

# LEMUR LATITUDES

critters with attitude VOL. 5 #1



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## LCF AWARDED GRANT FOR BIOLOGY TEACHERS' WORKSHOP

The Lemur Conservation Foundation has been awarded a grant by the Leslie and Margaret Weller Fund of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County for a two-week summer workshop. The first Sarasota Teachers' Institute for Conservation Biology workshop will take place in June 2007 at LCF's Myakka facilities.

Teachers, who will receive academic credit for the workshop, will attend lectures by leading scientists expert in the art of communicating scientific principles. They will also participate in a hands-on field training program to learn fieldwork techniques, and use that knowledge to create a module on conservation biology for high school science curriculum. Following their work in the Institute, teachers will be able to use concepts and methodology learned about lemur biology and conservation as a way of motivating students to develop an interest in the scientific process, fieldwork, conservation biology and careers in science.

The following leading scientists will teach the workshop sessions:

Dr. George Amato AMNH (American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY) Direc-

tor, Sackler Institute for Conservation Genetics, on the role of genetics in conservation biology.

Dr. Joseph Levine, co-author of the textbook "Biology" (Prentice Hall) used by the Sarasota School District.

Dr. Eleanor Sterling, AMNH Director, Center for Biodiversity and Conservation, on the crisis in loss of global biodiversity and how to teach conservation concepts.

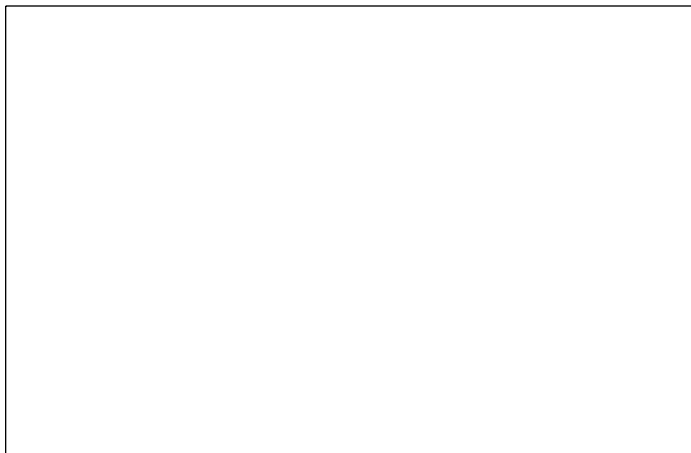
Dr. Robert Sussman, Professor, Washington University at St. Louis, Department of Anthropology, on lemurs and their conservation status in the wild.

Dr. Linda Taylor, University of Miami, Department of Anthropology, will conduct the field-training classes and help teachers incorporate their new knowledge in their own biology curricula.

The teachers will be asked to introduce the module to other science teachers in their district. Upon completion of the workshop they will be able to bring their class to the Mianatra Center to learn more about living lemurs.

Twenty five teachers are expected to participate in this pilot project in June. They will reconvene in the Summer of 2008 for a few days to compare notes and determine how the program could be improved.

Ann Prewitt, AMNH teacher, Department of Education, suggested the project and Executive Director Penelope Bodry-Sanders, saw it to fruition. Penelope points out that while a lemur colony is utilized for study, the program is not specifically about lemurs. It is a program that will assist teachers in encouraging student interest in the scientific process, field work, conservation biology and careers in science.





## THE DREAM JOB IN THE DREAM LIBRARY



*Kate Lippincott in the Anne and Walter Bladstrom Library in the Mianatra Center for Lemur Studies*

Kate Lippincott became the first librarian of the Anne and Walter Bladstrom Library in January. Located in the brand new Mianatra Center for Lemur Studies officially opened in December 2006, the library will not only house a collection of books but also become the virtual heart of the Lemur Conservation Foundation.

Many would have specifically shied away from such a challenge but Kate, describing her position as “the dream job,” is thrilled with the idea of starting a library from scratch. And not any old library at that. Although it has a physical collection of books, the Center’s thrust will be the digital and virtual world.

