

Molecular phylogeny of *Nycticebus* inferred from mitochondrial genes

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Abstract: Researchers are still discussing the classification of *Nycticebus*. We established a molecular phylogeny covering all recognized taxa in *Nycticebus* to provide information for further evaluation. We sequenced partial D-loop (ca. 390 bp) and cytochrome b genes (425 bp) from 22 specimens. We separated most of the major groups except for some mixing of *Nycticebus coucang coucang* and *N. bengalensis*. *Nycticebus pygmaeus* diverged earlier from the ancestral stock than the other taxa. *Nycticebus coucang menagensis* was well discriminated from *N. c. coucang*. It may be possible to explain the mixing of *Nycticebus coucang coucang* and *N. bengalensis* by the hybridization between the 2 groups in the field. Although our data did not provide direct evidence for or against the new proposal that *Nycticebus coucang javanicus* be raised to the rank of a distinct species (*N. javanicus*), we have good evidence for regarding *N. c. menagensis* as a species. © 2006 Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

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