The feeding ecology and behaviour of the red colobus monkey (Colobus Badius Kirkii)

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Doctor of philosophy

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Feeding ecology and behavior of the Zanzibar red colobus monkey, colobus badius Kirkii was studies between January 1980 and April 1981 in Zanzibar (Tanzania). This involved an intensive systematic study of twelve month on two monkey group (I and II) in Jozani Forest reserve, and of eight month on another group (III) in Kichanga. Opportunistic observations were made on these and other monkey group in in Jozani, Pete, Muungwi and Muungoni. C.b Kirkii was observed to range in ground water forest, coral rag forest and thicket, mangrove forest, scrub, abandoned coconut and mango plantations, and other cultivated areas. Kirkii had a diverse and was selective in its feeding. It also fed on exotic and crop species and was condemned as vermin. Main items in Kirkii diet were leaf buds, young leaves unripe truits and seeds, and young floral parts. Ripe succulent fruits and mature leaves were avoided. Foods high in protein or fermentable carbohydrates and also digestible were selected. Alkaloids and condensed tannis showed little influence on food selection. The three study groups showed differences in food choice and selectivity. These were attributed to interference competitions. Food habit of Kirkii was similar to those of other red colobus. Like most red colobus, c.b. Kirkii ranged in heterosexual social groups that varied in size and day range lengths of group I and II varied thought-out the study period, and were not influenced by diet, food abundance, or rainfall. Day range lengths were positively related to intergroup encounters in group II. Range use in group I and II was not uniform. It was positively related to the abundance of food trees in group I. Ecological and behavioral factors influenced food selection and ranging in groups of c.b Kirkii is threatened by habitat destruction by human activity. Its survival can be guaranteed by protecting their natural habitat through adequate conservation measures