
Morphological aspects of the reproductive tract of the howler monkey (*Alouatta guariba clamitans* e *Alouatta caraya*): the female model

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Abstract

Brazil has about 133 primate's species and subspecies among which 35% are endemic. The land occupation, the natural environments destruction, hunting and the illegal commerce of wild animals left some species seriously threatened of extinction. The present study deals with the morphology of the reproductive tract of howler monkeys (*Alouatta guariba clamitans* and *Alouatta caraya*), with *data* can subdivide further reproduction researches, aiming its conservation. Ten female reproductive tract were studied microscopically and macroscopically. The age of the animals was estimated using a dental-age key, most of them were sexually mature. Representative fragments of the uterus, ovary, uterine tube and vagina were cut and prepared for histology and scanning electron microscopy. Our *data* showed that the *Alouatta* female vulva resembles the external genitalia of the male. The uterus are pyriform and characterized by a long cervix. The muscular layer of the cervix was well developed and the musculature of the body of the uterus showed a particular organization. The vaginal epithelium showed no cyclic alterations. The most significant feature found seems to be the presence of abundant glandular interstitial tissue in the compact ovaries. The female reproductive tract morphology of the howler monkey showed similarities with other *Platyrrhini* and few interspecific (*Alouatta guariba clamitans* – *Alouatta caraya*) differences.

Key-words: Primates, Animal anatomy, Morphology, female

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