

**Hybrids between common chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*)  
and pygmy chimpanzees (*Pan paniscus*) in captivity**

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In the wild, pygmy chimpanzees or bonobos occupy a limited geographic range on the left bank of the Zaire river and no sympatric populations have been reported of common chimpanzees and bonobos (Malenky *et al.* 1989). Several authors have claimed that sufficient genetic and anatomic distinctions exist to recognize a separate species status for the bonobo (Coolidge 1933, Vandebroeck 1959, Susman 1984). Comparisons of the behaviour of both species further reveal unique characteristics for each chimpanzee (De Waal 1988, 1989, Patterson 1979, Savage-Rumbaugh and Wilkerson 1978, Savage-Rumbaugh *et al.* 1989). Copulations between the two species have been reported in captivity (Savage-Rumbaugh and Wilkerson 1978). A few authors suggest that the bonobo should be classified on a subspecific level within *Pan troglodytes* (Schwarz 1934, Watson and Penny in press). This paper presents five cases of hybridization between the two species of *Pan*.

The animals were studied briefly at the house of the family Rech. Three hybrids were conceived by one bonobo male (*Pan paniscus*), Congo, and two common chimpanzee females (*Pan troglodytes*), Julie and Clara. The bonobo male was probably born in 1978 or 1979. The two chimpanzee females were probably born in 1979 or 1980 and have had no other offspring but the hybrids. The male has been housed together with Zora, a common chimpanzee female of approximately the same age, since his first arrival at an estimated one year of age- but has never copulated with his familiar cage-mate. In contrast, he mounted the two *Pan troglodytes* females, that were kept in the adjacent cages, dorsally whenever accessible. These matings resulted in five pregnancies (Table 1).

TABLE 1. - Hybrid pregnancies of chimpanzees.

Date	Event	Offspring Name	Sex	Mother	Father
1990	Abortus(*1)	-	Female	Clara	Congo
1990	Abortus(*2)	-	-	Julie	Congo
25-03-1991	Birth	Blois	Male	Julie	Congo
05-12-1991	Birth	Tibie	Female	Clara	Congo
10-03-1992	Birth	Diana	Female	Julie	Congo

(\*1) foetus of approximately six months old, abortus was apparently due to stress suffered during a storm.  
 (\*2) embryo of approximately two or three months old.

In comparison to common chimpanzees, the hybrid infants have smaller and dark ears, a darker and less prognathic face, pink lips and marked whiskers. The female genitalia are larger and more ventrally oriented. In contrast to pygmy chimpanzees, the one year old male has a wider chest and shows spotted skin pigmentation on the inner side of the thighs. None of the infants has a webbed second and third toe. The hybrid infants are being hand-raised in family conditions. Infants and adults are usually in restricted auditory contact. The hybrids' vocalisations are being analysed sonographically and, preliminary, characteristics of both species can be recognized. The owners note that, in comparison to other common chimpanzees that were raised in the same family, the one year old hybrid male behaves less aggressive, shows a marked preference for water, and easily and often walks bipedally. The three individuals are presently the subject of case studies of the behavioural, genetic and vocal aspects of hybridization.

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