

LEMUR LATITUDES

critters with attitude

VOL. 5 #2



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LCF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: UP AND RUNNING

... at the Mianatra Center for Lemur Studies:

The first Sarasota Teachers' Institute for Conservation Biology workshop took place in June 2007 at LCF's Myakka facilities. The workshop was very successful and received glowing reviews from all the participants. In the words of an attending middle school science teacher: "I was blown away by the wealth of information that I really did not have before this class."

The teachers attended eight lectures given by prominent experts, did field research and observed and recorded animal behavior. Using their new skills, they developed new lesson plans to be used in their own classes. The workshop was so well received that LCF is now planning to offer it twice a year. We are very confident that the Teachers' Institute will become one of the pillars of LCF's educational mission.



Sarasota Teachers' Institute for Conservation Biology

Another education program grew out of LCF President Penelope Bodry-Sanders' involvement with the Science and Environment Council of Sarasota County (SEC) for which she serves as board member.

The Council consists of non-profit and governmental institutions dedicated to promoting science and conservation through education. SEC and Sarasota County School District initiated a two-year curriculum-enhancement pilot project in which LCF par-



Ninth graders testing soil on their LCF field trip

ticipated as a host institution. Ninth graders were chosen for the pilot as it appears that interest in science wanes at this grade level. The point of the pilot project was to discover whether field trips to various science and nature-oriented institutions (Mote Marine Laboratory, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, and LCF among others) could reignite interest and "make science real" for students. The answer is yes and "Students who attended the field-trips demonstrated consistently better attitudes towards science than students in the control or comparison classes." *

Each field-trip included a class on some aspect of physical science that related to the host's scientific niche. LCF certainly found the most literally down-to-earth subject to teach: geophagia ("earth eating", a behavior exhibited by most primates, including humans). Students gathered soil, performed chemical analyses of their samples and, based on the results, attempted to answer the question "Why do lemurs and other primates eat dirt?" Their speculations were correct - some earth is full of minerals useful or needed for producing strong healthy bodies.

LCF, SEC and the school board are quite pleased with this first year's results and additional field-trips are scheduled this fall and winter for the new ninth grade science classes.

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* Science and Environment Council of Sarasota County, Interim Report, Two-year Science Curriculum enhancement pilot project, 2007.



BLADSTROM LIBRARY FORGING AHEAD

Three major developments for the Library this fall:

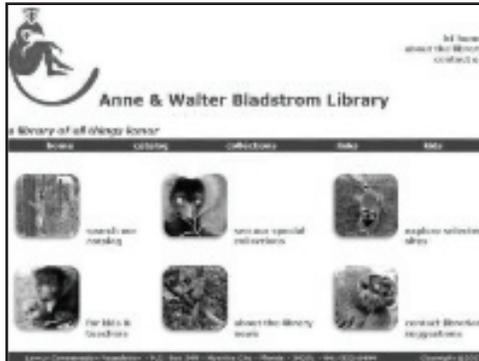
- The Anne and Walter Bladstrom Library now has its own place on the LCF website (<http://www.lemurreserve.org/bladstromlibrary/>)
- A new library management software system, including catalog, is up and running.
- Digitized images from historic works are in the process of being downloaded to our library pages thanks to the American Museum of Natural History.

Combined, these developments, though still in progress, mark the real start of the “all things lemur” library.

The new Bladstrom Library pages will lead the user to all the library’s resources and information and also links out to valuable

resources available elsewhere on the Internet. A special section designed specifically for K-12 users and teachers will provide youth-oriented information. The section for teachers will offer curriculum tools developed by LCF as well as links to other educational resources. This special section is particularly crucial in fulfilling LCF’s educational mission and will constantly evolve and grow.

The library’s new catalog is accessible from the library’s homepage (click on the “Search our Catalog” link) and our holdings are being added now. Once completed, the catalog will provide easy access to all the resources in the



The library’s home page

library’s collections, books, journals, papers, images, as well as links to valuable outside resources.

