



PREVOST'S SQUIRREL

RODENTIA
Family: Sciuridae
Genus: *Callosciurus*
Species: *prevostii*



Range: Southeast Asia - Thai-Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Borneo and nearby smaller islands

Habitat: Lowland and montane forest

Niche: Arboreal, omnivorous, diurnal

Wild diet: fruit, nuts, seeds, buds, flowers, insects and bird eggs

Zoo diet:

Life Span: Wild 8 - 10 years, Captivity 10 -15 years

Sexual dimorphism:

Location in SF Zoo: Bird short string

APPEARANCE & PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS:

Prevost's squirrels are also known as the tricolored squirrel; they have black backs and tails, white sides, and red-brown undersides. The coloration of the pelage varies over the species range. Their fur is usually thick but not soft. Their body is 7-10 inches long, and their bushy tail is of a similar length.

Like all rodents, they have a pair of strong incisors, which grow continuously throughout their lives and are worn down by gnawing on tough foods. They have bulbous eyes, which are adapted to vertical vision, peering intently up and down tree trunks as they climb.

Weight: 1.1 lb
SH:
HRL: 7 – 10 in
TL: 7 – 10 in

STATUS & CONSERVATION

This species is listed on the IUCN Red list as Least Concern because it is common and widespread, occurring in a number of protected areas, it is tolerant to some degree of habitat modification. However, habitat destruction and the pet trade may affect their numbers. Many of the natural habitats in which they live have a vulnerable or a critical/endangered status, such as the Peninsular Malaysian rain forests and the Sumatran lowland rain forests.

COMMUNICATION AND OTHER BEHAVIOR

Prevost's squirrels are solitary and spend most of their time high in the trees of forests, foraging for food. As with all squirrels, the Prevost's is a good climber, leaping nimbly through the treetops in search of plants and seeds. It rarely has a reason to come to the ground; they can leap 8 – 10 feet between branches. Their keen senses help it keep a lookout for danger, like eagles and martens.

It is believed that the adults give seeds to juveniles since the juveniles are never seen foraging. It is also believed that they cache food after one was observed trying to wedge a ripe fruit into a crack in a tree branch.

These squirrels communicate with each other by trilling, whistling, or raising their tail. Vocalizations include harsh alarm calls and birdlike sounds.

COURTSHIP AND YOUNG

Although the breeding season is year-round, it peaks between June and August. The female squirrel builds a spherical nest from leaves and twigs, called a drey. Alternatively, she may line the hollow of a tree with leaves. She may have up to three litters each year. The young are born altricial. They are cared for by the female, and leave the nest at 6 to 8 weeks of age.

Estrous:	
Gestation: 40 days	Sexual Maturity: 1 year
# of Mammas:	Weaning Age:
# of Young: 1 - 4	Weight at birth: 16 g

MISCELLANEOUS

Callosciurus is a genus of squirrels collectively referred to as the "beautiful squirrels" due to their striking coloration.

Squirrels are vital to the survival of the forests in their native range. Prevost's squirrels drop the seeds of some species after eating the flesh from the fruit. Squirrels disperse these seeds by carrying them away from the parent tree. Seeds carried away in such a manner may have a lower risk of being eaten compared to ones that are found beneath the parent tree. This helps replant the trees, to create a healthy and diverse forest.

Sources:

Walker's Mammals of the World Vol II © 1999 by Ronald M. Nowalk, Johns Hopkins University Press

<https://nationalzoo.si.edu/Animals/SmallMammals/fact-prevost.cfm>

http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Callosciurus_prevostii/

<http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/3603/0>

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