

Lemur Latitudes

March/April 2016



Happy Trails, Crispin and Keegan





Ring-tailed Crispin (top) and Keegan are moving across Florida to the Brevard Zoo--a happy ending for these charismatic half brothers.

When Keegan developed a head tilt and balance problems in May 2015, LCF staffers pulled the brothers from the forest for round-the-clock care. With treatment by Dr. Chris Levine of Sarasota Companion Animal Neurology and Dr. David Holifield, LCF's staff veterinarian--and support from Crispin and the LCF husbandry team--Keegan made a fantastic recovery. But twin moms Sassy and Sobe did not welcome their boys back, so LCF worked with the SSP (Species Survival Plan) to find them a good home, among the ring-tailed lemurs at the Brevard Zoo.

Zoological manager and favorite caretaker Caitlin Kinney will drive them to the east coast and will ease the transition by sharing information about their routine, favorite foods, and personalities. Crispin takes after their dad, Molson; he's a little wider, fuzzier, and cautious than slim, sleek, and bold Keegan. Unlike the Myakka City Reserve, [Brevard Zoo](#) is open to the public, so visitors will be able to watch the cousin-brothers snuggling in the sun or roughhousing in the grass.



PARTNERING IN HABITAT PROTECTION IN MADAGASCAR

As part of LCF's new conservation initiative focused on Anjanaharibe-Sud Special Reserve (ASSR), a team recently visited Befingotra village, near the entrance of ASSR, and met with school teachers and community leaders to discuss future educational and community development projects.



Forest police, guides, and ASSR park rangers, sporting LCF T-shirts

At least 11 lemur species, including critically endangered silky sifakas and indris, inhabit ASSR, a large (277 km²) montane rainforest in the northeast of the island nation. Threats to lemur survival largely stem from extreme poverty in rural villages near protected areas.

The conservation team coordinated by LCF's conservation program director, Dr. Erik Patel, is developing both lemur research and ecotourism projects deep in ASSR, as well as community-based conservation projects in villages adjacent to the reserve.

The local community is excited to partner with LCF and join serious discussions about projects that will improve lemur conservation as well as positively impact human livelihoods.



HEADING INTO THE WOODS, NOTEBOOK IN HAND

Colorado College anthropology professor Krista Fish had one goal for her January field training at LCF's reserve: "I wanted to get as close to a real field experience as possible."



Chandler Jacobson, bio major and Colorado College junior, observes ring-tails in the main forest.

Her eight students had spent a week preparing in Colorado Springs before flying east for a week in Myakka City. They developed research proposals and honed their observation skills on squirrels and dogs near campus. But tracking lemurs in the almost wild proved more challenging than following animals in the park. One team, for instance, "lost" their targets for more than hour--just what Dr. Fish was hoping for.

"Research experience in general is good," said Rebecca Twinney, a bio anthropology major from Boston. She focused on mongoose lemurs because "nobody knows about them" and tracked social distance--group size and spacing.

Other projects included ring-tail vocalizations in both forests and enclosures, the age at which ring-tailed lemurs assert female dominance, and a transect habitat study from the forest edge to the interior and out again.



"For a few, this may be a springboard to thesis research," said Dr. Fish. For all, it was a chance to put theory into practice as they weigh career choices. Senior bio anthropology major Jiumei Gao, from Guangdong, China, was investigating vigilance behavior in ring-tailed lemurs. "I see myself working for a nonprofit," she said, "and I'll go anywhere in the world."



MARKING AN ANNIVERSARY WITH A NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At the first of several special events in honor of LCF's 20th anniversary, founder Penelope Bodry-Sanders made a surprise announcement: Dr. Alison Grand was dropping the "interim" from her job title to become the foundation's new executive director.

For the past six months Dr. Grand has been testing out the

job--"and she has performed so brilliantly that after an extensive candidate search, the board asked her to assume the permanent position," said Bodry-Sanders.

A primatologist, researcher, and conservationist, Dr. Grand came to LCF from Disney's Animal Kingdom, where she conducted behavioral research projects and developed, implemented, and evaluated conservation programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



Dr. Alison Grand

Dr. Grand began her work with lemurs as an undergraduate at the University of the South. She continued her primate studies at the University of Georgia, where she received an MS and PhD in neuroscience and behavior. She also completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Wake Forest Primate Center. Her early work experiences included caring for diverse primates at Brec's Greater Baton Rouge Zoo, among them black lemurs (*Eulemur macaco*) and critically endangered black-and-white ruffed lemurs (*Varecia variegata variegata*).

Dr. Grand is thrilled to continue her work with the Lemur Conservation Foundation as the new executive director. "I look forward to championing the mission of LCF, as we celebrate 20 successful years of working to save lemurs from extinction."



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make the
next 20 years
just as

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