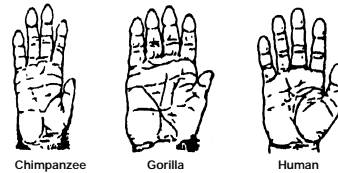


African Great Apes

Victims

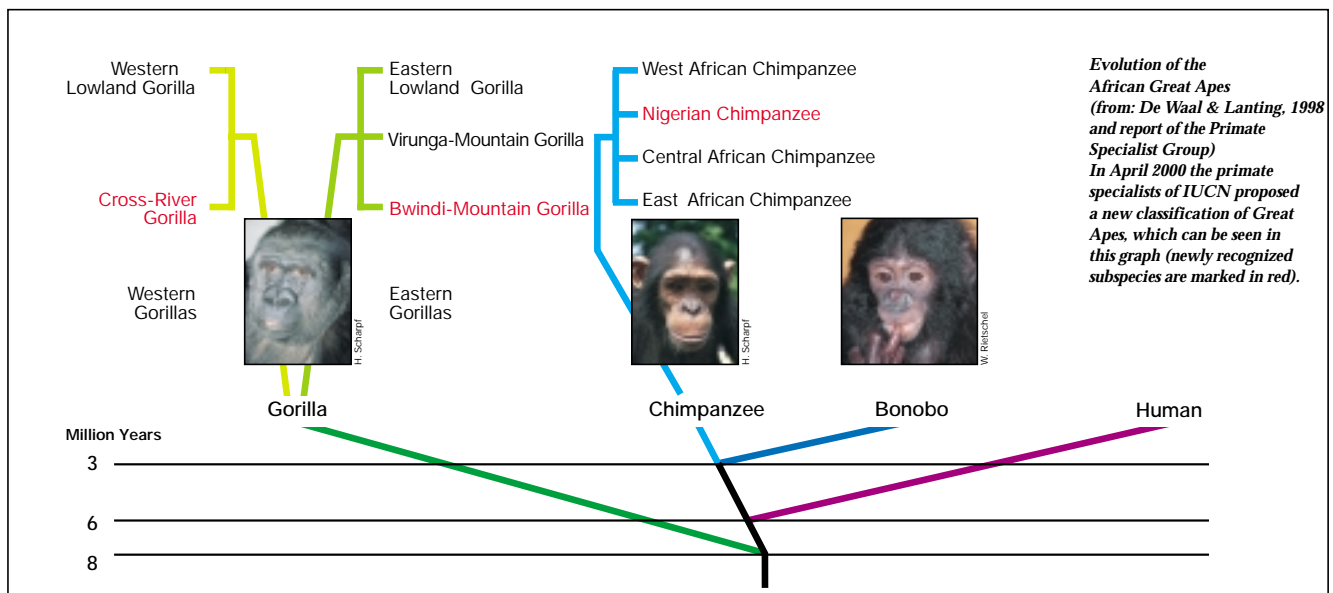
Around 30 million years ago, the evolution of Apes began. Our close genetic relationship with them and our similarities in social behaviour are impressive: It is difficult to draw the line between us and our hairy relatives!

But humans are also the greatest danger for Great Apes: The destruction of their habitat has already taken them to the brink of extinction, and now they end up in the pot!



Great Apes, like us, have:

- Intelligence and consciousness
- a socially complex organisation
- a rich and flexible social system
- emotional expressions similar to humans
- a slow reproductive rate (a baby every 4-5 years)
- a long adolescence (10-12 years)



In the North East of the PR Congo, 5-7% of the gorillas and chimpanzees populations are killed annually. In the market of the capital Brazzaville alone, meat from 293 chimpanzees was sold in one year.

However, the disastrous effect of poaching and additional indirect consequences is much worse:

- Mutilations, infections and death of youngsters caught in snares prepared for other animals
 - For example, in Uganda 25% of chimpanzees suffer from mutilations and missing limbs through poachers' snares!
- displacement into areas with less hunting pressure, where they suffer competition for food from other groups and species
- disturbance of social systems which increases intraspecific aggression
- increased susceptibility to diseases through stress



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