



Black and White Ruffed lemur (*Varecia variegata editorium*)
(Photo Noel Rowe).

Primate Conservation Inc. UPDATE 2024

Director's Report

2024 will be PCI's 31st year of giving small grants and matching funds to help graduate students and habitat conservationists study the least known and most endangered primates in their natural habitat. Without PCI funds, many of these projects would not have happened and researchers might have sought other careers. ~~Fortunately~~Fortunately, donors to PCI provided the funding to help these dedicated people protect and study their given primate. After ~~3~~three decades of giving small grants, some of our most dedicated and consistent donors have died and many have not been replaced. So as the need to address climate change and many other threats to the primate order increases, PCI has less funds to continue our important work. If you can help PCI with a donation please do so now.

Please support PCI with a check or you can donate by credit card or PayPal at www.alltheworldsprimates.org. Members are rewarded with access to our exclusive All the World's Primates website, which has well-referenced information, as well as photos, video and audio recordings covering all the currently known primates. The book version of *All the World's Primates*, with over a 1800 photos of all 512 species, can be bought at www.pogonias.com, with free shipping.



Toussaint conducting a conservation education class explaining his research. (Photo courtesy of Toussaint Rabary)

Toussaint Rabary *Leveraging Varecia variegata feeding behavior to restore forest and wetland ecosystems in Ihofa, Madagascar* University of Antananarivo \$2530.00

The Black and White Ruffed Lemur, which is frugivorous, plays an important role in natural regeneration and propagation of evergreen rainforest flora across its range in eastern Madagascar (Razafindratsima and Matinez, 2012; Manjaribe et al., 2013). Their ecological specificities have been studied at length in humid, evergreen forests; however, their ~~use of and~~ ecological importance to wetlands remains unexplored. This project aimed to characterize the habitat use and feeding behaviors of *V. variegata* in Ihofa forest, an area that contains both evergreen rainforest and wetlands. More specifically, I explored the dietary composition of *V. variegata* in these habitats and performed seed germination studies to ascertain possible benefits of gut passage on consumed floral species. From October 2021 to October 2023, I recorded behavioral data collection via instantaneous group scans on two groups of *V. variegata* in non-overlapping territories in the forests of Sahanody and Tsimanasovy - sites near Ihofa. I observed the lemurs consume 79 plant species. Of those species, only two were restricted to wetlands, flowers of *Symphonia urophylla* and fruits of *Pandanus longissimipedunculatus*. The microhabitat characteristics were documented using the Modified-Whittaker nested vegetation sampling method and the territories had 164 plant species combined. Six wetlands exist in the Sahanody territory whereas only one wetland is in Tsimanasovy. We noticed that *P. longissimipedunculatus* is the most dominant wetlands species ~~in all of these wetlands~~. Concerning seed germination tests, 12 species were subjected to nine different treatments. Three treatments were designed to assess the effects of gut passage on seed germination and

are discussed here; the remaining treatments were focused on improving germination in a nursery setting. Overall, seeds collected from feces (FS) had the highest germination success (61.9%) compared to seeds in intact fruits (IF: 24.4%) or extracted from fruit (SEFF: 45.1%). In particular, *Canarium* sp. (FS: 63.9%; SEFF: 5.9%) and *Gambeya boiviniana* (FS: 32.3%; SEFF: 16.8%) may rely on gut passage as the germination success of seeds of these species did not exceed 20% except for those that were consumed by *V. variegata*. Two thousand seeds produced from the germination tests were planted into an area managed by VOI TAMAMMIFI in Mahatsara, a site near Ihofa, as part of the reforestation efforts conducted by Madagascar Biodiversity Partnership.

Dereje Yazezew Mammo *Effect of habitat fragmentation on the population size and distribution of two primate species, Omo River Guereza and Grivet monkey in Mugere-Zala Natura; forest, Central highlands, Ethiopia.* Debre Berhan University \$3860.00

Relatively little research has been carried out on Black and White colobus in Ethiopia despite a notable decline in distribution and abundance due to forest clearance and hunting. The grivet monkeys are also highly challenged nowadays due to the aforementioned factors.



The Omo River Black and White Colobus (*Colobus guereza*)
Photo Dereje Yazeze

Primates, which live in fragmented forests, consume fewer plant species and have greater seasonal differences in diet composition than those living in continuous forests. Deforestation, livestock grazing and agricultural encroachments are becoming common and widespread practices in and around natural forest in the study area.

One of the global and national problems currently is the inflation crisis. Especially in, Ethiopia, money has lost its power to purchase needed services. The local field assistants are dissatisfied with the subsistence per diem they have been paid, due to the minimal



Dereje Yazezew during data collection at his study site in Ethiopia (Photo courtesy of Dereje Yazeze)

purchasing power of the money at the market. Moreover, the inaccessibility of the study area means, there are additional cost for motor cycle and mule transportation. I have become accustomed to walking the last 3 to 4 hours on foot to get to the study site to save limited grant money.



A view of the degraded landscape with slash and burn fires.
Photo Dereje Yazeze)

How to Support PCI

PCI is an all-volunteer, tax-deductible private operating 501(c)(3) foundation which has supported more than 785 projects in more than 31 countries with primate habitats throughout the world since 1993.

If you would like to contribute cash, stock, or real estate to PCI or would like more information on a specific project, please contact me at the address below. To keep our overhead to a minimum, so that as much as possible of the money raised is used to support field conservation projects, this is our annual appeal for your donations. Please do not forget about this, as you will not receive other mail from us, nor will we share your name with others. We appreciate your support and hope you will give generously to help fund these vital primate projects.

Sincerely,

Noel Rowe
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