

## If I Were an Animal

*By Cindy Peters*

I most closely relate to a monkey. I have several logical reasons for this decision: My Chinese Horoscope states that I am a monkey, bananas are my favorite fruit, and monkeys are cute. Monkeys are the most like humans with their appearance, behavior and expressions, unlike other animals.

When I was a child my favorite game was Monkeys in a Barrel. I liked the Monkey motto "Hear no evil, see no evil, and speak no evil." I like expressions like, "Monkey see/monkey do," "Monkey shine," "Monkey business" and "I will be a monkey's uncle."

Some of my favorite movies involved monkeys like *King Kong*, *Tarzan*, *Jungle Book*, *Curious George*, *Mighty Joe Young*, *Planet of the Apes* and *Every Which Way but Loose*. My favorite rock band growing up was named "The Monkees."

I recently read that animal trainers will only work with very young monkeys. Young monkeys have been used to assist disabled people with feeding, fetching, manipulating objects and personal care. According to Wikipedia a monkey in several cultures represent intelligence, health, charm, understanding, authority, clarity and energy.

With my research I discovered their lifespan depending on the breed can vary from 10-50 years. There are no Federal laws in this country that prohibit the ownership of monkeys. However, monkeys do not make good pets long term. Once they reach puberty, they become difficult. Doesn't that sound like humans? Once they reach puberty, they can become aggressive and attack humans to establish their dominance. Smaller monkeys reach puberty at 18-24 months and larger monkeys reach puberty at 5-10 years. Many monkeys also carry Hepatitis B.

I sincerely love monkeys from a distance. Would I ever really want a monkey as a pet or to become a monkey? Absolutely not, however of all the animals in the world I feel the most like a monkey.

Well, that about wraps it up. I think I will go out and get a banana.