



West African potto

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The **West African potto** (*Perodicticus potto*) is a species of nocturnal [strepsirrhine primate](#). It is found in tropical [West Africa](#). It is also known as **Bosman's potto**, after [Willem Bosman](#), who described the species in 1704. It is the [type species](#) of the genus *Perodicticus*.^{[2][3]}

Taxonomy [\[edit\]](#)

This species was formerly considered the only species in the genus *Perodicticus*, but a 2015 study split it into three species, with only the name *Perodicticus potto* only applying to the West African population.^[4]

Phylogenetic evidence supports the West African potto being the most basal member of the genus *Perodicticus*, with the other two species being sister species to one another. It is thought to have diverged from the other species during the mid-late [Miocene](#), between 6–10 million years ago.^[4]

The mysterious "[false potto](#)" (*Pseudopotto martini*) is now thought to have been a misidentified specimen of West African potto.^[3]

Distribution [\[edit\]](#)

This species ranges from [Guinea](#) west to [Nigeria](#), with an [disjunct](#) population in eastern [Senegal](#). The [Niger River](#) serves as the eastern barrier to the species' range, separating it from the [Central African potto](#) (*P. edwardsi*).^[1]

West African potto



In Ghana



In Cincinnati Zoo

Conservation status



Scientific classification

Domain:	Eukaryota
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Mammalia
Order:	Primates
Suborder:	Strepsirrhini
Family:	Lorisidae

Ecology [\[edit \]](#)

One population of chimpanzees living in Mont Assirik, Senegal, was observed to eat West African pottos, taking them from their sleeping places during the day; however, this behaviour has not been observed in chimps elsewhere.^[5]

Conservation [\[edit \]](#)

Although this species is known to survive in disturbed forests near human habitation, population growth and subsequent habitat destruction in West Africa are of major risk to the species. Heavy deforestation for industrial agriculture is thought to have led to rapid population declines in the species. In addition, this species is more frequently hunted for bushmeat due to a decline in larger animals to hunt, which has in turn also caused pottos to become rarer. Due to this, it is classified as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List.^[1]

References [\[edit \]](#)

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Genus: *Perodicticus*

Species: *P. potto*

Binomial name

Perodicticus potto

(Müller, 1766)

Synonyms

- Pseudopotto martini?*

Schwartz, 1996

	Wikidata: Q747610 • Wikispecies: Perodicticus potto • ADW: Perodicticus_potto • ARKive: perodicticus-potto • BioLib: 32064 • BOLD: 247639 • CoL: 4F78J • EoL: 47049510 • GBIF: 2436624 • iNaturalist: 549032 • IRMNG: 10765472 • ITIS: 572892 • IUCN: 91995408 • MDD: 1001074 • MSW: 12100120 • NCBI: 9472 • Observation.org: 86393 • Open Tree of Life: 339040 • Paleobiology Database: 232729 • Species+: 7356 • Xeno-canto: Perodicticus-potto
<i>Perodicticus potto</i>	
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