

LEMUR LOVE: OUR IMPACT IN 2020

PROTECT LEMURS. EMPOWER WOMEN. FURTHER SCIENCE.



WELCOME

DEAR LEMUR FRIENDS,

I started Lemur Love in 2012, primarily as a mechanism to continue my own scientific research with lemurs. I love animals generally, and was completely enamoured with following wild lemurs around and learning about the world as they see it. Imagine being in the depths of a spiny forest – seeming at the end of the Earth – just you and a troop of lemurs (who completely ignore but tolerate you), in which females are in charge and don't let males forget it for one second. I was concerned, though, about habitat destruction and poaching within the Tsimanampesotse National Park, where I lived for about a year collecting data for my doctoral dissertation. Lemur Love was born out of a desire to protect this specific habitat and the lemurs I'd gotten to know as individuals.

Since then, I have listened, reflected, and learned immensely. Moreover, I experienced a significant “aha” moment when I both realised and internalized that conservation is not simply about the animals that I know and love, but rather, conservation is about people. Conservation cannot and will not happen if local people are not integral to conservation agendas. And conservation in Madagascar cannot be sustainable if Malagasy people themselves do not have opportunities to contribute. Madagascar's legacy of colonialism includes a dominance of foreign researchers in research and conservation, including funding opportunities and publications. As fortunate as I have been to build a career on studying Madagascar's wildlife, I also feel a responsibility to now ‘pay it forward’ to others (particularly Malagasy young people), and the Lemur Love team is helping to do this.

Over these years, Lemur Love has also grown and evolved. Our core working group is composed of four board members (myself, Ms. Holly Schneider Brown, Dr. Kim Reuter, and Dr. Seheno Courduant-Andriantsaralaza), which will soon be five, as Dr. Hoby Ambinintsoa Rasoanaivo is joining in 2021. We also have

three advisors (Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy, Ms. Lynne Venart, Ms. Lauren Petronaci), two Community Advisors (Mdm. Angellia Razanadrainy, Mdm. Lanto Vonimalala), and three active volunteers (Ms. Sibylle Westbrook, Ms. Andrea Haverland, Ms. Liz Bonsey). Our mission is to “Protect Lemurs. Empower Women. Further Science” and, importantly, each of these must happen with the others. Moreover, we are dedicated to including Malagasy voices and perspectives in all aspects of this work.

2020 has been an unparalleled year for all of us – and Lemur Love needed to quickly adapt to the new post-COVID-19 landscape. By May 2020, the pandemic had already wiped out half a billion dollars in tourism revenue in Madagascar, causing severe job losses, food insecurity, and increases in habitat loss. Southern Madagascar, where the majority of our work takes place, is also experiencing a severe two-year drought and widespread food shortages. We know that when people are suffering, biodiversity cannot thrive, and so we took swift action through targeted COVID-19 emergency relief programs. Here, we are pleased to report on the results of these efforts, which have resulted

* Our Malagasy Director and Community Advisors are the only paid staff.

in the largest mobilisation of Lemur Love funds – USD\$115,000 in emergency funding with over USD\$48,000 spent this year alone – and an additional USD\$67,000 secured for programming in 2021.

2021 will no doubt bring more challenges. We benefit from being a small organization that is primarily volunteer run*, and that we can react and mobilize quickly. Additionally, we have trusted Community Advisors helping us identify priorities and urgent needs, which when addressed, will reduce human suffering and also protect the wild habitat (and its precious lemurs!). We also look forward to increasing our field efforts through Malagsay research teams and ranger-led conservation action at several locations in Madagascar in 2021.

Thank you for your generous support and best wishes for a safe and healthy new year,

Dr. Marni LaFleur
Lemur Love Founder and Director

None of our work this year – and indeed over the last several years – would be possible without the support of what we call our “Global Troop” (i.e. donors, partners, supporters, and friends) around the world. We are particularly grateful to individuals and organisations who worked with us this year as we expanded beyond our usual areas of focus into emergency aid provision, and for our phenomenal within-Madagascar Director Dr. Seheny Corduant-Andriantsaralaza. Dr. Seheny has shown excellent leadership, ingenuity, and resilience in ensuring our programs are a success.

