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The Hyoid Morphology of *Tarsius syrichta*: Implications on Phylogeny

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Poster Presentation 3

THE HYOID MORPHOLOGY OF *TARSIUS SYRICHTA*:
IMPLICATIONS ON PHYLOGENY

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Of two major divisions in the primate order, the suborder Anthroipoidea contains members whose physical characteristics are more derived while members of the suborder Strepsirhini have more primitive characteristics. The determination of the phylogenetic relationship of one primate family, the *Tarsiidae*, has been somewhat elusive due to its complement both of primitive and derived traits. Thus, placement of the Tarsiers into either of the two suborders has been difficult. We examined the hyoid morphology of one representative species, *Tarsius syrichta*, and searched for clues to ancestry among the arrangement, shape, and attachment of hyoid bones and muscles. By comparing the character states we observed in the specimen with literature descriptions of other primates from both suborders and using phylogenetic computer software, we hoped to gain insight into the Tarsier's relationship within one of the two suborders. Interestingly enough, our data did not assist us in placing the Tarsier family into either suborder but instead reflected its equal relation to both suborders. This might suggest that a third suborder is appropriate to explain the place of the Tarsier family, a suborder which deviated from an ancestor common to the other suborders.