



## **"Wildlife in Other Lands" Part Two**

Trips that I have taken in the past two years seemed destined to intertwine; the world is smaller than you may think. The first trip was to the Southern coast of Spain, an area known as the Costa del Sol, or "Coast of the Sun." It was there that I had the privilege of visiting the famous "Rock of Gibraltar," you know, that piece of land in Spain owned by Great Britain and more commonly associated with the Prudential Insurance Company.

I had heard, prior to visiting, that there were monkeys that live on Gibraltar. These monkeys were alleged to pick your pockets, search through bags and women's purses, and snatch food from your hand. Needless to say, the people that had told me these stories were telling the truth. I witnessed these interesting, beautiful creatures snatching bags out of people's hands and jumping on a person's shoulders to pick their hair of lice and fleas as if the person were another monkey. Since they seemed to weigh about 20 pounds, a jump on the shoulder was painful!

The Gibraltar monkeys, as they are known (actual name is Barbary Macaques), were almost extinct from Gibraltar at the end of WWII, so Winston Churchill ordered a restocking of them from Morocco. Morocco is just about nine miles across the Mediterranean Sea from Gibraltar and a nice, short boat ride from Europe to Africa. Because of the restocking, the population of the monkeys increased rapidly and ended up becoming problematic by the mid 1990's. Due to this, a humane sterilization program was implemented. Now the population has decreased and is less problematic for the resi-

dents of Gibraltar who live in the village at the base of the "Rock."

It was a weird feeling the first time the tour bus stopped and we were allowed to walk on the sidewalk and road with the monkeys. I will never forget when I was walking up the steps to the public facilities; one of the apes jumped out in front of me and would not move from his spot so I could pass by; it was as if he was guarding the restroom. I learned later from the tour guide that the apes are very territorial, and the sidewalk was probably the route to his home. In any case, I was not about to challenge him.

Then a year later, December 2005, I was on the beautiful island of Barbados, located in the southern, eastern most part of the Caribbean Sea. On a tour of the island (its about 11 miles by five miles), the tour guide started telling us about the "Green Monkeys." Immediately memories of the Gibraltar monkeys came to mind, especially the one guarding the men's room. These "green" monkeys were aptly named because they transition from an infant, where they are often blue in color (they have little fur when they are born) to a mature adult with a thick fur that is brownish-grey in color with specks of yellow and olive green. When light reflects from their bodies, the fur has an overall green appearance...hence the name "Green Monkey."

Thankfully I did not have the same experience as I did with the one in Gibraltar, mainly because many of the monkeys in the area we were traveling through are kept as pets. We drove down a small alleyway, off course from the

tour, and much to our surprise there was a Green Monkey sitting on a fence. One of the ladies with us had a banana left over from breakfast in her satchel; she held her hand out offering it to the monkey. She held the banana loosely and the monkey took it gently from her hand and began to eat it. These monkeys were much less aggressive and more pleasant to be around than the Gibraltar monkeys. There are several thousand Green Monkeys in Barbados, though the majority of them are located in the woodland areas on the northern end of the island that most tourists never visit.

I have been to many Zoos in the world but it is always more enjoyable viewing animals in their natural habitat. While I watch the animals, I sometimes think: What do these often strange looking creatures think of us as we watch them, feed them, or scream when they startle us?



**Barbary Macaque, mama and baby from "Rock of Gibraltar"**  
*Photo by: Scott M. Anna*



**Green Monkey in Barbados**

*Photo by: Scott M. Anna*