

OWEN DAVEY



FLYING EYE BOOKS



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# MAD ABOUT MONKEYS



For Gramps, who always called me 'Monkey'

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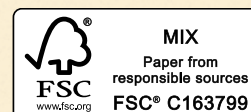
Scientific consultant: Dr Nick Crumpton

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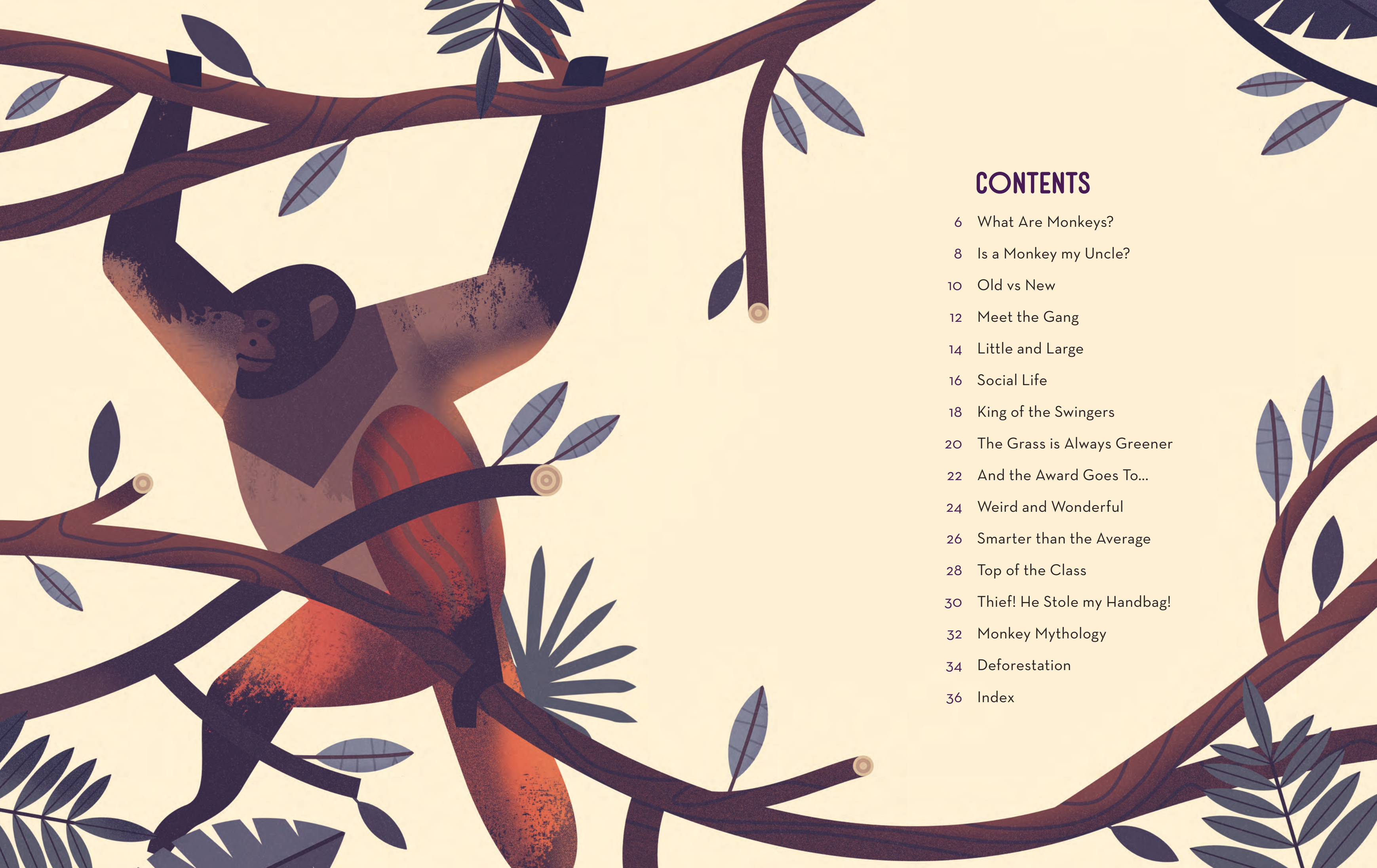
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## CONTENTS

- 6 What Are Monkeys?
- 8 Is a Monkey my Uncle?
- 10 Old vs New
- 12 Meet the Gang
- 14 Little and Large
- 16 Social Life
- 18 King of the Swingers
- 20 The Grass is Always Greener
- 22 And the Award Goes To...
- 24 Weird and Wonderful
- 26 Smarter than the Average
- 28 Top of the Class
- 30 Thief! He Stole my Handbag!
- 32 Monkey Mythology
- 34 Deforestation
- 36 Index



Monkey habitats

## WHAT ARE MONKEYS?

Monkeys belong to a group of mammals known as 'primates'. Humans are also primates but humans are not monkeys. However, monkeys and humans aren't all that different.

