

POSITIONAL BEHAVIOR OF THE GOLDEN MONKEY (*CERCOPITHECUS MITIS KANDTI*) IN THE VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK, RWANDA

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Cercopithecus mitis kandti is endemic to the Albertine rift, classified as endangered due to its small population size and limited available habitat. A study on its positional behavior was conducted between November 2007 and January 2008 (110 hours) in an habituated group of 80 individuals. The study aims to determine the different postures adopted by golden monkeys and specifically their degree of terrestriality. Instantaneous scan sampling was used to collect data on habitat use, activity patterns, postures, locomotion behavior and support use. The results indicate that the golden monkey spends 100% of its time in the bamboo zone. They spend the majority of their time moving (37%) and feeding (27%). Sitting is the most used stationary posture (78%). Quadrupedalism is the most used locomotion behavior; 50% of their time spent moving is either walking or running. They spend 21% of all their time on the ground. The level in the trees that is the most frequented is the medium level (> 6m: 60%), this level provides supports to the golden monkeys. The horizontal (0°-15°) and medium-sized branches (6-25 cm) are generally the most used supports by golden monkeys (58% and 60% respectively). Bamboo is a key food species (58% feeding time) thus all postures and locomotion behaviors are adapted to this habitat. To ensure the conservation of this endemic species, intensive protection efforts should target this habitat zone. This study has been funded by the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International.

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