The ultimate goal is to concentrate and organize all our knowledge about lemurs in one place. To this end, rare books, scholarly works, field notes and any published lemur literature will be digitized and links to other web sites will be organized, creating the most comprehensive

full-text, species-specific database available to all, free of charge.

It is a grand vision as Kate points out with obvious enthusiasm; to make the Mianatra Center and its virtual and physical library THE one-stop source for all things lemur. Kate wants to insure that within five years, researchers, scholars, students, universities or anyone interested in lemurs are aware that there exists a one-stop web site that can provide all information about our pro-simian friends. Scholars who wish to publish their lemur research will also find a ready-made vehicle for their project.

The completion of the dream library involves obtaining permission to reproduce literature, digitizing information, physically scanning of books and documents (a task that Kate hopes will be performed by volunteer USF library school students;) cataloguing the present book collection, organizing the library portal of the web site and linking to other sources. Kate will be also responsible for planning the yearly library budget and seeking grants to expand the center’s capabilities.

Kate Lippincott received her M.A in Library and Information Science in 1997 from the University of South Florida in Tampa. She has worked at Georgia State University in Atlanta, Birmingham-Southern College in Birmingham, Alabama, Selby Public Library in Sarasota, and most recently at Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers. Kate has been very involved since she first started working in libraries in the early 1980s, with the technical side of libraries, implementing library management systems, planning web sites, teaching computer classes, and systems support. Kate also teaches in the graduate program as an adjunct faculty member for the School of Library and Information Science at USF.

More than her experience, Kate brings an unbounded enthusiasm to the Center. Having found a position that uses her knowledge, creativity, energy, love of challenge and calls upon her managerial and public relation skills, Kate

## MANAGER MONICA HOFFINE: SPREAD THE WORD

Manager Monica Hoffine is driven. Now that the Mianatra Center is open and poised to become the premier lemur research facility, she is determined to see it used... a lot. Promoting the Lemur Conservation Foundation for biological, anthropological and ethological projects is nothing new on Monica’s agenda and whenever she attends conferences she never fails to mention Myakka as an ideal research setting. Of course, students and researchers have used LCF’s facilities extensively since 1999, but the opening of the Mianatra Center and its library has made the Myakka center the most complete lemur research center in existence anywhere.

Monica wishes to remind everyone that Internships are held in June, July and August. Spots are still available in either Animal Husbandry (lasting one or two weeks) or in Field Research Methods (two to four weeks.)

In addition, and under the aegis of their own professors and universities, researchers in primate cognitive, social, reproductive and ecological matters may choose to use LCF’s facilities to complete their research. Groups of mongoose lemurs, red-fronted brown, common brown and Sanford’s lemurs are available and the animals may be studied in free-ranging groups or in a captive environment.

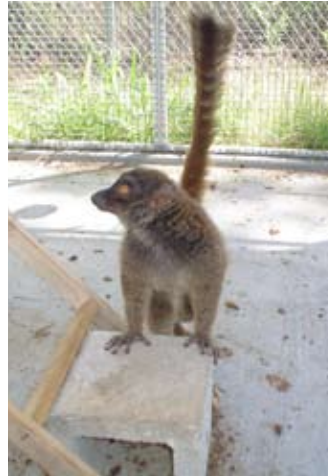
Share this newsletter with your favorite college students, give an internship as an early Christmas present, spread the word. Not only will you make Monica happy, but you may also open a whole fascinating world for a lucky few.

Application forms, required documentation and costs involved are available on [www.Lemurreserve.org](http://www.Lemurreserve.org) under Research and education. You may also call Monica at 941-322-8494.

# Critter Corner



*Fred, a white fronted brown lemur*



*Mbola, a Sanford's lemur*

- LCF Program Manager, Monica Hoffine, and LCF technical support, John Mogilewsky, drove to Duke University Lemur Center (aka Duke University Primate Center) the last weekend in March to pick up four brown lemurs. All the lemurs have settled into their daily routines in quarantine and have adjusted well to the sights, sounds, smells & temperatures of Florida. Bozy and Mbola are female Sanford's lemurs (*Eulemur sanfordi*), ages 20

and 19, respectively. They spend most of their time curled up together, along with Hery, a 22 year old male Sanford's lemurs. After their 30 day quarantine is finished and the LCF vet gives the thumbs up, this trio will be introduced to the group of Sanford's lemurs already housed in one of the lemur enclosures (see our October 2006 newsletter). Fred is an 18 year old male white fronted brown lemur (*Eulemur albifrons*); we will introduce him to Gideon, the reserve's only other white fronted brown lemur. Gideon has some trouble socializing with other lemurs and needs a calm, sweet natured friend for long-term companionship - Fred seems to be the perfect match. Everyone at the Myakka City Lemur Reserve is delighted by these charming additions to the colony.

