

PREFACE

After teaching primate comparative anatomy for a number of years, I realized that this subject should be simpler for students and professionals alike. I wrote this volume to fit the great diversity of primate morphology among living primates into meaningful subunits. Any complaints about errors or overly simplified "morphological stories" can be directed toward me, as I have tried my best to streamline primate comparative anatomy in order to get a "take home" message across. There are plenty of specialized articles and books that can be examined after reading this one, given the ever growing banks of information on primate anatomy, evolution, ecology, and taxonomy.

Anatomy books are only as good as their illustrations, and I especially thank Mat Severson for all of his artistic efforts, hard work, and time over the past several years to complete this volume. It is our hope that these illustrations show primate anatomy realistically and that the images are accurate enough to be used next to actual bones. Although we have selected a subset of primates to illustrate, we hope that the selected taxa will offer a survey of primate anatomical diversity across the entire Order Primates.

This is a book about primate anatomy with a comparative focus and it surveys all families of living

primates. It is largely focused on the skeletal system to comport with most classroom settings, but soft tissue anatomy, for example, muscles and brains, is discussed briefly when appropriate. I decided early on to avoid any lengthy discussions on soft tissue comparative anatomy as a way to simplify this volume. In a similar vein, I largely excluded comments on particular fossil primates to minimize both complexity and the details required to explain each fossil group sufficiently. As a compromise, I have written a small section on primate evolution in chapter 1 to anchor the living primates, and I added illustrated boxes on a variety of fossil primates to the individual chapters for a few notable comparisons with living primates, providing a little flavor for this interesting but broad theme.

This volume is largely written from my lecture notes over many years of teaching and I admit to having borrowed liberally from many sources. At the end of each chapter, I have listed important references that provided expertise or helped me explain particular anatomical points. I hope that this volume will be useful to undergraduate and early graduate students in setting the stage for advanced work in comparative anatomy. The comparative anatomy of primates is a resource for taxonomy, functional anatomy, and general primate biology, but this field also represents

the backbone for paleoprimateology and in so doing is the foundation for understanding our past.

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