



Tarsiers: Past, Present, and Future (Rutgers Series in Human Evolution)

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Tarsiiformes, or tarsiers for short, are a group of living species of special interest to primatologists because their combination of derived and ancient characteristics make them pivotal to understanding the roots of primate evolution. These small-bodied, nocturnal, solitary creatures resemble lower primates in their behavior but genetically, DNA evidence aligns them more closely with higher primates, such as monkeys, apes, and humans. These astounding creatures exhibit an ability found in no other living mammal - they can turn their heads 180 degrees in either direction to see both prey and predators. The world's only exclusively carnivorous primate, they eat live food (primarily insects, but the occasional vertebrate, such as lizards, snakes, or frogs will also do). This unique combination of behavior and anatomy makes the tarsier an especially interesting and controversial animal for study among primate behaviorists, evolutionists, and taxonomists, who view the tarsiers as "living fossils" that link past and present, lower and higher primates in the long chain of evolutionary history. This new volume presents alternative and contrasting perspectives on the most debated questions that have arisen in tarsier studies. Top researchers bring together perspectives from anatomical, behavioral, genetic, and conservation studies in this new and exciting addition to the understanding of primate evolution. A volume in the Rutgers Series on Human Evolution, edited by Robert Trivers, Lee Cronk, Helen Fisher, and Lionel Tiger.

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