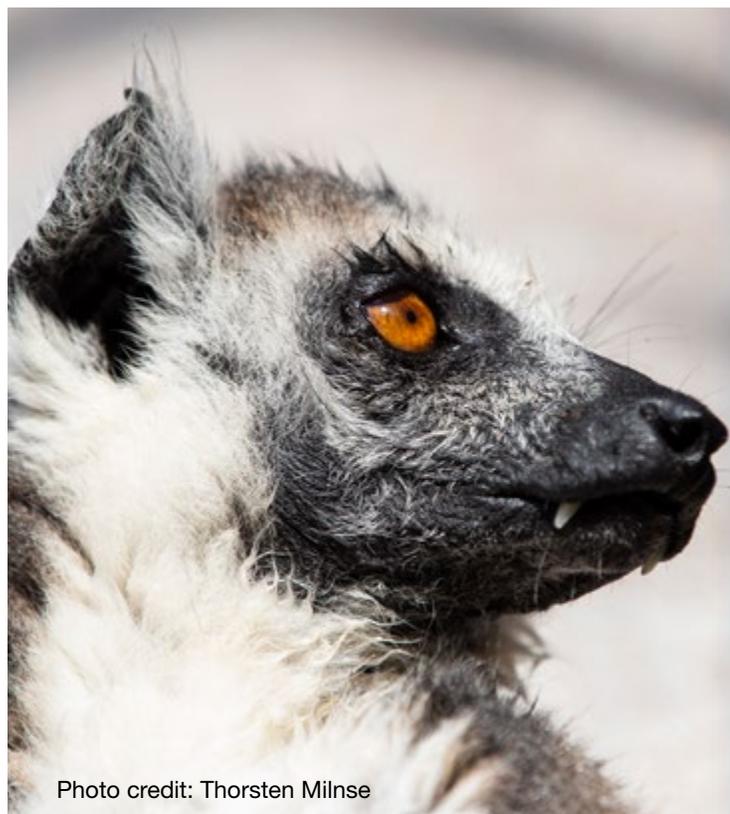


Photo credit: Thorsten Milnse

CONTENTS

Lemur Love achievements in 2020	4
COVID-19 emergency response 2020 at a glance	6
Supporting Malagasy scientists	8
Writing fellowships	10
COVID-19 programming for 2021	12
About our partner communities	14
The impact of our COVID-19 emergency programming	16
Looking forward	18
Our partners in 2020	20

LEMUR LOVE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

PROTECT LEMURS.

- The Andranovao Research Team (a permanent research staff located near our study site in Tsimanampesotse National Park) monitored anthropogenic activities, and three social groups of ring-tailed lemurs that we have studied for over a decade. The Andranovao Research Team is managed by WWF Madagascar.
- Lemur Love raised the alarm about the ‘one-two punch’ of drought and pandemic impacts on southwest Madagascar in a June 2020 article in Mongabay.¹



EMPOWER WOMEN.

- We are working to increase Malagasy representation on Lemur Love’s board. We are excited to welcome Dr. Hoby Ambinintsoa (Antananarivo) to our board and are still looking to fill a second position for 2021.
- We have formally designated two Community Advisors from the villages where we work: Lanto Vonimalala (Efoetse) and Angellia Razanadrainy (La Marmaille School, Mangily). We commit to including their voices when implementing programs, so as to best address the needs of the communities that they are part of.



Photo credit: Thorsten Milnse

FURTHER SCIENCE.

- In 2020, the IUCN Red List assessment – led by Lemur Love scientists (with Dr. Lisa Gould) – was published for the ring-tailed lemur, confirming that the species continues to be considered Endangered.² Additionally, we authored or co-authored the IUCN assessments for *Lepilemur hubbardorum*, *Lepilemur mustelinus*, and *Mirza coquereli*.
- Lemur Love published two articles in the 2020 edition of Lemur News on our work on empowering Malagasy scientists and on the pet trade of lemurs. In one article, we discussed the impact of Lemur Love’s efforts to increase Malagasy inclusion in the 56th Annual Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) meeting which took place in Antananarivo, Madagascar, in August 2019 and brought 712 delegates from 55 countries together to discuss biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. In the second article, we looked at the fate of indriids in tourist facilities within Madagascar.³
- Lemur Love data collection efforts have resulted in over 30 publications in the scientific literature over the last decade.⁴
- As COVID-19 disrupted our annual June-July field expedition in Tsimanampesotse National Park, this year’s expedition launched in mid-December with Dr. Hoby – our newest board member – leading an all-Malagasy research team.