Our new catalog software is from EOS International, a library software company focused exclusively on special libraries. LCF librarian Kate Lippincott spent two days at the company headquarters in California to learn how to set up and manage the software. The catalog has many search features and functionalities that should make finding information fast and efficient. Our library’s records are stored and backed up on the EOS servers in California, so no system maintenance or equipment is required on our part. As our collection grows and use increases, the sophisticated search capabilities and special features of the software will become increasingly valuable.

The American Museum of Natural History has begun digitizing some of their rare books, including Grandidier’s *Histoire Physique, Naturelle et Politique de Madagascar*. The museum has generously offered to share the lemur images in which LCF has expressed a special interest. These images, which will be the start of our larger digitization project, will be temporarily accessible through the “Special Collections” link. Kate will be attending a workshop in Tallahassee to see the latest techniques in digitizing, organizing and presenting electronic collections.



From Grandidier’s

Histoire Physique, Naturelle et Politique de Madagascar

UP AND RUNNING... CONTINUED

... in Tampolo

Former LCF intern Amalia Fernand directed a one-week educational workshop in Tampolo during her month-long stay in Madagascar last August. Armed with paper, paint, crayon, microscopes, binoculars and assorted craft supplies, Amalia led her students on a fun journey of discovery... of their own backyard. Amalia raised all funds for her expenses and supplies at the Montessori school of DeLand, Florida, where she was teaching.

Observation of nature (binoculars and microscopes are popular items), craft-making (lemur masks are a favorite), and field trips in the Tampolo forest were all part of the fun week. Proof that the project was a resounding success came when the number of children attending the workshop increased from 25 to 64 in three days.

Based on her experiences teaching about Madagascar and lemurs both at home and at Tampolo, Amalia is presently preparing a Comprehensive Environmental Education Program about lemurs and their ecology for English-speaking teachers. The program, which will be available on CD and



Amalia Fernand and students in Tampolo

sold through LCF’s website next year, will include lesson plans, readings, math problems and activities tailored for grades four through six.

Critter Corner



Births at the Reserve

April and May saw the birth of two sets of red ruffed triplets at LCF's Myakka facility. Unfortunately, and in spite of the best efforts of all involved, one litter succumbed to bacterial enteritis. The deaths saddened us, but we must remember that such events are not uncommon in the wild. Hale and Tsikey, the now childless parents, seem intent on replacing their lost litter and are already showing interest in breeding again.

Bopp's and Tsard's offsprings are thriving and, at six months old, are nearly as big as their parents.

To honor the juveniles' ancestral home, they were given Malagasy first names and the sir names of several generous donors. The males are Volana (moon) Bladstrom (after Anne and Walter Bladstrom), and Orana (rain) Wood (after Brenda, Brandon and Rob Wood). The female is named Kintana (star) North (after Marilyn K. North).



Gotcha!



Child play



More play

A long-term study on parenting styles among red ruffed lemurs was originated by Dr. Natalie Vasey of Portland State University. Program Manager Monica Hoffine and Assistant Program Manager Tyann Marsh have conducted extensive research on the LCF red ruffed parenting styles following Dr. Vasey's protocol. This research will contribute greatly to the study.

Canadian imports

The Reserve is awaiting the arrival of four new lemurs currently quarantined in a CDC-approved facility in Miami after their import from Canada:

- Two mongoose lemurs from the Calgary Zoo in Alberta; Kikeli, a six-year old female, and her brother Bimbini, four years old.

- Two ringtailed lemurs from Le Jardin Zoologique du Quebec; a five-year female (unnamed as of yet), and her four-year old brother Domino.

The import of the animals required obtaining a permit from CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora), as well as extensive paper work and intense planning, all of which were handled masterfully by LCF's Program Manager Monica Hoffine. LCF would like to thank the following for their contributions to this process: AH Deringer (import expeditor who waived brokerage fees), Hoover's Transport (who trucked the animals from Quebec to Miami at reduced cost), and Le Jardin Zoologique du Quebec (who helped underwrite transport costs).

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 a unique Field Training Program that 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.

Oh no! not another Lamborghini!

Tired of the same old gifts?

Enter our Malagasy Gift shop (lemurreserve.org/lcfshop2.html) and treat family, friends or yourself to a lemurian Christmas. We offer embroidered items, books, cards, T shirts, caps, bags... everything to please any discriminating prosimian devotee.

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



LEMUR
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