

Evolutionary history of *Rhinopithecus* (snub-nosed monkey) in East Asia

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Rhinopithecus, snub-nosed monkey or golden monkey, is a relatively large, folivorous monkeys that are vicariantly distributed from southern China to Southeast Asia at present. It is usually classified into four species, all of which are now on the verge of extinction. However, the fossil record of the genus is relatively rich: many fossil specimens have been reported from the early to late Pleistocene sediments of China, suggesting their wide distribution during the Pleistocene in East Asia. Recently we reported *Rhinopithecus* fossils from the early/middle Pleistocene of Chochen locality, southern Taiwan, where only macaque monkey, *Macaca cyclopis*, now occur. In Taiwan *Rhinopithecus* presumably became extinct in the late Pleistocene, probably owing to global cooling and vegetation change, whereas macaques, which is of almost the same body size as *Rhinopithecus*, survived to the present. The contrasting history of survival between the two kinds of monkeys may be due to ecological/behavioral differences between them or as a result of accidental events that occurred in the Pleistocene of Taiwan.

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