anatomy of a chimpanzee

anatomy of a chimpanzee is a fascinating subject that reveals much about both our closest living relatives and our own evolutionary roots. This comprehensive article explores the physical structure, unique features, and biological systems of chimpanzees. Readers will gain detailed insights into their skeletal framework, muscular system, vital organs, sensory adaptations, reproductive anatomy, and neurological makeup. By understanding the anatomy of a chimpanzee, we uncover the remarkable similarities and important distinctions between chimpanzees and humans. The article also provides engaging facts and expert knowledge, making it a valuable resource for students, researchers, and anyone curious about primate biology. Continue reading to discover the intricate details of chimpanzee anatomy and learn why these animals are so crucial to scientific study.

Overview of the Anatomy of a Chimpanzee

Chimpanzees are large, robust primates, sharing approximately 98% of their DNA with humans. Their anatomy reflects evolutionary adaptations that enable complex behaviors, social interactions, and survival in diverse environments. The anatomy of a chimpanzee consists of several interconnected systems, each playing a vital role in movement, sensory perception, digestion, and reproduction. Key anatomical regions include the head, torso, limbs, and internal organs. Chimpanzees possess both primitive traits, such as opposable toes for grasping, and advanced features like highly dexterous hands. Understanding the anatomy of a chimpanzee reveals the underlying biological mechanisms that drive their intelligence, agility, and social structure.

Skeletal System of Chimpanzees

Skull and Facial Bones

The skull of a chimpanzee is robust, with a pronounced brow ridge and large jawbones. The cranium houses a relatively large brain, while the face features forward-facing eyes and a flat nose. The dental structure includes large canine teeth, used for both feeding and social displays.

Vertebral Column and Torso

Chimpanzees possess a flexible vertebral column, allowing for both upright and quadrupedal movement. Their ribcage is barrel-shaped, providing support for strong muscles of respiration and locomotion. The pelvis is shorter and broader than in humans, adapted for climbing and knuckle-walking.

Limbs and Joints

- Long arms with flexible shoulder joints for brachiation
- Shorter legs relative to body size
- Hands with opposable thumbs and elongated fingers
- Feet with opposable big toes for grasping

These skeletal features enable a wide range of movements, from swinging through trees to walking on the ground. The anatomy of a chimpanzee is perfectly suited for life both in the forest canopy and on the forest floor.

Muscular Structure and Locomotion

Major Muscle Groups

Chimpanzees have a highly developed muscular system, particularly in the upper body. Muscles in the shoulders, arms, and chest are powerful, facilitating climbing and tool use. Leg muscles, while strong, are less developed than those of humans.

Locomotive Adaptations

Their anatomy allows for knuckle-walking, an efficient mode of terrestrial movement. Chimpanzees also display impressive climbing abilities, supported by strong grip strength in hands and feet. Muscular coordination enables rapid movement and agility in complex environments.

Comparison with Human Musculature

- Greater upper body strength than humans
- Muscles adapted for climbing, swinging, and grasping
- Less specialization for bipedal walking

This muscular anatomy reflects the evolutionary pressures faced by chimpanzees in their natural habitats, emphasizing versatility and strength.

Chimpanzee Organs and Internal Systems

Digestive System

The digestive anatomy of a chimpanzee includes a complex stomach and a long intestine, suited for a diet rich in fruits, leaves, seeds, and occasional animal protein. Their teeth and jaws are adapted for chewing tough plant material.

Respiratory and Circulatory Systems

The lungs and heart of chimpanzees support high levels of physical activity. Their cardiovascular system efficiently supplies oxygen and nutrients throughout the body, while their respiratory system allows for endurance in climbing and running.

Excretory and Immune Systems

Chimpanzees possess kidneys and a liver similar to those of humans, responsible for filtering waste and detoxifying the blood. Their immune system is robust, helping protect against various diseases and infections found in rainforest environments.

Sensory Anatomy and Adaptations

Vision and Eye Structure

Forward-facing eyes provide chimpanzees with stereoscopic vision and depth perception, crucial for navigating complex environments. Their retina contains color-sensitive cells, allowing them to distinguish ripe fruits and foliage.

Hearing and Ear Anatomy

Chimpanzee ears are sensitive to a wide range of frequencies, enabling them to detect vocalizations and environmental sounds. The anatomy of their inner ear supports balance as well as acute hearing.