Monkeys evolved around 35 million years ago. Today, they are easily identifiable by their long arms and bodies covered in thick fur and their more exposed faces.



Common squirrel monkey

### These Hands Were Made for Walkin'

Monkeys walk on all fours the majority of the time. Animals that do this are called 'quadrupeds'. Monkeys are able to stand and walk around on their back two legs, but only for a short time.

### Home Sweet Home

The type of place where an animal lives is known as their habitat. Some monkeys have a habitat high up in cooler mountainous regions, but most live in warm lowlands like savannas, plains and, more often than not, within tropical rainforests. Many monkeys live in trees to protect themselves from predators. Animals that live in trees are described as being 'arboreal'.

### Nom Nom

Monkey diets vary from species to species, but they can include fruit, seeds, nuts, leaves, flowers, insects, spiders, eggs and even some small animals like crabs and lizards.



The varied diet of monkeys

So now you know the basics, let's swing right into an unforgettable adventure across continents, from the jungles of South America to the highlands of East Africa. Like us every monkey has its own character and story to tell. So get set to meet our quirky cousins, and go *Mad about Monkeys!*

# IS A MONKEY MY UNCLE?

Many people believe that humans come from monkeys, but this is not true. Humans and monkeys are part of a wider group of mammals called primates.

Monkeys and humans are believed to have shared a common ancestor around 25 to 30 million years ago. Both monkeys and humans evolved from this animal in a variety of different ways until we became the species we are today.

Evolution is the theory of how animals have changed over time. Certain characteristics are passed down from generation to generation to help them survive.

Having a longer tail might help a monkey balance better in a tree and make it easier to reach fruit or keep safe from predators. A monkey with a long tail is then more likely to survive to have a baby with a long tail.

The traits of the most successful monkeys, such as a long tail, will thrive in a group and be passed down. Eventually the whole species will have long tails.

