

Grey-shanked Douc Monkey

Pygathrix cinerea Nadler, 1997

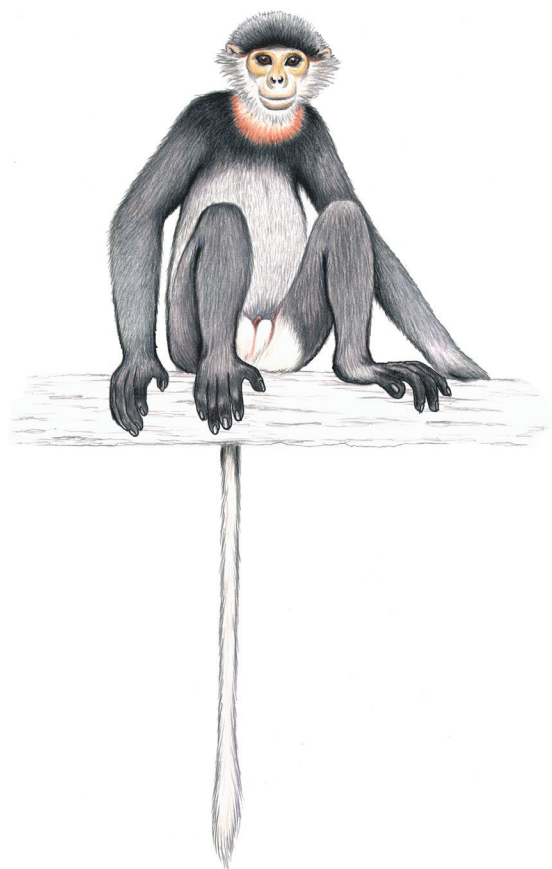
Vietnam, Cambodia (?), Laos (?)

(2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008)

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The colobine monkeys of the genus *Pygathrix* are native to Indochina. Until only ten years ago, just two distinct taxa were recognized: the red-shanked douc, *Pygathrix nemaeus* (Linnaeus 1771), in the northern part of Central Vietnam and Central Laos; and the black-shanked douc, *P. nigripes* (Milne-Edwards, 1871) from South Vietnam and east Cambodia. The grey-shanked douc was first described as a subspecies of the red-shanked douc, but genetic studies have since demonstrated a divergence at species level (Roos and Nadler 2001). It occurs in Central Vietnam between 13°30' and 16°N, and has been recorded in five provinces: Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, and Binh Dinh. Currently, grey-shanked doucs are known only from Vietnam, but records exist close to the border with Laos, and there are photos of hunted animals from south-east Laos and far north-east Cambodia that suggest that the species occurs in small neighboring areas in both countries. Surveys and research on this recently discovered primate have been conducted by the Vietnam Primate Conservation Program of Frankfurt Zoological Society, and the Endangered Primate Rescue Center at Cuc Phuong National Park.

Grey-shanked douc populations are fragmented, and estimated to total 600–700 individuals. Their occurrence has been confirmed in eight protected areas: Song Thanh Nature Reserve, Ngoc Linh Nature Reserve, Ba To Cultural and Historical Site, An Toan Nature Reserve, Kon Cha Rang Nature Reserve, Kon Ka Kinh National Park, Mom Ray National Park and A Yun Pa Nature Reserve. Hunting—the principal threat to the species—is, however, still a problem inside these parks and reserves. Snares are the most commonly-used method since gun confiscation programmes were carried out in a number of the areas. Often hundreds of traps are installed in trees frequently used by the monkey groups, as well as on the ground where they are seen crossing between small forest patches. Trapped animals are often severely injured and mutilated. Forest loss within at least part of the species' range is attributable to the expansion of agriculture, illegal logging and firewood collection. Almost 10,000 ha of forest are selectively logged every year in the Central Highlands.



The Endangered Primate Rescue Center has received 37 confiscated grey-shanked douc monkeys since 1995, and has begun a breeding program to provide stock for reintroduction in protected forests. Based on information from villagers and forest protection authorities, less than one-quarter of the hunted animals are confiscated alive. Frankfurt Zoological Society is studying the species in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, specifically to provide recommendations for the establishment of special “Species Protection Areas”, which will promote connectivity between the currently-isolated populations in the established parks and reserves.

References

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