Other Sensory Organs

- Highly developed sense of touch in hands and feet
- Acute sense of smell for food and social communication
- Taste buds adapted to a varied diet

Sensory adaptations contribute to their survival by enhancing their ability to find food, communicate, and avoid threats.

Reproductive Anatomy of Chimpanzees

Male Reproductive System

Male chimpanzees possess testes that are relatively large compared to body size, reflecting a mating system involving sperm competition. The penis and associated structures are adapted for efficient copulation.

Female Reproductive System

Females have a bicornuate uterus and ovaries that cycle regularly. Visible sexual swellings signal fertility to males, playing a crucial role in social and reproductive behavior.

Gestation and Birth

1. Gestation lasts approximately 230 days
2. Single offspring is typical, though twins can occur
3. Infants are born with grasping reflexes and strong attachment behaviors

Reproductive anatomy and physiology are tightly linked to chimpanzee social dynamics and population structure.

Neurological System and Brain Structure

Brain Anatomy and Function

The brain of a chimpanzee is large relative to body size, with a highly folded cortex. This structure enables complex cognition, problem-solving, and social interaction. Key regions include the frontal lobe, responsible for planning and decision-making.

Nervous System Organization

An intricate network of nerves coordinates movement, sensation, and behavior. The anatomy of a chimpanzee's nervous system supports advanced communication and emotional expression.

Similarity to Human Brain

- High degree of structural similarity to human brains
- Capacity for learning, memory, and tool use
- Presence of mirror neurons, facilitating empathy and imitation

The neurological anatomy of a chimpanzee is a key area of research in understanding primate intelligence and evolution.

Physical Variations and Sexual Dimorphism

Differences Between Males and Females

Sexual dimorphism is prominent in chimpanzees. Males are generally larger, with more robust muscle and bone structures. Females possess slightly smaller body size and less pronounced brow ridges.

Age-related Anatomical Changes

Anatomical features change as chimpanzees age. Infants have proportionally larger heads and shorter limbs, while adults develop more powerful muscles and denser bones.

Population Variations

- Regional differences in body size and coloration
- Minor variations in dental and skeletal features
- Adaptations to local environments and diets

Understanding these variations provides insight into the adaptability and evolutionary history of chimpanzees.

Unique Anatomical Features of Chimpanzees

Hands and Manual Dexterity

Chimpanzees have highly dexterous hands, with opposable thumbs and elongated fingers. This allows for complex tool use and precise manipulation of objects, setting them apart from most other primates.

Facial Musculature and Expression

Facial muscles enable a wide range of expressions, crucial for communication within social groups. The anatomy of a chimpanzee's face supports nuanced emotional signaling.

Adaptations for Arboreal Life

- Flexible shoulder joints for overhead movement
- Grasping feet for climbing and stability
- Strong back and core muscles for swinging and hanging

These features highlight the evolutionary specialization of chimpanzees for life in the trees.

Conclusion and Key Takeaways

The anatomy of a chimpanzee demonstrates a sophisticated blend of strength, agility, and intelligence. From their powerful skeletons and muscles to their complex brains and sensory organs, chimpanzees are uniquely adapted for a life that bridges the gap between terrestrial and arboreal worlds. Their anatomy offers vital clues about primate evolution and human origins. By studying the anatomy of a chimpanzee, scientists continue to uncover new insights into health, behavior, and the natural history of our closest living relatives.

Q: How does the skeletal anatomy of a chimpanzee differ from humans?

A: Chimpanzees have longer arms relative to their legs, a more flexible shoulder joint, and a barrel-shaped ribcage. Their pelvis is shorter and broader, which aids climbing and knuckle-walking, unlike the human pelvis adapted for bipedal walking.

Q: What are the main muscles responsible for a

chimpanzee's strength?

A: The major muscle groups in the shoulders, arms, and chest give chimpanzees superior upper body strength. These muscles are essential for climbing, swinging, and manipulating objects.

Q: Why do chimpanzees have large canine teeth?

A: Large canines are used for feeding, as well as for social displays and dominance interactions within groups. They help in processing tough foods and play a role in defense.

Q: What sensory adaptations help chimpanzees survive in their environment?

