

Miniature Tree Giraffes

Well, they're about the size of a capuchin monkey and look a lot like giraffes; the only real difference is that Miniature Tree Giraffes have prehensile, toed feet instead of hooves. Oh, and they eat fruit, leaves, and small insects. Otherwise, yeah, pretty giraffe-like. They started showing up in the Congo river basin about six months ago, and they're remarkably common at this point.

In fact, there's even now a Giraffe Craze, thanks to the usual unscrupulous importers and celebrity idiots. Everybody famous has to have their very own, and it's hard to crack down on illegal imports when nobody cares, hey? So there's a lot of money in Miniature Tree Giraffes at the moment and certainly the creatures breed well in captivity. They're actually not bad pets, honestly: non-aggressive, affectionate enough, need less training than a dog but more than a cat. And they're cute.

They're also frightening the heck out of the scientific community, not least the ones doing immunology. Nobody in that field sleeps well when they read the phrase "previously unknown mammalian species from the Congo," particularly since Miniature Tree Giraffes can

catch both tuberculous and toxoplasmosis. It's probably time to go find out where exactly the Miniature Tree Giraffes came from in the Congo in the first place, and see if there's anything *e/se* weird there, as well as getting certain answers. Like how humanity managed to miss the existence of Miniature Tree Giraffes in the first place. That's just **strange**.

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