SF Zoo:** Primate Discovery Center

---

## APPEARANCE & PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS:

---

Black and White Colobus have a long tail and small stub for a thumb, which is an adaptation for quick movements through the trees. The long white hairs on their back and tail act as a parachute, slowing speed on downward leaps. The long tail acts as a rudder for mid-air corrections.

Their fur is distinctly black and white, while the face is gray and has no fur. A U-shaped white mantle of varying length is found on the sides and back. The tail is a whitish with a large white tuft at the end of the tail. Molars have high, pointed cusps while the upper canines are elongated and tusk-like. Colobus have an enlarged salivary gland to aid in softening food and uses gut microbes in multi-chambered stomach to break down the cellulose of diet, enabling them to draw more energy from plant resources than other monkey species. These features give them the characteristic pot-belly.

<b>Weight:</b>	<b>M 19.8 - 31.9 lbs</b>
	<b>F 14.3 - 22 lbs</b>
<b>HRL:</b>	<b>1.5 - 2.3 ft</b>
<b>TL:</b>	<b>1.7 - 3 ft</b>

Colobus are important for seed dispersal through their sloppy eating habits as well as through their digestive system.

---

## STATUS & CONSERVATION

---

There has been a decline in populations over the last 100 years. They are noted in Appendix II of the CITES. This decline is due to hunting and deforestation. They are still abundant in many parts of their lowland ranges in Cameroon, the Nigerian border and East African reserves and parks. Although still abundant, there is the potential for extinction of eastern populations from unrestricted skin trading.

---

## COMMUNICATION AND OTHER BEHAVIOR

---

Colobus live in sexually mixed groups averaging 8 to 15 individuals, with usually only one fully adult male and three or four reproducing females, adolescents and infants. The fixed core of the mixed group consists of the females, who remain in the group of their birth for life. Females are thought to be close relatives that display their friendly intra-group relationships, marked by mutual grooming and "infant transfer." This latter phenomenon consists of an infant being handled by several females soon after birth and carried as far as 25 m from its mother. A mother may even suckle the infant of another female and her own simultaneously. These monkeys spend most of their time sitting in the tops of trees. Adolescent males leave their birth group either voluntarily or due to force from the adult male. Upon leaving their natal group, young males either lead a solitary life or form temporarily associate with other solitary males. Some males eventually take over their own harem and create a new group. There is no true leader of a group, but strong males usually take leadership roles. There are definite indications of infanticide in consequence of the threat of male replacements within mixed groups. Inter-group relationships are not friendly among mixed groups that live in well-defined territories of about 32 to 40 acres. Territories are vigorously defended by males with leaps and cries, hand-to-hand communication, roars, and occasional chasing and fighting. Additionally, displays of the white fringe fur flapping up and down serve as warning to others. Some groups, however, do share water holes and other essential resources.

---

## COURTSHIP AND YOUNG

---

Colobus breed once every two years (20 months) though breeding is not strictly seasonal. Births are timed so that weaning occurs at the time of greatest food availability. Sexual behavior is usually initiated by the female by tongue smacking. During copulation, the female remains prone. At birth, the infants are about 20 cm in head-body length. The eyes are open and the infant clings to the mother's or father's stomach. Both the female and the male take part in the parenting of the infant. The young of the *C. guereza* do not share the black and white coloration, but instead have pure white fur for the first weeks of their life.

Estrous	
Gestation: 6 months (average)	Sexual Maturity: F - 4 yrs / M - 6 yrs
# of Mammae: 1 pair	Weaning Age:
# of Young: one, rarely twins	Weight at birth: 14 oz

---

## MISCELLANEOUS

---

The name "colobus" is derived from the Greek word for "mutilated," because unlike other monkeys, colobus monkeys do not have thumbs. Members of the genus *Colobus* are distinguished from members of the other subfamily, Cercopithecinae, by the absence of cheek pouches and the presence of prominent ischial callosities that are separate in females and contiguous in males.

### Sources:

### Last Revision: 11/94

### Present Revision: 3/08

Brainard, ed 1983; Grzimek 1990; Kavanagh 1983; MacDonald 1984; Nowak ed. 1991

<http://www.awf.org/>

<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/>