

CAPUCHINS OF THE PANTEPUY BIOGEOGRAPHIC REGION: *CEBUS APELLA*, *C. OLIVACEUS*, AND *C. ALBIFRONS*

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The taxonomy and biogeography of Amazonian primates is currently in a state of constant revision. Several new species/subspecies are described nearly annually, and the geographical distribution of many revised. This is partly due to increased fieldwork in regions not traditionally visited by scientists and use of molecular biology in taxonomical studies. From 2003 to 2005, we conducted a series of expeditions to the Rio Negro – Rio Branco interfluvium and adjoining Brazilian Pantepui region in order to record primate species occurrences in this poorly known region. We surveyed the several mountains of the Pantepui and left bank tributaries of the Rio Negro. Inventory work was conducted on foot or in canoes. We also interviewed local people. Although current distribution maps show *Cebus apella* occurring in the Rio Negro – Branco interfluvium and in Venezuela Amazonas, we did not encounter the species in our surveys. *C. apella* is also unknown to local people. Contrarily, *Cebus olivaceus* which was thought to occur only east of Rio Branco (with the exception of Maracá island) was found in our surveys as far west as the Padauari river. As predicted, *C. albifrons* was found in great abundance throughout the Negro – Branco interfluvium. In light of the new evidence gathered in our fieldwork we thus present a revised distribution map of *Cebus spp.* in Amazonia. In addition, we present a molecular analysis of the relationships between our collected specimens and other capuchins from elsewhere (e.g., *C. olivaceus* from Venezuela, *C. capucinus* and *C. apella*).

Key words: Amazonas, Biogeography, *Cebus olivaceus*, Pantepuy.