A: Chimpanzees have forward-facing eyes for depth perception, acute hearing for communication, a keen sense of touch in their hands and feet, and a strong sense of smell for finding food and recognizing individuals.

Q: How does the reproductive anatomy of chimpanzees support their social structure?

A: Features like large testes in males and sexual swellings in females promote mating competition and signal fertility, which influences social dynamics and group interactions.

Q: What role does the brain play in chimpanzee behavior?

A: The chimpanzee brain, with its highly folded cortex, supports advanced cognitive skills, problem-solving, social learning, and the use of tools, making them one of the most intelligent non-human species.

Q: What is sexual dimorphism in chimpanzees?

A: Sexual dimorphism refers to physical differences between males and females, such as size, muscle mass, and facial features. Males are typically larger and more robust than females.

Q: How are a chimpanzee's hands adapted for tool use?

A: Chimpanzees have opposable thumbs and elongated fingers, providing exceptional manual dexterity. This allows them to grasp objects, manipulate tools, and perform intricate tasks.

Q: How long is the gestation period for chimpanzees?

A: The gestation period for chimpanzees is about 230 days, after which a single infant is usually born, though twins can occasionally occur.

Q: What unique anatomical features enable chimpanzees to live in trees?

A: Flexible shoulder joints, strong grip strength in hands and feet, and muscular back and core allow chimpanzees to climb, swing, and move efficiently through the forest canopy.

Anatomy Of A Chimpanzee

Anatomy of a Chimpanzee: A Deep Dive into Our Closest Relative

Introduction:

Have you ever wondered what lies beneath the fur of our closest living relative, the chimpanzee? More than just a fuzzy face and playful antics, the chimpanzee boasts a remarkably complex anatomy, reflecting its arboreal lifestyle and evolutionary kinship with humans. This comprehensive guide delves into the intricate details of chimpanzee anatomy, exploring everything from their skeletal structure to their internal organs. Prepare to uncover the fascinating similarities and subtle differences that define this incredible primate. We'll cover everything you need to know to understand the unique physical makeup of this fascinating creature.

H2: Skeletal System: Built for the Trees

Chimpanzees possess a skeletal system beautifully adapted for life in the trees. Their bones are proportionally lighter than those of humans, contributing to their agility and climbing prowess.

H3: Limbs and Hands:

Their long arms, significantly longer than their legs, are crucial for brachiation – swinging from branch to branch. Their hands are remarkably dexterous, featuring long fingers and a relatively opposable thumb, allowing for precise grasping and manipulation of objects. This contrasts slightly with human hands, where the thumb is proportionally longer, giving us a more refined pincer grasp better suited for tool use.

H3: Spine and Posture:

The chimpanzee spine exhibits a degree of curvature different from humans. While humans have an S-shaped spine supporting upright posture, chimpanzees have a more curved spine better suited for

quadrupedal locomotion and climbing. This difference is a key anatomical distinction reflecting our diverging evolutionary paths.

H2: Muscular System: Power and Precision

The chimpanzee’s muscular system is a marvel of strength and coordination. They possess exceptionally strong muscles, particularly in their arms, shoulders, and back, reflecting their demanding arboreal lifestyle and their capacity for powerful movements.

H3: Powerful Upper Body:

Their powerful shoulder and back muscles enable them to effortlessly swing through the treetops, while their strong hands and forearms provide the grip necessary to hold onto branches.

H3: Leg Muscles for Climbing and Walking:

While not as dominant as their upper body muscles, their leg muscles are still robust and well-developed. These muscles support their climbing abilities and their occasional knuckle-walking on the ground.

H2: Nervous System and Sensory Organs:

Chimpanzees possess a highly developed nervous system, comparable in complexity to that of humans. Their brains are relatively large, showcasing advanced cognitive abilities.

H3: Brain Structure and Function:

The chimpanzee brain exhibits a remarkable degree of structural similarity to the human brain, contributing to their sophisticated problem-solving skills, social intelligence, and tool use.

H3: Enhanced Senses:

While their eyesight is excellent for navigating the tree canopy, their sense of smell is also relatively acute, playing a role in social interactions and foraging.

H2: Digestive System: A Herbivore's Diet

Chimpanzees are primarily frugivores, meaning their diets consist mainly of fruits. Their digestive system is adapted to process plant matter, with specialized digestive enzymes and a relatively long digestive tract.

