

above with a bite that cracks their skull. They are extremely intelligent animals and reliable pets (Sanderson 1953).

Goats are probably the oldest ruminant animal (next to dogs) to be domesticated 8000 years ago. Domestication occurred along the rivers of the ancient civilizations of Nile (Africa), Tigris and Euphrates (Asia), and Indus (India). In 1872, Indian goats were bought from vessels in England, and about the same time they were brought to the West Indies to be milked for the children of immigrant labourers on the ships (Shannon 1945). The original goats imported from Africa, Arabia and India were long-legged and hardy, and were crossed by British breeders.⁶ Goats adapt easily to mountainous and semi-arid environments, and are used for meat, milk and hide production. Goat milk is valued for people suffering with ulcers and matasmus.

Rhesus monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*) were released in islands near Puerto Rico in the 1960s (SZGD 2000, ZOO 2002), and later in Florida (BBC 2003). They have a squat thickset built and are highly intelligent. In India, they are considered sacred and are left unmolested.

Very few birds from India were brought to the Caribbean, and none could have flown over the vast oceans. The most widely distributed is the Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*). The Peacock is identified by its magnificent huge tail that can be raised into a broad fan. Both male and female emit a loud scream. They are raised as garden and farmyard ornamental birds (Höner 2003; Raffaele *et al.* 1998). Their feathers play an important part in Hindu iconography.

Another bird that is native to India and found in the Caribbean is the Hill Myna (*Gracula religiosa*). It is also called "The Talking Myna" because it has the surprising ability to mimic human speech, bird calls, and other sounds. There are other birds like the Red Avadavat (*Amandava amandava*) ("Strawberry Finch"), Warbling Silverbill (*Lonchura malabarica*) ("Indian Silverbill"), Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*) ("Spice Finch"), and the Chestnut Mannikin (*Lonchura malacca*) ("Black-headed Nun"). These birds were introduced to Puerto Rico (in the 1960s) Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, Martinique and Guadeloupe (NFSS 1999; Faffaele *et al.* 1998; Sims 2002). It is likely that they escaped or were released from cages.

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⁶ Shannon (1945) argues that the term **Anglo-Nubian** is a misnomer; Anglo-Indian is a more appropriate and accurate designation.