Website Review

Folia Primatol 2012;83:45–46
DOI: 10.1159/000339994

Published online: July 26, 2012

www.marmosetcare.com

Anyone who is lucky enough to work with common marmosets, either as part of their job or for voluntary work, can only adore this interactive website. The authors report information gathered from a long-term first-hand experience with the common marmosets, whilst at the same time referencing published and official documents they have had the foresight to attach to the website. Combining these two approaches of personal accounts and scientific accounts succeeds in making the website very open and friendly yet still altogether reliable and informative.

In our opinion, the strongest part of www.marmosetcare.com is the 'Vocalization' section, in which you can listen to 'live' recordings of a huge number of marmoset calls. Until now, it has been possible to learn about these calls only by reading literature and looking through ethograms which, whilst being informative, can never give an ideal representation of the different kinds of marmoset calls as the only realistic way to recognize and understand these calls is to actually listen to them. On this website, numerous calls are described and their ecological function explained, accompanied by a recording of that particular call. And let us just say how wonderful this is! This method of including sound clips overcomes the linguistic limitations encountered when trying to describe specific sounds.

Videos are also a relevant characteristic of this website, being numerous, diverse and amusing. They completely capture the essence of a *Callithrix jacchus* monkey and are the perfect prelude to any web-based research into understanding this species.

In the 'Care in captivity' section, the fundamental issue of environmental enrichment is summarized in the up-to-date concept of complexity, control and choice, underlining the importance of giving marmosets the option to remove themselves from an objectionable situation.

On top of this, the importance of sociality for these monkeys is rightly underlined and repeated in many passages throughout the website. Information on different typologies of grouping in captivity is very useful for any laboratory which manages, or aspires to manage, a colony of common marmosets. Nevertheless, the authors should be reprimanded for the curious lack of information regarding the physical removal of an individual from its relatives, a very prevalent problem in the captive management of marmosets and a less than ideal topic to have been excluded.

A relatively new subject area that has been included is the importance of the role that humans play in the well-being of marmosets, with many of the crucial aspects of this role being covered by the website. A detailed interactive guide to recognising the nature ('negative' or 'positive') of behaviours displayed towards humans is provided. Another aspect reported, which is particularly relevant if there are to be a lot of dealings with students, is the fact that the marmosets may be unable to recognise individuals if they change their clothes or body perfume – a problem, in our judgement, if carrying out a behavioural experiment.

KARGER

Fax +41 61 306 12 34
E-Mail karger@karger.ch
www.karger.com

© 2012 S. Karger AG, Basel
0015-5713/12/0831-0045\$38.00/0

Accessible online at:
www.karger.com/fpr

Finally, we appreciated the approach used to deal with the issue of keeping marmosets as pets. No ethical, but only economic and practical reasons are put forward. Keeping wild animals in household environments is ethically debatable, but we know that beyond all doubt the financial costs involved are the most effective arguments to persuade people to avoid this questionable behaviour.

Overall, www.marmosetcare.com is an invaluable resource for anyone who has an interest in the common marmoset. This includes experts in the field, students and novices and even those people who have only a casual interest in learning more about the species. The extensive and detailed research combined with the user-friendly interface results in a cornucopia of information available at the user's fingertips, and we firmly believe that this website will do wonders for both the well-being of the species in captivity and for the quality of research relating to this species that is produced.

Arianna Manciocco, Rome
Emma Sinclair, Guilford