

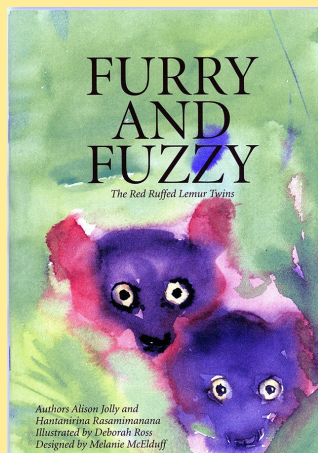


LEMUR CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

E-ulemur Latitudes
e-newsletter September 2013
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Image by Lee Nesler

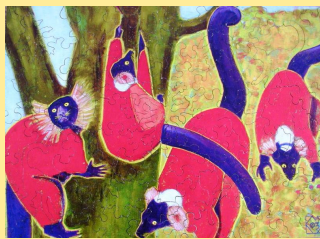
Grooming Natural Habitats for Safety and Emergency Protocols at the Maykka City Reserve

Just another day at the office, if your office happens to be the Myakka City Lemur Reserve! Summer is over, and now the LCF team is keeping a watchful eye in the south Florida sky during 'Hurricane Season.' The reserve is a wild area, with several habitat grooming issues to consider.


For example, mowing is a very important part of the summer routine. Keeping the fast growing grasses cut is important because it provides a clear sight line through the property. Our staff then has improved visualization of the area and allows newly planted trees to grow quickly.

Our natural habitats and a free ranging lemur colony are central to the Lemur Conservation Foundation mission. In our forest enclosures LCF lemurs encounter every element in the natural world just as they would in their forested home in Madagascar. Our unique colony provides opportunities for scientific research and observation. It also means that lemurs retain their native behaviors. In this ever-changing and diverse environment our colony lemurs coexist in multi-species habitat. They are enriched and stimulated by natural fluctuations and native Florida flora and fauna.

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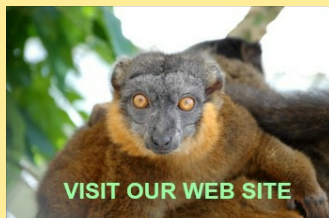
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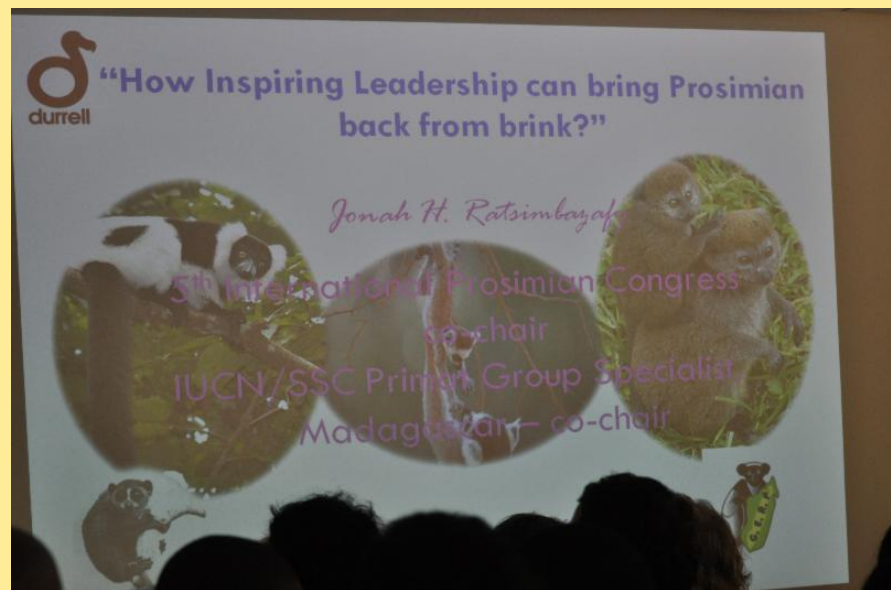
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5th Prosimian Congress



Thanks to Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, Madagascar), a congress chairperson and keynote speaker, for sharing these incredible images and great experience at the 5th Prosimian Congress.