H3: Stomach and Intestines:

Their stomach and intestines are designed to efficiently extract nutrients from plant-based foods, including fruits, leaves, and insects.

H3: Dental Adaptations:

Their teeth are also adapted for their diet, featuring strong incisors for biting into fruits and

relatively robust molars for grinding tough plant material.

H2: Cardiovascular and Respiratory Systems:

Similar to humans, chimpanzees possess a four-chambered heart and efficient respiratory systems allowing for sustained activity. Their cardiovascular system efficiently distributes oxygen and nutrients throughout their bodies, supporting their energetic lifestyle.

Conclusion:

The anatomy of the chimpanzee reveals a complex and fascinating organism, exquisitely adapted to its arboreal environment. Understanding their skeletal structure, muscular system, and internal organs offers a compelling insight into the evolutionary history shared between humans and chimpanzees, highlighting both the striking similarities and the subtle differences that define our unique evolutionary trajectories. Further research continues to reveal the intricate details of chimpanzee biology, adding to our understanding of these remarkable primates.

FAQs:

1. What is the average lifespan of a chimpanzee? Chimpanzees typically live for 40-50 years in the wild, though their lifespan can be longer in captivity.

2. How do chimpanzee brains compare to human brains in terms of size? While chimpanzee brains are significantly smaller than human brains in absolute size, they are proportionally large compared to their body size.

3. Do chimpanzees exhibit any forms of tool use? Yes, chimpanzees are known for their sophisticated tool use, including using sticks to fish for termites and stones to crack nuts.

4. What are the main differences in skeletal structure between chimpanzees and humans? Key differences include the curvature of the spine (affecting posture), limb proportions (longer arms in chimpanzees), and the relative lengths of fingers and thumbs.

5. How does the chimpanzee digestive system differ from that of a human? While both are omnivorous, the chimpanzee digestive system is better adapted for processing plant matter, with a longer digestive tract and different enzymatic capabilities compared to humans.

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on human origins as one of three lineages emerging from an African ape parental population. Over 150 pages of original full color photos and illustrations that include maps, skeletons, muscles, and graphed data for easy comparisons.

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tweaks? Is our language and our technology just an extension of the grunts and ant-collecting sticks of chimps? In this book, Jeremy Taylor sketches the picture that is emerging from cutting edge research in genetics, animal behaviour, and other fields. The indications are that the so-called 1.6% is much larger and leads to profound differences between the two species. We shared a common ancestor with chimps some 6-7 million years ago, but we humans have been racing away ever since. One in ten of our genes, says Taylor, has undergone evolution in the past 40,000 years! Some of the changes that happened since we split from chimpanzees are to genes that control the way whole orchestras of other genes are switched on and off, and where. Taylor shows, using studies of certain genes now associated with speech and with brain development and activity, that the story looks to be much more complicated than we first thought. This rapidly changing and exciting field has recently discovered a host of genetic mechanisms that make us different from other apes. As Taylor points out, for too long we have let our sentimentality for chimps get in the way of our understanding. Chimps use tools, but so do crows. Certainly chimps are our closest genetic relatives. But relatively small differences in genetic code can lead to profound differences in cognition and behaviour. Our abilities give us the responsibility to protect and preserve the natural world, including endangered primates. But for the purposes of human society and human concepts such as rights, let's not pretend that chimps are humans uneducated and undressed. We've changed a lot in those 12 million years.

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wild, or working animals, the lessons we learn impact on many areas of the profession. This book highlights research ranging from the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems, prostate and hoof, through to histopathology, imaging, and molecular techniques. It investigates both healthy and pathological conditions at differing stages of life. The importance of each cell and tissue through to the whole organism is explored alongside the methodologies used to understand these vital structures and functions.

