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From Wilderness to Urbanity: The Adaptation of African Green Monkeys in Bangkok's Abandoned Forest Areas

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Abstract

This study investigates the adaptation and survival of non-native African green monkeys (*Chlorocebus sabaesus*) in an abandoned urban forest area of Bangkok, Thailand. Combining ethnographic and ecological fieldwork, we explored the factors shaping their establishment, focusing on their interactions with the local environment and human community. Key findings reveal that the Mon community, guided by Buddhist beliefs and traditions of animal veneration, plays a critical role in fostering a symbiotic relationship with the monkeys by providing essential resources such as food and shelter. Ecologically, the monkeys have adapted well to the urban forest without causing major disruptions to local biodiversity; however, concerns about unregulated population dynamics warrant attention. To address potential risks and ensure sustainable coexistence, we propose a community-based management strategy that integrates cultural practices, ecological monitoring, and legal recognition of the monkeys as part of Thailand's wildlife heritage. Specifically, this approach emphasizes collaboration between local stakeholders, such as the Mon community and landowners, alongside governmental agencies. Our findings contribute to broader discussions on urban wildlife adaptation and highlight the importance of integrating cultural and ecological perspectives in managing non-native species.

Keywords: *Chlorocebus sabaesus, Non-native species, The Mon people, Environmental law*