

## 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 pristine forest, yet are readily available for educational and research purposes. Researchers from New College of Florida, Rutgers University, University of Texas at Austin, University of Miami, Yale University and others come to the MCLR to further our understanding of these fascinating primates. Together with the University of Miami, the LCF conducts the unique Field Training Program, which teaches students field techniques. The LCF has built an education center at the Tampolo Forest Station, its partner reserve in Madagascar, to promote collaborative research projects and a researcher exchange program.

## Wishlist

White bath towels  
Pressure washer  
Ultrasonic scaler

Centrifuge  
End tables  
Lamps

Large dining room table with chairs

Any of the above items can be new or gently used.



## Helping Hands Wanted!

The staff at MCLR would love your help. If you live in the area or plan to travel nearby, give us a call or e-mail us. We could use help in the following areas: painting, cleaning, landscaping, carpentry, lemur enrichment, and more. Contact Monica at [lcmanager@earthlink.net](mailto:lcmanager@earthlink.net) or at (941) 322-8494. We hope to see you soon!



LEMUR  
CONSERVATION  
FOUNDATION

[www.lemurreserve.org](http://www.lemurreserve.org)

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October 2005

# LEMUR LATITUDES

critters with attitude VOL. 3 #2

## Thinking Like a Lemur: Exploring Prosimian Cognition

by NEHA MAHAJAN and JENNIFER BARNES

For decades, those primates most closely related to human beings have dominated the field of primate cognition research: first apes, then old world monkeys, and finally, new world monkeys. However, until very recently, prosimian primates, such as lemurs, were dismissed as lacking any of the interesting cognitive capacities that higher-order primates have. Recent cognition research at the Lemur Conservation Foundation, however, suggests that lemurs know far more about the world, its



Researchers Jen & Neha record a trial with a mongoose lemur

social agents, and its physical properties than anyone had anticipated. Like monkeys and apes before them, prosimian primates are showing researchers that they, too, have some understanding of everything from simple arithmetic to social cognition. With the wealth of lemur data collected at LCF, you might say that lemur cognition research is in the process of giving its cousins a run for their money.

Lemurs, like other primates and human infants, spontaneously enumerate objects. When shown a display in which two lemons are set sequentially behind a barrier (1 + 1), lemurs expect to find exactly two lemons (1 + 1 = 2), not one (1 + 1 = 1) or three (1 + 1 = 3). Their success at these tracking tasks even exceed those of human infants – lemurs, unlike infants, succeed even when the objects they're counting are broken in half during the display. In

the area of tool cognition, our research shows that lemurs can learn to use simple pulling tools as quickly as other primates, and even manipulate the tools in novel ways significantly more often than other primate species. Our research also suggests that lemurs know what others can and cannot see, they can differentiate between animate and inanimate objects, and they have some expectations about how each set of objects should act.

The field of lemur cognition, so long ignored, is now alive and kicking. More researchers are being drawn into testing these remarkable animals, and there's no denying the enthusiasm generated by this research. Lemurs, like apes and monkeys before them, offer us a window into our evolutionary past, and with advances in research at LCF, that window is becoming clearer all the time.

