

EVALUATION OF THE HYBRIDIZATION BETWEEN RHESUS (*Macaca mulatta*) AND LONG-TAILED MACAQUES (*M. fascicularis*) IN THE CENTRAL AND CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF VIETNAM BASED ON MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS

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Summary

Rhesus (*Macaca mulatta*) and long-tailed (*M. fascicularis*) macaques belong to the same *fascicularis*-species group in the genus *Macaca*, and are parapatric with a contact zone encompassing from 12° to 16°30'N in the Central and Central Highlands of Vietnam. Previous studies have reported probable hybrids between the two species from that zone, but have not studied exact nature of hybridization. To examine morphological characters of hybridization, the surveys on distribution, relative tail length, and pelage characters in macaques from free-ranging and pets in the contact zone in Vietnam were conducted by interview and photogrammetry. Average relative tail length of “rhesus” macaques was 67.3% in Cu Lao Cham island and 66.5% in Son Tra peninsula, respectively. Average relative tail length of rhesus-like and long-tailed-like macaques was 68.3% và 100.9%, respectively. In all populations macaques had longer tails than those of Chinese (36.5%) and Indian rhesus macaques (44.2%), but much shorter than that of long-tailed macaques in Thailand (111.2%) and Indochinese peninsula (118.4%). Pelage of rhesus-like and long-tailed-like macaques also displayed intermediate color pattern between those of pure *M. mulatta* and *M. fascicularis*. The results suggest introgression between the two species in the research area.

Keywords: Hybridization, *Macaca mulatta*, *Macaca fascicularis*, relative tail length, pelage color.