

## FOOD SELECTION AND FEEDING BEHAVIOUR OF GREY LANGUR, *SEMNOPIITHECUS ENTELLUS* IN WEST BENGAL

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In an earlier article, Nandi (2020) studied the leadership and foraging strategy of Grey Langur, *Semnopithecus entellus* (Dufresne, 1797) in West Bengal with reference to super cyclone Amphan. In the present communication, interesting food items of Grey Langur seen in 1960s in rural set up at Goghat of Hooghly district on tender leaves of tree species and cultivated vegetable plants, in 1990s on leaves of some tall land plants at Bishnupur town of Bankura district, and from time to time since 2020 on suburban wetland and dryland associated plants of Maheshtala areas of South 24-Parganas district, West Bengal are herein communicated.

In general, langurs are primarily herbivores, subsisting on leaves, leaf buds, legumes, fruit buds, cones, roots, rhizomes, shoots, seeds, grass, ferns, lichens, *etc.*, including agricultural crops and human food items ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gray\\_langur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gray_langur)) like bread, bananas, and buns. It is interesting to note that langurs prefer sweet, sour, bitter items, and salted nuts. The highlights of the present long lasted over the years observations are as follows:

- \*In 1960s, preferences for eating of tender tamarind leaves, brinjal, legumes of pulses were observed. This indicates sour tamarind leaves can be preferred food item.
- \* In 1990s, tender neem leaves were found voraciously eaten, indicating their preferences for bitter taste too.
- \* In 2020s, besides eating a variety of leaves, *viz.*, papaya, bottle gourd, neem, *etc.*, a preference for tender leaves of *sisso* (*Dalbergia sisoo*) as well as eating of sour to taste green tomatoes appeared interesting. Langurs were found to jump up twice from a car roof top to reach the tender *sisoo* leaves.



Fig.1 Two langurs eating papaya leaf



Fig. 2 Three langurs on the same shed

A DST supported study suggests that the folivorous langurs are very thoughtful and selective in their food, and are tolerant to human interferences as well as scarcity of natural food items (<https://dst.gov.in/hanuman-langurs-are-thoughtful-about-their-food>). Nandi *et al* (2021) noted at Cauvery Sangama, of Kanakpura district of Karnataka, a troop of Bonnet Monkey had apparently forgot the taste of wild fruits and leaves, become mal-nourished due to non-availability of food provision by tourists during Covid 19 lockdown impact on tourists' flow.

## References

<https://dst.gov.in/hanuman-langurs-are-thoughtful-about-their-food>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gray\\_langur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gray_langur)

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