[Visit the 5th Prosimian Congress Web site here](#)

[Click Here to watch a short video from the congress called Lemurs of Madagascar](#)

The International Prosimian Congress is recognized as the most important global meeting for primatologists studying any aspect of prosimian biology to present and share their experiences. The congress features a dynamic scientific program with more than 150 cutting-edge contributions to symposia, workshops and posters; countless networking opportunities for future collaboration, fantastic field trips, and world-renowned keynote speakers, all contributing to the conservation of prosimians.



The venue of the Congress was the Centre ValBio Research Campus in Ranomafana, Fianarantsoa, Madagascar. The Centre Valbio is a research station located on the edge of beautiful Ranomafana National park. It is among the best location in the Indian Ocean for primate lovers.

Prosimian primates have been relatively neglected in the past for several reasons; their predominantly cryptic, nocturnal habits; their occurrence in countries with under-developed infrastructures; and their misunderstood "primitive" nature as a result of their early divergence from anthropoid primates, including humans. Nevertheless, no interpretation of primate evolution could be considered comprehensive without an understanding of these fascinating animals, and their high levels of diversity provide a unique window for understanding processes of mammalian evolution, and primate evolution in particular. [READ MORE HERE](#)



'Deciphering the relative impact of threats on population abundance, species survival, and adaptation is critical to predicting extinction risk and providing conservation recommendations. Significant research has been conducted on prosimians; new species have been discovered in addition to a growing wealth of information on existing species. Such research has contributed greatly to our knowledge and understanding, yet there is a tangible risk of losing a substantial proportion of prosimian species. The question is therefore 'how can science and policy best promote prosimian survival?' To attempt to answer this key question, we propose to organize an International Prosimian Conference in Ranomafana, Madagascar to discuss and develop the topic of the Congress 2013: "How science and policy can pull prosimians back from the brink of extinction?"

Ring-tailed Lemurs



Did you know that ring-tailed lemurs were first mentioned in western literature around 1625 in Samuel Purchas's popular 'Pilgrimages' or travel logs? In his writing Purchas describes ring-tailed lemurs as being about the size of a monkey with a face like a fox and having a long tail with black and white rings.

Carl Linnaeus might have been familiar with Purchas's work, and with the 1729 journal of Robert Drury, an English sailor shipwrecked on Madagascar for fifteen years. Drury's journal is one of the oldest written accounts of life in southern Madagascar, the home of the Ring-tailed lemur.

Linnaeus looked to the works of Ovid and Virgil for the term 'Lemur' and its reference to 'Lemuria,' a Roman festival during which ghosts were exorcised. It is descriptive of some lemurs' nocturnal habits, noiseless movements, reflective eyes, and ghost like cries and appearance. Today lemurs are known as 'ghosts of the forest.'

Lemurs, found only on the island of Madagascar, are some of the most unique and the most endangered animals in the world. Scientists theorize that they arrived in Madagascar as a result of rare rafting or swimming events that brought them to the island from the African continent. Once in Madagascar they evolved in ecosystems that rival the Amazon basin in biodiversity. Among the 103 species of lemurs only the Ring-tailed lemur is classified as its own genus. It is the type species for the genus of 'Lemur.'

Known scientifically as *Lemur catta*, and as 'Maki' or 'Hira' in the Malagasy language, they are highly adaptable with a range covering a large portion of southern Madagascar's diverse geography. They breed successfully in captivity. Despite their success as a species ring-tailed lemurs, like virtually all of Madagascar's species of lemurs, face severe challenges to their survival. The 2012 assessment of Madagascar's fauna by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature documented 91% of lemur species as 'Critically Endangered,' 'Endangered,' or 'Vulnerable.'

According to Dr. Russell Mittermeier, President of Conservation International and Chairperson of the IUCN Primate Specialist Group, lemurs are the most threatened primate on earth. Ring-tailed lemurs are listed as 'Near Threatened,' with declining wild populations and habitat that is shrinking faster than any other in Madagascar. As we observe Ring-tailed lemurs in their natural habitats we can learn what they need to survive as a species and how we can better manage precious resources.

[Would you like to learn more about ring-tailed lemurs? CLICK HERE to read the full article.](#)

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