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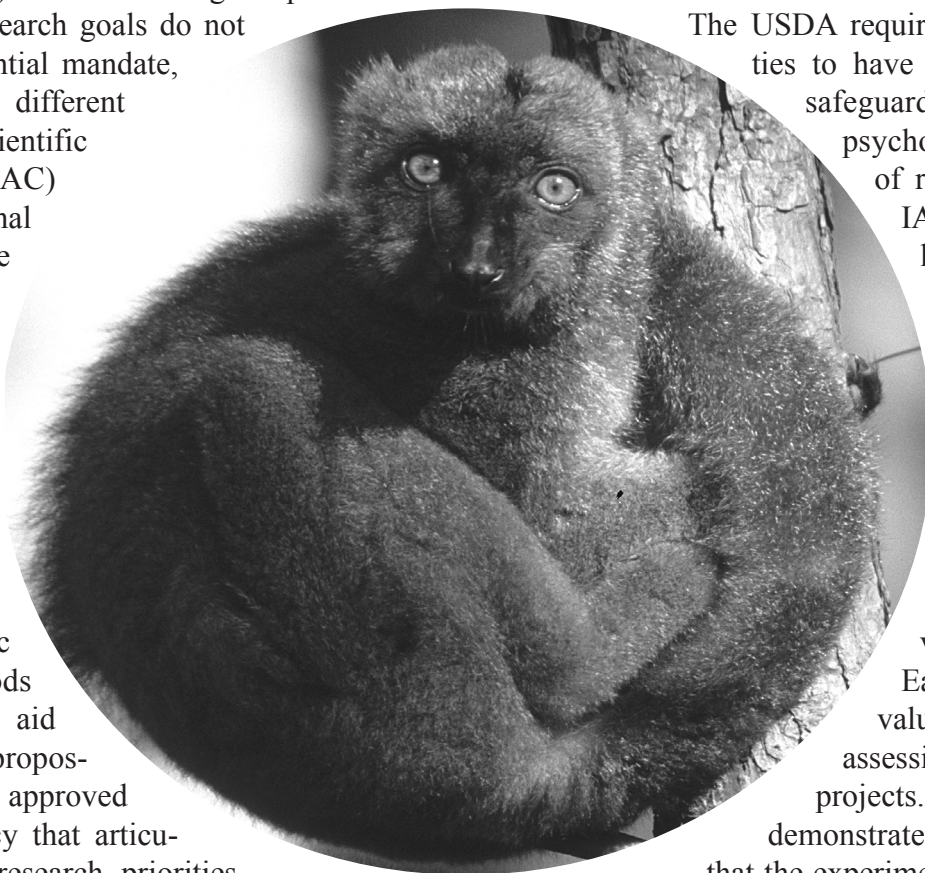
Dr. Cathy Williams

## Research "Rules" at the Myakka City Lemur Reserve

by MONICA HOFFINE

Scientific research of the lemur colony is an essential element of the Lemur Conservation Foundation's mission. Professors and students at the graduate and undergraduate levels are welcome to submit research proposals to the LCF Program Manager and every year, the LCF receives a growing number of these proposals. Because the health and wellbeing of the lemurs housed at the Myakka City Lemur Reserve (MCLR) is the staff's highest priority, to ensure that research goals do not interfere with this essential mandate, the LCF relies on two different committees: the LCF Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) and the LCF Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Both committees review every project proposal submitted to LCF, but the primary focus of each differs.

The SAC focuses on the quality and validity of the scientific objectives and methods of each proposal. To aid in critiquing project proposals, the SAC recently approved a formal research policy that articulates our institutional research priorities. Researchers are encouraged to review the policy prior to submitting their proposals and a copy will soon be available on our website. The SAC looks for the following qualities in a proposal: 1) the project does not interfere with the natural patterns of behavior or troop composition; 2) the project cannot be conducted in traditional settings (zoos) due to the methods and/or research goal; 3) the project contributes to knowledge of colony management or animal husbandry of captive lemurs, particularly in semi-free ranging habitats, 4) and the project focuses on a new and unique aspect of prosimian ecology, behavior, and/or physiology, adding rather than duplicating published information. These criteria were chosen to ensure that science conducted at MCLR is of the highest quality



and of the greatest benefit to lemurs, captive and wild. They also ensure that projects taking advantage of the unique facilities of the LCF are given priority over those that can easily be conducted in more traditional settings.

In addition to review by the LCF Scientific Advisory Council, all projects are reviewed by the LCF Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

The USDA requires all research facilities to have an active IACUC to safeguard the physical and psychological wellbeing of research animals. An IACUC must have at

least one member who is a veterinarian to provide expertise in physiological matters. The LCF IACUC has a total of six members whose expertise ranges from zoology to psychology to veterinary medicine. Each member provides a valuable perspective when assessing proposed research projects. The researcher must demonstrate in his/her proposal that the experimental methods will not

result in harm to any of the research subjects. The IACUC members make sure a project's methods not only prevent physical harm to the subjects but also prevent more subtle sources of distress - such as stress, loneliness, or anxiety. Another important task of the IACUC is to regularly inspect the lemur reserve. Every six months committee members review and suggest ways to optimize the facilities for the physical, mental, and psychological health of the lemur colony. The staff at the MCLR continually strives to improve the already excellent conditions of our free-ranging lemurs. Together, the LCF SAC, the LCF IACUC, and the LCF staff ensure that the lemurs and researchers flourish at the Myakka City Lemur Reserve.

