

# Grizzled Tree Kangaroo – Information Sheet

**Family:** Macropodidae

**Genus:** *Dendrolagus*

**Species:** *inustus*

**Characteristics:** they are part of the long footed complex with distinct grey colouring with black ears, back and face. They have a long sometimes fluffy tail.

**Males:** 15.5 kg (average weight)

**Females:** 11.4 kg (average weight)

**Distribution:** this species is widely distributed across the north coast ranges of New Guinea. Found from Wewak through to Vanimo and northwest along the coast, all the way up to the Vogelkop Peninsula in West Papua.

**Elevation:** 100 metres – 1,400 meters above sea level.

**Diet:** Known to eat leaves of many plants also favoured by people. TCA's captive Grizzled tree kangaroos eat most known edible leaves presented to them.

**Reproduction:** Twins have been recorded in the wild. Kept in captivity at the TCA base and in zoological institutions with regular breeding success. Sexually maturity is reached at 8.5 – 10.6 kg.

**Conservation Status:** Vulnerable (IUCN)

**Local Names:** Yongi / Marengi (Olo, Sandaun Province), Yargal (Yil, Sandaun Province), Wakera (Lobo Bay, West Papua).

**Social Structure:** Sexual dimorphism with males much larger with distinct chest features. Males very strong and aggressive in captivity and keep growing throughout their life weighing at least 17 kg.

## Habits:

The Grizzled Tree Kangaroo is the biggest, if not the heaviest species of tree-kangaroo, and has a long heavily furred tail. As with other tree-kangaroo species, the males are larger than the females, in this case growing up to 15Kg in weight. They are found from Wewak through to Vanimo and northwest along the coast, all the way up to the Vogelkop Peninsula in West Papua. They are most active during the mornings and early evenings. It is a favourite food of village hunters in Sandaun and East Sepik Provinces where it occurs.

There are two sub-species of the Grizzled Tree Kangaroo: the Grizzled Tree Kangaroo (*Dendrolagus inustus inustus*) and the Finsch's Tree Kangaroo (*D. i. finschi*). The differences between the two sub-species is the colour of the face, *D. i. inustus* has a grey forehead whilst *D. i. finschi* has a black forehead. Other reports suggest that *D. i. finschi* has a darker coloured back in contrast with its limbs compared to *D. i. inustus*.

The Grizzled Tree Kangaroo (*D. i. inustus*) is found in lowland and mid-montane rainforest of the Vogelkop and Fakfak Peninsulas in West Papua. It potentially inhabits 35,000 square kilometres. Its fur colour is grey with a rusty tinge. Its tail is very long, pale gery in colour and is very thickly furred. A large, naked callosity is found at the base of the tail and is unique to this species. This callosity may act as a seat for the species.



Almost nothing is known about the reproductive and social life of this sub-species of Tree Kangaroo. The status of *D. i. inustus* is unknown as there have been few recent recorded sightings. The Finsch's Tree Kangaroo inhabits lowland and mid-montane rainforest on the north of the island of New Guinea. It is found at elevations from sea-level to 1500m. Its potential habitat covers approximately 10,000 square kilometres. Its appearance is very similar to *D. i. inustus*. More information on this sub-species has been recorded as some data exists on reproduction. To our knowledge it is the only Tree Kangaroo to raise twins.

This Tree Kangaroo is one of three species found within the Torricelli Mountain Range of Sandaun Province, PNG. A hunting moratorium was established for this species in 2006.

TCA has successfully bred this species in captivity at the TCA base in Lumi.

#### **Conservation status:**

This species is heavily hunted throughout all of its range. It is currently being over-exploited due to a growing human population and habitat loss from logging and agriculture but due to its large distribution it is considered to be vulnerable. Since the Tenkile Conservation Alliance established a hunting moratorium for this species in 2006, people have reported this species close to the village and in areas of land that have not had tree kangaroos for over 20 years.

#### **References:**

*Mammals of new Guinea – Tim Flannery (1995) and*

*Tree Kangaroos - a curious natural history – Tim Flannery, Roger Martin and Alexandra Szalay (1996).*

*Illustrations Peter Schouten.*

<http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/6431/0>



PO Box1304, Wewak, East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea  
[help@tenkile.com](mailto:help@tenkile.com)  
[www.tenkile.com](http://www.tenkile.com)