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anatomy of a chimpanzee: Why Chimpanzees Can't Learn Language and Only Humans Can Herbert S. Terrace, 2019-10-01 In the 1970s, the behavioral psychologist Herbert S. Terrace led a remarkable experiment to see if a chimpanzee could be taught to use language. A young ape, named “Nim Chimpsky” in a nod to the linguist whose theories Terrace challenged, was raised by a family in New York and instructed in American Sign Language. Initially, Terrace thought that Nim could create sentences but later discovered that Nim’s teachers inadvertently cued his signing. Terrace concluded that Project Nim failed—not because Nim couldn’t create sentences but because he couldn’t even learn words. Language is a uniquely human quality, and attempting to find it in animals is wishful thinking at best. The failure of Project Nim meant we were no closer to understanding where language comes from. In this book, Terrace revisits Project Nim to offer a novel view of the origins of human language. In contrast to both Noam Chomsky and his critics, Terrace contends that words, as much as grammar, are the cornerstones of language. Retracing human evolution and developmental psychology, he shows that nonverbal interaction is the

foundation of infant language acquisition, leading up to a child's first words. By placing words and conversation before grammar, we can, for the first time, account for the evolutionary basis of language. Terrace argues that this theory explains Nim's inability to acquire words and, more broadly, the differences between human and animal communication. Why Chimpanzees Can't Learn Language and Only Humans Can is a masterful statement of the nature of language and what it means to be human.

anatomy of a chimpanzee: The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary Andrew Westoll, 2011-05-10 The "moving" true story of a woman fighting to give a group of chimpanzees a second chance at life (People). In 1997, Gloria Grow started a sanctuary for chimps retired from biomedical research on her farm outside Montreal. For the indomitable Gloria, caring for thirteen great apes is like presiding over a maximum-security prison, a Zen sanctuary, an old folks' home, and a New York deli during the lunchtime rush all rolled into one. But she is first and foremost creating a refuge for her troubled charges, a place where they can recover and begin to trust humans again. Hoping to win some of this trust, journalist Andrew Westoll spent months at Fauna Farm as a volunteer, and in this "incisive [and] affecting" book, he vividly recounts his time in the chimp house and the histories of its residents (Kirkus Reviews). He arrives with dreams of striking up an immediate friendship with the legendary Tom, the wise face of the Great Ape Protection Act, but Tom seems all too content to ignore him. Gradually, though, old man Tommie and the rest of the "troop" begin to warm toward Westoll as he learns the routines of life at the farm and realizes just how far the chimps have come. Seemingly simple things like grooming, establishing friendships and alliances, and playing games with the garden hose are all poignant testament to the capacity of these animals to heal. Brimming with empathy and entertaining stories of Gloria and her charges, The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary is an absorbing, bighearted book that grapples with questions of just what we owe to the animals who are our nearest genetic relations. "A powerful look at how we treat our closest relatives." —The Plain Dealer "I knew the prison-like conditions of the medical research facility from which Gloria rescued these chimpanzees; when I visited them at their new sanctuary I was moved to tears. . . . Andrew Westoll is a born storyteller: The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary, written with empathy and skill, tenderness and humour, involves us in a world few understand. And leaves us marveling at the ways in which chimpanzees are so like us, and why they deserve our help and are entitled to our respect." —Dr. Jane Goodall "This book will make you think deeply about our relationship with great apes. It amazed me to discover the behaviors and feelings of the chimpanzees." —Temple Grandin, author of Animals in Translation

anatomy of a chimpanzee: Chimpanzees in Context Lydia M. Hopper, Stephen R. Ross, 2020 The study of the chimpanzee, one of the human species' closest relatives, has led scientists to exciting discoveries about evolution, behavior, and cognition over the past half century. In this book, rising and veteran scholars take a fascinating comparative approach to the culture, behavior, and cognition of both wild and captive chimpanzees. By seeking new perspectives in how the chimpanzee compares to other species, the scientists featured offer a richer understanding of the ways in which chimpanzees' unique experiences shape their behavior. They also demonstrate how different methodologies provide different insights, how various cultural experiences influence our perspectives of chimpanzees, and how different ecologies in which chimpanzees live affect how they express themselves. After a foreword by Jane Goodall, the book features sections that examine chimpanzee life histories and developmental milestones, behavior, methods of study, animal communication, cooperation, communication, and tool use. The book ends with chapters that consider how we can apply contemporary knowledge of chimpanzees to enhance their care and conservation. Collectively, these chapters remind us of the importance of considering the social, ecological, and cognitive context of chimpanzee behavior, and how these contexts shape our comprehension of chimpanzees. Only by leveraging these powerful perspectives do we stand a chance at improving how we understand, care for, and protect this species.