*Gideon, a white-fronted brown lemur. Photo by Noel Rowe.*

## Philadelphia Zoo to Host "Lemur Appreciation Day"



*Christina forages at the MCLR*

In September the Philadelphia Zoo Chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) invited LCF Program Manager Monica Hoffine to give two lectures about the lemurs at the Myakka City Lemur Reserve. The Philadelphia Members of AAZK were preparing for the zoo's special Lemur Appreciation Day. The lectures provided a basic primer on how scientists define lemurs, what makes lemurs so unique, and the primary threats to their future survival. The audience also learned how LCF is addressing lemur conservation through ground breaking research. The lecture was well attended by both zoo keepers and curators; excitement about LCF and its lemur colony was especially apparent during the question and answer periods following each lecture. Everyone was eager to learn more about what LCF is doing to promote lemur conservation. Between lectures, Monica had the opportunity to visit with lemurs and other primates at the zoo. LCF female mongoose lemur, Christina, lived at the Philadelphia Zoo prior to coming to Myakka City. The Philadelphia Zoo still has mongoose lemurs, along with black and white ruffed lemurs and two sifaka. Philadelphia Zoo's Lemur Appreciation Day will be held October 22 from 10 am to 2 pm. Activities will include several stations including a coloring station, public-viewed training and enrichment sessions, and a chance for kids to compare their leaps to that of lemurs! LCF thanks the Philadelphia Zoo's AAZK chapter for their warm hospitality and hopes that the zoo and city have fun while they learn to appreciate lemurs.

## Malagasy Lemur Shop Offers New Gifts for 2005 Holiday Season

HOLIDAY GIFTS from the Malagasy Lemur Shop!

Please visit our website to see all the marvelous, fine quality gifts featuring lemurs for your family and friends. The "store" has expanded and includes:

From Madagascar:

- Lemur embroidered tablecloths and napkins
- Lemur embroidered totes

Art:

- Lemur art note cards
- Children's Tampolo Art Workshop note cards **NEW!**
- LCF 2006 Lemur Calendar by Peter McCaffrey **NEW!**

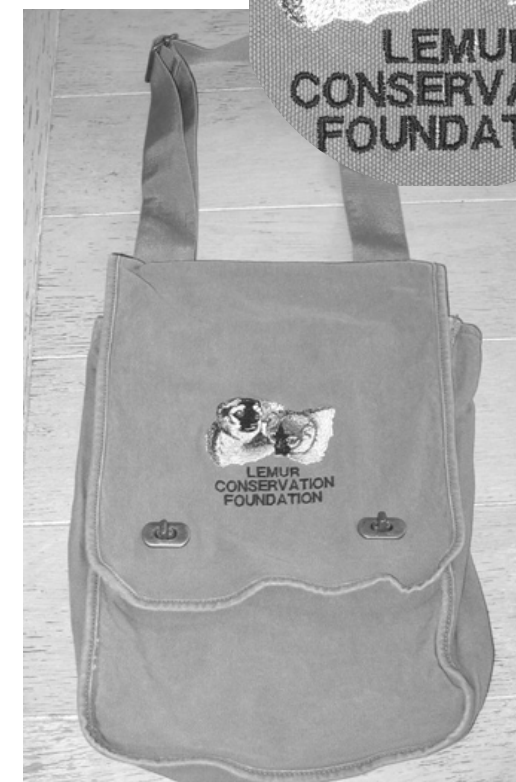
Clothing - All lemur embroidered

- Baseball caps
- Tee shirts
- Polo shirts
- Denim shirts

Other

- Lemur embroidered LCF Field Bag **NEW!**
- Ako the Aye-Aye* children's book **NEW!**

VISIT US!! [www.lemurreserve.org](http://www.lemurreserve.org)



*New for the 2005 Holidays: LCF Field Bag  
Art work from the LCF 2001 calendar by Joyce Powzyk*