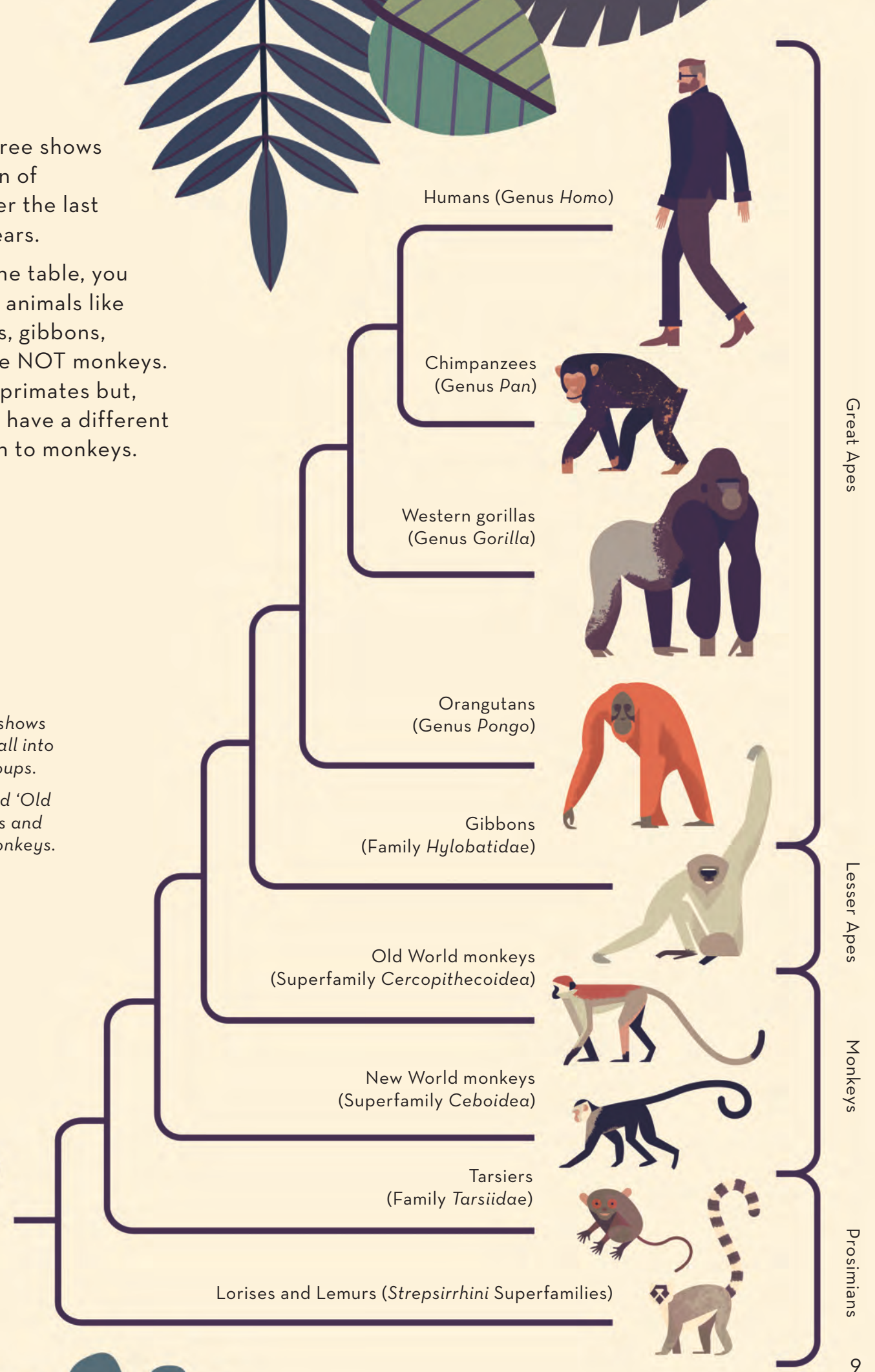
Common woolly monkey



This family tree shows the evolution of primates over the last 45 million years.

Looking at the table, you can see that animals like chimpanzees, gibbons, or lemurs are NOT monkeys. They are all primates but, like humans, have a different classification to monkeys.

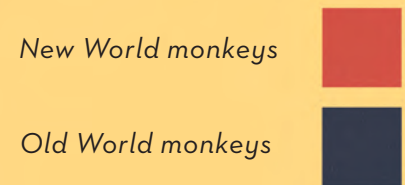
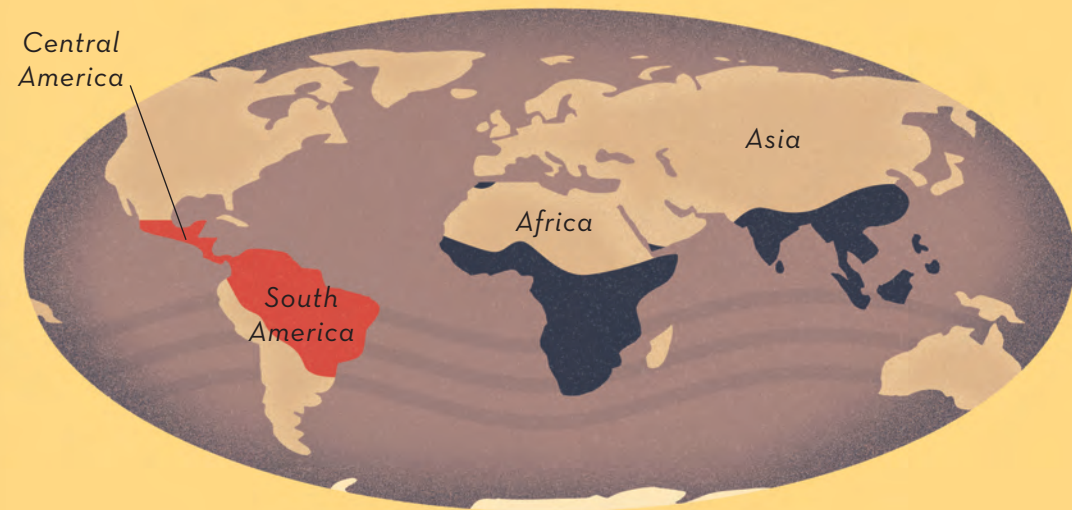
The chart also shows that monkeys fall into two distinct groups. These are called 'Old World' monkeys and 'New World' monkeys.



# OLD VS. NEW

Monkeys are thought to have evolved in Africa and spread to Asia and then to the Americas. Those that remained in Africa and Asia are Old World monkeys and those that evolved in North and South America are New World monkeys.

Today, it is possible to tell whether a monkey is classed as Old World or New World just by looking at it. This page will get you clued up on how to tell the difference!



## On the Nose

Old World monkeys tend to have narrow noses that point downwards. They have nostrils that are close together and open downwards too. New World monkeys, however, have flatter noses and their nostrils are far apart and open sideways.



*Celebes crested macaque (Old World)*  
Narrow nose, points downwards



*Red titi (New World)*  
Flat nose, opens sideways

*Silvery marmoset (New World)*

## Tree's a Crowd

New World monkeys only ever live in trees, and are small to avoid breaking the branches. Most Old World monkeys don't hang around in the trees and can grow much bigger.

## The Tail End

Monkeys use their tails to help them with climbing and balancing in the trees, but only New World monkeys have something known as a 'prehensile tail'. Prehensile means 'able to grasp'. A prehensile tail is a tail that can act like an extra limb for the monkey.



*Peruvian black spider monkey (New World)*



*Grivet (Old World)*

## Take a Seat

Many species of Old World monkeys have strange sitting pads on their bottoms called 'ischial callosities'. These hairless pads keep the monkeys more comfortable when they sit down on rocks or trees for long periods of time.

*Drill (Old World)*



*Bearded saki (New World)*