



TUFTED CAPUCHIN

Phylum: Chordata; Class: Mammalia; Order: Primates; Family: Cebidae; Subfamily: Cebinae
Cebus apella

There are 5 species of *Cebus sp.*, the capuchin monkeys:

- Cebus olivaceus* - wedge-capped capuchin
- C. capucinus* - white-faced, white-throated, or black and white capuchin
- C. albifrons* - cinnamon or white-fronted
- C. apella* - tufted, brown, black-capped, or hooded
- C. kaapor* - Ka'apor capuchin

There are approximately 10 subspecies of *Cebus apella*, including *Cebus apella apella*, the brown tufted capuchin, the type of capuchin found at Rolling Hills Refuge.

Weight: 2.2 - 4.0 pounds

Length: average head & body length = 18 inches, with a tail of approximately equal length

Lifespan: 35-45 years in captivity

Habitat: rain forests

Range: Tufted capuchins have the largest range of any New World monkey. They are found in several countries in northern and central South America

Status:

- Cebus apella apella* is not currently listed as endangered.
- Cebus apella* is listed as CITES Appendix II. CITES, The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, is a United Nations treaty, with 122 member states, which provides a means for regulating international trade in wild animals and plants.

Diet in the wild: "Fruit, seeds, pith, nectar, animal prey - insects, birds, eggs, reptiles, bats, and mammals up to 32 oz. in weight" (Rowe 94).

Special features:

- The **name Capuchin** "comes from the similarity of one *Cebus* species to the costume worn by the Capuchin order of monks from Spain" (Rowe 81). The **tufted capuchin** is named for the **2 tufts of hair** on the top of either side of their head.
- Capuchin monkeys have a **semi-prehensile tail** used "mainly as an anchor while they are at rest or feeding" (Preston-Mafham 53).
- Capuchins have nails on their **digits**.
- The **thumb** in cebid monkeys is **not opposable**, but the great toe is well-developed and widely opposable to the other toes (Nowak 445).
- Capuchins can **leap** 10-13 feet
- Predators:** eagles

Social organization & Behavior:

- Capuchins are **arboreal**; they spend most of their time in the trees.
- Capuchins are "very **intelligent and curious**" (Rowe 94).
- Tufted capuchins live in groups of 5-15 members. Each troop usually has a dominant (alpha) male. Sub-ordinate males often form a socially separate subgroup (Rowe 94).
- "Each individual maintains **olfactory identity** by washing its palms and feet in its own urine and scratching its fur" (Rowe 95; SSA 48). Urine washing may also be a form of thermoregulation (SSA 53).
- Capuchins communicate through a wide variety of **vocalizations & facial expressions**.
- Capuchins in captivity have been known to **use tools**.

Breeding & Care of Young:

- Gestation** = approximately 150 days
- In the wild, tufted capuchins typically give birth during the months of October - January.
- Tufted capuchins normally give birth to **1 offspring** at a time.
- An infant tufted capuchin clings to its mother's back or shoulders for approximately the first 3 months of life
- By 6 months of age, "infants are pretty much getting about on their own and consuming solids. They still rely quite heavily on their mothers, though, still in need of much security and supplementation of milk" (SSA 51). Young are **weaned** at approximately 12 months of age.

