

JUVENILE CAPUCHIN MONKEYS (*Cebus apella*) DIFFER FROM ADULTS ON FORAGING BEHAVIOR

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“Slow” life histories, with long juvenile periods, are characteristic of the Primate order. Some of the current hypotheses attribute this long juvenile period to the need to obtain foraging skills. The present work analyses the feeding behavior of juvenile capuchin monkeys (*Cebus apella*) (1.5 to 5 years of age) from a semi-free-ranging group at Parque Ecológico do Tietê (PET), São Paulo, Brazil, from October 2007 to December 2009. The group had between 25 and 31 individuals, and a total of 11 juveniles were observed throughout the study. Data were obtained using “focal animal” method. Foraging represented a bigger part of the activity budget of juveniles than of adults or infants. Compared to adults, juveniles had a similar ingestion rate and consumed more fruit and less invertebrates. Human provisioning was the main food source. Juveniles’ longer foraging time suggests that they are less efficient in this behavior than adults. They dedicate most of their foraging time to items that are relatively easy to obtain, such as fruits, and this allows the ingestion rates similar to those of adults. This result differs from data on wild populations, which suggest that juveniles spend more time foraging for invertebrates while adults eat more fruits. This difference may be due to the food abundance observed at PET, which would allow for less feeding competition and, therefore, juveniles would not be kept away from high-quality, easy-to-obtain food sources.

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