

Their Bark

(Continued from Page B10)

At night they head as a troop for a "sleeping tree." Generally the troop's dominant male sleeps closer to the adult females, while subordinate males choose more far-flung branches.

The troop — an average of nine monkeys — may contain only one adult male, or two, or occasionally more. Fighting for dominance is rarely seen, the scientist said. Red howlers tend more toward vocalization than violence.

One troop under study was invaded by two males, however, providing a rare view of red howler aggression. All three males were injured in the battles for supremacy. Access to females is the main motivation for becoming top male; that male breeds with several females, perpetuating his genes.

Like most red howler activities, motherhood is a fairly relaxed experience. A mother doesn't pick up her infant; she waits for it to

climb onto her back, where it clings as she leaps from bough to bough.

While adults nap, young red howlers frolic, springing among the trees, squealing and biting each other in fun. Some can be mischievous. One day, as Crockett watched from below, two adolescent howlers were playfully wrestling while hanging from branches by their prehensile tails, which can grasp like hands. A third monkey came up and unwound one of the tails, sending the monkey crashing to a branch below. It regained its grasp unharmed.

Infants Slain

Some of the adults are not so winsome. The disappearance of several infants over the last few years has led the scientist to believe that infanticide by red howler males is widespread, at an average rate of one killing in each troop every five or six years. As is true of some other mammals, the males apparently kill dependent

Four Paws to Freedom

Three new members joined the Four Paws to Freedom 4-H Club. They are: Christina Leh, Georganne Nolan and Patty Pierson. Danette Adams was the guest speaker for their March meeting. She discussed her jobs with the group. Ms. Adams is an animal control officer for

Tewksbury Township and a professional dog trainer. Many members participated in the County Presentation Contest. Members are selling the Four Square Value Coupon Books in the North Hunterdon area. Seeing Eye Bowl team tryouts will be held at their next meeting.

4-H Sheep Club

Members of the All Breeds 4-H Sheep Club worked on their 4-H Day at the Mall display during their most recent meeting. Kevin Milz, a Hunterdon County 4-H

Sheep Club member, spoke to the group about livestock judging. Kim Kelly gave a presentation on pneumonia in lambs during the business portion of the meeting.

Sifting Stitches

Sifting Stitches 4-H Club members were pleased with the results they received at the Mid-Year Clothing Judging recently. Excellents were received by Kim DeFlesco, Lucy Hornby and Lisa Risko. Tracy Arduini and Lisa Risko were hostesses while Lori Risko worked as a judge. Members learned more about presentations through a slide program by Co-Leader, Laura Arduini. Many members participated in the

County Presentation Contest held last March 16.

They plan to take part in 4-H Day at the Mall on April 7. Lori and Lisa Risko are co-chairmen of the club's Window Display committee. Other committee members are: Kim DeFlesco, Toni Heater, Lucy Hornby, Sara Nering and Tracy Arduini. Members will work on their Window Display at their next meeting to be held at the Delaware Township School Library on April 10.

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infants so the mother will be available for mating sooner. A few males, Crockett believes, may have unwittingly killed their own offspring.

In comparisons of 50 troops, she has found populations in the woodland to be denser, troop size larger, and troops to contain two adult males more often than the

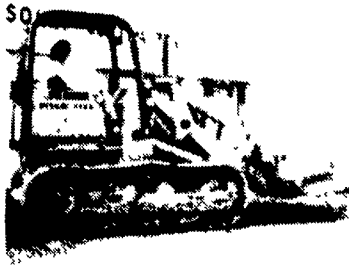
one found in gallery forest troops.

Troop sizes in the two habitats have become increasingly more equal. Crockett theorizes that the forest study's start coincided with a crash in the population, possible caused by the failure of a particular tree to fruit. This staple of red howler diet has recovered, and forest troops are thriving.

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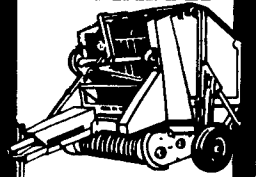
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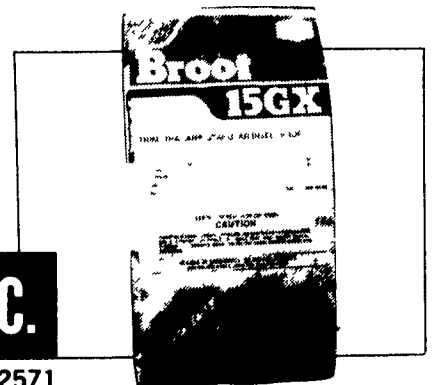
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