



Vervet monkeys

Wild monkey fast facts

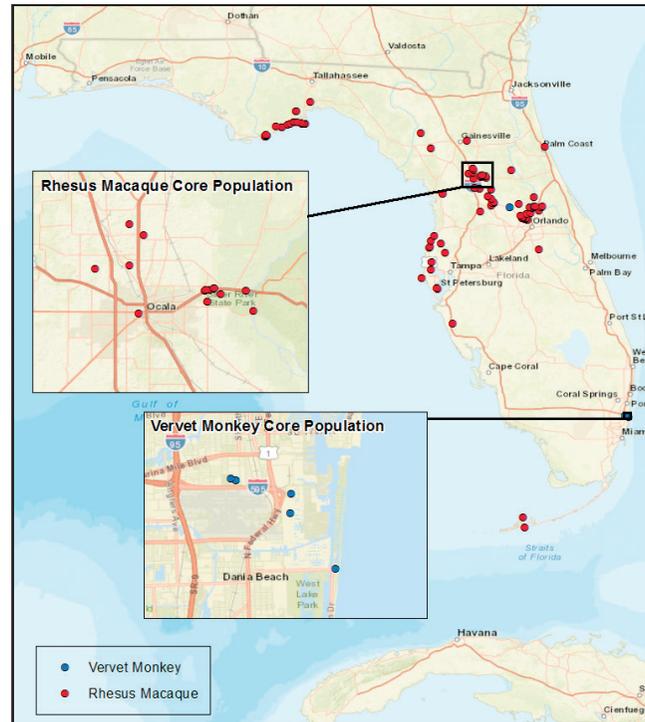
- Rhesus macaques are native to Asia. They were brought to the Silver Springs attraction in the 1930s and released onto an island as part of a jungle boat tour, but quickly escaped.
- Vervet monkeys are native to Africa. Individuals were released in the 1950s and 1960s by tourist attractions.
- Wild monkeys in Florida can cause ecological, agricultural and economic impacts.
- Wild monkeys carry diseases that can be spread to humans including some that can be fatal.
- If you encounter wild monkeys in Florida it is important to keep a safe distance. Never feed wild monkeys. Feeding wild monkeys in Florida is illegal.
- **Wild monkeys are not native to Florida and are not protected except by anti-cruelty law.**

Report wild monkeys

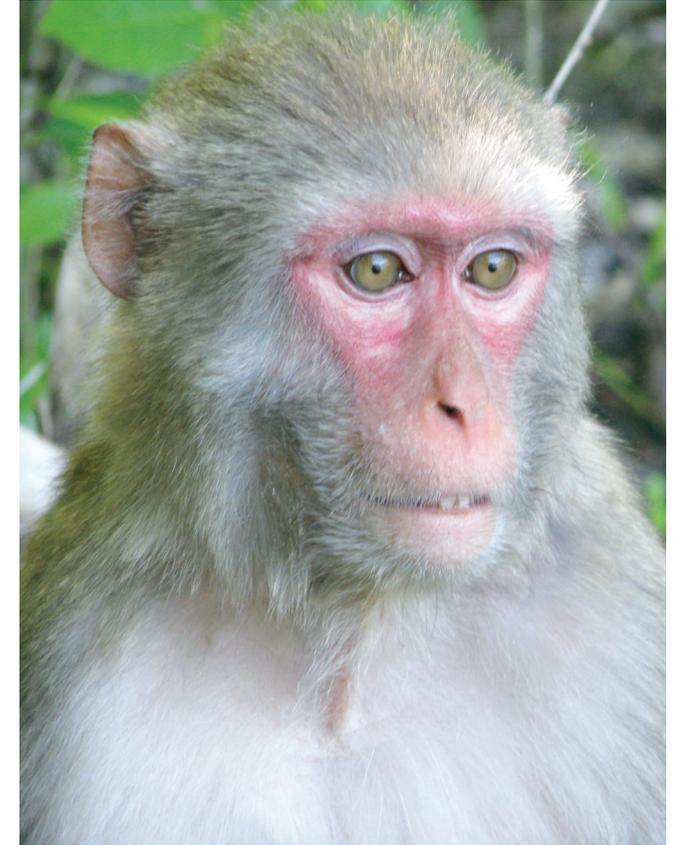
You can help the FWC by reporting wild monkeys. For rhesus macaques and vervet monkeys, please only report sightings OUTSIDE their core population areas. The map below shows credible sightings as of 3/1/18 and includes core population areas for rhesus macaques in Marion County and vervet monkeys in Broward County.

How to report wild monkeys to the FWC:

1. Try to take a photo from a safe distance.
2. Note the location.
3. Call the FWC's Exotic Species Hotline at 888-lveGot1 (888-483-4681).



Wild Monkeys in Florida



Adult rhesus macaque/Photo © S. Eben Kirksey

Why you should never feed wild monkeys



Wildlife Alert

If you observe a wild monkey that is posing an imminent threat to human safety, call the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-WILDLIFE (888-404-3922).



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Wild monkeys in Florida

Several species of wild monkey have been introduced in Florida, through intentional releases or by escaping from captivity. Currently two species—rhesus macaques and vervet monkeys—are established and reproducing in the state. Other species of wild monkeys have been reported, but those populations have not persisted. Wild monkeys are mostly herbivorous and eat fruit, vegetation and insects, and may also consume bird eggs.

Rhesus macaques

- The core population is in central Florida around the Silver River.
- Transient individuals have been reported outside the core area.
- Adults are brown to gray in color in color with pink faces.
- Rhesus macaques average 20 inches in height and weigh about 15 pounds.



Adult male rhesus macaque /Photo © C. Jane Anderson, University of Florida,

Vervet monkeys

- The core population is in southeast Florida.
- Adults are dark, grizzled-gray with black faces surrounded by white fur.
- Vervet monkeys average 17 inches in height and weigh about 11 pounds.



Adult male vervet monkey/Photo © Adam G. Stern

Feeding wild monkeys is prohibited in Florida and is a second-degree misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500 and 60 days in jail.

Why is it important NOT to feed wild monkeys?

- Brings monkeys into closer contact with people, which increases the chance of injury through bites and scratches.
- Can cause monkeys to become territorial and more aggressive.
- Increases the risk of disease transmission. Wild monkeys in Florida have been documented to carry several diseases that are transmissible to humans such as the herpes B virus, which can be fatal to humans.



Juvenile rhesus macaque/ Photo © S. Eben Kirksey



Woman feeding rhesus macaque

What constitutes feeding?

Feeding is defined in Rule 68A-4.001(7) of the Florida Administrative Code as placing food or garbage, allowing the placement of food or garbage, or offering food or garbage in a manner that attracts wild monkeys.

What you can do

- Never approach or offer food to wild monkeys. Never place food or garbage so that it will attract wild monkeys.
- If you encounter wild monkeys, keep pets on a leash and supervise children closely.
- Dispose of uneaten food and garbage in closed trash containers. To help prevent conflicts with monkeys and other wildlife, feed pets indoors or remove uneaten pet food left outdoors.
- If you are bitten or scratched by a wild monkey, immediately wash the wound and seek medical attention according to the CDC guidelines at [cdc.gov/herpesbvirus](https://www.cdc.gov/herpesbvirus) (click First Aid and Treatment). Call the National B Virus Resource Center for emergency information at 404-413-6550.