- New fences have been installed around shelters to prevent free-ranging lemurs from accessing lemurs housed at the shelter. Not only will this new management strategy help prevent injuries between antagonistic animals, but also encourage free-rangers to utilize the whole forest thereby optimizing their quality of living and providing a more natural environment for research purposes.

## **DR. LINDA TAYLOR: "THE BEST PLACE IN THE WORLD TO STUDY PRIMATES."**

Dr. Linda Taylor pioneered the Field Training program at LCF and brought her first group of students to Myakka in 2002. We asked her to share her views on the changes she experienced in her Field Training courses at the Reserve over the past five years.

Recalling the early days of laptops on the kitchen table of the researchers' housing and interminable internet dial up connections, Dr. Taylor does not hide her enthusiasm for the new and definitely improved facilities. She describes the Mianatra Center as the "crown jewel" in "the best place in the world to study primates."

Dr. Taylor notes that technological advances have changed the face of field training work in general. Digitalization of data and pictures and easy access to information via the web have enhanced the depth of both the learning and teaching experiences. The Mianatra Center offers high speed internet connection and a state-of-the-art physical facility that will make the Field Training program both more efficient and enjoyable.

The addition of a second lemur enclosure has allowed Dr.

Taylor's students, usually numbering eight or nine, to spread out for their research, a boon to naturalistic observation.

Dr. Taylor believes that the AZA certification of the Myakka City Lemur Reserve in 2006 was of primary importance to define the Myakka Reserve as a prime research site for prospective primatologists, zoo educators and veterinarians.

This year, for the first time at the Reserve, Dr. Taylor will introduce Field Training to biology instructors through the Sarasota Teachers' Institute for Conservation Biology. Field training techniques are usually not part of the basic curriculum for prospective biology teachers, and Dr. Taylor believes that, in most cases, she will be presenting new concepts to these instructors. Not only will she introduce teachers to field techniques, such as how to fill out a data card or create an ethogram, but she will also emphasize where primates in general fit in the animal kingdom.

The Lemur Conservation Foundation is particularly proud of its Scientific Advisory Board and of the invaluable contribution that scientists such as Dr. Taylor are making to conservation efforts.

## ABOUT US



**The Lemur Conservation Foundation (LCF)**, incorporated in Florida (1996), is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit publicly supported organization (EIN 59-3359549) dedicated to the preservation and conservation of the primates of Madagascar through captive breeding, non-invasive scientific research, education, and reintroduction. At LCF's 90-acre, non-public Myakka City Lemur Reserve, the lemurs live naturally in a pristine forest, yet are readily available for educational and research purposes. LCF also operates the Mianatra Center for Lemur Studies and the Anne and Walter Bladstrom Library open for scientific research by appointment only. Researchers from around the world come to the MCLR to further our understanding of these fascinating primates. In partnership with several universities, the LCF conducts the unique Field Training Program which teaches students field techniques. In Madagascar, the LCF has built an education center and a guesthouse at the Tampolo Forest Station, its partner reserve in Madagascar, to promote collaborative research projects and a researcher exchange program.

## Wish List:

- Stainless steel pet bowls (5" diameter)
- White towels for lemurs
- Towel set for humans
- Additional dinnerware service for the Center (Booths & Chinese tree pattern)
- Quality Digital camera for Tampolo
- Fabulous Florida book series
- Golf cart
- Postage stamps

We are grateful to Catherine Laur White, LCF volunteer par excellence for researching, reporting, writing and producing this newsletter.



LEMUR  
**CONSERVATION**  
FOUNDATION

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