



## RING TAILED CATS

**Kingdom:** Animalia **Phylum:** Chordata **Class:** Mammalia **Order:** Carnivora **Family:** Procyonidae  
*Bassariscus astutus*

**Description:** Ring tailed cats are generally a greyish brown color, with between 14 - 16 alternating bands of black and fawn on their tail. It resembles a small fox with a raccoon tail.

**Length:** 15-18 inches

**Tail Length:** 15-20 inches

**Weight:** 2-3 pounds

**Habitat:** Arid rocky regions and woodland areas near water

**Distribution:** Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Kansas, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas

**Diet:** Omnivorous, small mammals, small reptiles, insects and fruit

**Life Span:** 7 years in the wild and 14 in captivity

**Status:** Stable

### Special Characteristics:

- They are also known as North American Cacomistle, Northern Ringtail and Miner's Cat.
- They have 5 toes on each foot with semi-retractable claws. The back feet can rotate 180 degrees to allow them to descend headfirst.
- Expert climbers they can climb a vertical wall.
- They have rounded ears and hairy soles of the feet.
- Nocturnal, they spend the day in a den.
- When it first awakens, it will groom itself before going out to hunt. It will groom again after eating.
- Scents are as important as vocalizations in communication
- When threatened, a Ringtail will bristle the hair on its tail, arching the tail over its back towards its head, and thereby making itself appear larger. If captured, it screams a high pitched, penetrating sound and discharges a pungent, foul smelling secretion from the anal glands

### Reproduction:

- Sexual maturity at 10 months
- Gestation 45-50 days; Litter size 2-4
- Mating season is in April
- Males provide food for the pregnant females.
- Cubs eyes open at 30 days
- Cubs hunt independently at 4 months