anatomy of a chimpanzee: Anatomy, behaviour, and diseases of chimpanzees Geoffrey Howard Bourne, 1969

anatomy of a chimpanzee: *The Journal of Anatomy and Physiology, Normal and Pathological* , 1879

anatomy of a chimpanzee: Through a Window Jane Goodall, 2010-04-07 The renowned British primatologist continues the “engrossing account” of her time among the chimpanzees of Gombe, Tanzania (Publishers Weekly). In her classic, In the Shadow of Man, Jane Goodall wrote of her first ten years at Gombe. In Through a Window she continues the story, painting a more complete and vivid portrait of our closest relatives. On the shores of Lake Tanganyika, Gombe is a community where the principal residents are chimpanzees. Through Goodall’s eyes we watch young Figan’s relentless rise to power and old Mike’s crushing defeat. We learn how one mother rears her children to succeed and another dooms hers to failure. We witness horrifying murders, touching moments of affection, joyous births, and wrenching deaths. As Goodall compellingly tells the story of this intimately intertwined community, we are shown human emotions stripped to their essence. In the mirror of chimpanzee life, we see ourselves reflected. “A humbling and exalting book . . . Ranks with the great scientific achievements of the twentieth century.” —The Washington Post “[An] absolutely smashing account . . . Thrilling, affectionate, intelligent—a classic.” —Kirkus Reviews, starred review

anatomy of a chimpanzee: *The Journal of Anatomy and Physiology* , 1884

anatomy of a chimpanzee: *Behavioural Diversity in Chimpanzees and Bonobos* Christophe Boesch, Gottfried Hohmann, Linda Frances Marchant, 2002-08 Chimpanzees (Pan troglodytes) and bonobos (Pan paniscus), otherwise known as pygmy chimpanzees, are the only two species of the genus Pan. As they are our nearest relatives, there has been much research devoted to investigating the similarities and differences between them. This book offers an extensive review of the most recent observations to come from field studies on the diversity of Pan social behaviour, with contributions from many of the world's leading experts in this field. A wide range of social behaviours is discussed including tool use, hunting, reproductive strategies and conflict management as well as demographic variables and ecological constraints. In addition to interspecies behavioural diversity, this text describes exciting new research into variations between different populations of the same species. Researchers and students working in the fields of primatology, anthropology and zoology will find this a fascinating read.

anatomy of a chimpanzee: The Chimp Paradox Steve Peters, 2013-05-30 Your inner Chimp can be your best friend or your worst enemy...this is the Chimp Paradox Do you sabotage your own happiness and success? Are you struggling to make sense of yourself? Do your emotions sometimes dictate your life? Dr. Steve Peters explains that we all have a being within our minds that can wreak havoc on every aspect of our lives—be it business or personal. He calls this being the chimp, and it can work either for you or against you. The challenge comes when we try to tame the chimp, and persuade it to do our bidding. The Chimp Paradox contains an incredibly powerful mind management model that can help you be happier and healthier, increase your confidence, and become a more successful person. This book will help you to: —Recognize how your mind is working —Understand and manage your emotions and thoughts —Manage yourself and become the person you would like to be Dr. Peters explains the struggle that takes place within your mind and then shows you how to apply this understanding. Once you're armed with this new knowledge, you will be able to utilize your chimp for good, rather than letting your chimp run rampant with its own agenda.

anatomy of a chimpanzee: The Third Chimpanzee for Young People Jared Diamond, 2014-10-07 At some point during the last 100,000 years, humans began exhibiting traits and behavior that distinguished us from other animals, eventually creating language, art, religion, bicycles, spacecraft, and nuclear weapons—all within a heartbeat of evolutionary time. Now, faced with the threat of nuclear weapons and the effects of climate change, it seems our innate tendencies for violence and invention have led us to a crucial fork in our road. Where did these traits come from? Are they part of our species immutable destiny? Or is there hope for our species’ future if we change? With fascinating facts and his unparalleled readability, Diamond intended his book to improve the world that today’s young people will inherit. Triangle Square’s The Third Chimpanzee for Young People is a book for future generation and the future they’ll help build.

anatomy of a chimpanzee: The Lumbar Curve in Man and the Apes Daniel John Cunningham, 1886

anatomy of a chimpanzee: The Journal of Anatomy and Physiology, Normal and Pathological, Human and Comparative , 1895