1 The article appeared online, and can be read here: <https://news.mongabay.com/2020/06/one-two-punch-of-drought-pandemic-hits-madagascars-poor-and-its-wildlife>

2 <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/11496/115565760>

3 <http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/1200343/28349430/1600626452883/LN22.pdf?token=Pn762v7XgyBOGRSi4W2obLj9lc8%3D>

4 <http://www.lemurlove.org/publications-press--media.html>

COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE 2020 AT A GLANCE

We mobilised over USD\$48,000 in emergency funding for humanitarian programming, to protect lemurs on-the-ground, and to support Malagasy scientists facing a crisis in funding.

HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMING

- Delivered USD\$18,310 in food and cash aid in Efoeste, Mangily, and Andasibe in partnership with Conseil Diocesain De Development (CDD), ONG Reniala, La Marmaille primary school, and Association Mitsinjo. Food and/or small cash grants were distributed to 741 women and impacted approximately 4224 people (their families) for a one month period.
- Supported monthly school fees of 409 elementary school students over two months. This ensured that teachers were paid and no students had to drop out for outstanding fees. We additionally supported the start-of-the-year school fees for 150 students, who could not otherwise attend. (USD\$2117)
- Provided USD\$500 in seed funding for an emergency fund for mothers of the La Marmaille students, so that any mother of a student can receive funds for immediate purchase of food, medicines, or other urgent necessities.





Photo credit: Hoby Ambinintsoa

PROTECTING LEMURS ON-THE-GROUND AT TSIMANAMPESOTSE

- Before COVID-19, funding for biodiversity protection and conservation in Madagascar came primarily from foreign funding and aid (for the 92 protected areas that are managed by international and local non-government organisations), as well as tourism income (for the 46 protected areas managed by Madagascar National Parks). In the aftermath of COVID-19, it has become difficult for protected areas to continue ranger patrols and for long-term monitoring programmes to continue. Lemur Love advocated for and sought alternative funding sources for ranger patrols and monitoring.
- Serendipitously, the last time we were in the field before COVID (June-July 2019) we trained the the Andranovao Paraecology team (a permanent research staff located in Tsimanampesotse National Park) to monitor the specific lemur groups that we have been following for 12 years. As such, despite the COVID crisis and our inability to travel, we have data on individual lemurs and demography throughout this time.
- Field expedition led by Dr. Hoby Ambinintsoa (Dec 2020-Jan 2021)



WRITING FELLOWSHIPS

Thanks to a generous grant from Global Wildlife Conservation, we were able to fund seven future conservation leaders – out of a pool of more than 25 applicants! – to receive 6-month writing fellowships. Each Fellow is paired with one Lemur Love mentor, and one external academic mentor; external mentors have volunteered their time from 11 different universities in 4 countries. Fellows will use the six months to develop a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Topics of our fellows include:

1. Parasites in *Varecia* sp. and *Eulemur cinereiceps* (Ny Sanda Ratinarivo; Manombo Special Reserve)
2. Aye-aye mother/infant behavior (Faranky Ravelomandrato; Kianjavato Classified Forest)
3. Baobabs and vertebrates (Ny Ony Ratovonjanahary; Kirindy National Park)
4. Parasites and self-medication in diademed sifaka (Nirisoa Raveloson; Maromizaha Protected Area)
5. *Dalbergia* distribution in Ankarafantsika (Marc toky Razakamanantsoa; Ankarafantsika National Park)
6. Coquerel's sifaka in anthropogenic habitat (Miarisoa Lalaina Ramilison; Mariarano Classified Forest)
7. Mangrove forests and carbon emissions (Minoseheno Rakotovao; Mahavavy-Kinkony Protected Area)

WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL FOR OUR WRITING FELLOWSHIP VOLUNTEER MENTORS! THEY INCLUDE:

- Dr. Caroline Amoroso, Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Virginia (USA)
- Dr. Caitlin Eschmann, Wellness and Conservation Research Associate, San Francisco Zoo (USA)
- Dr. Meredith Gore, Associate Professor, University of Maryland (USA)
- Dr. Kathleen Grogan, Assistant Professor, University of Cincinnati (USA)
- Dan Hending, Ph.D. candidate, University of Bristol (England)
- Malcom Ramsay, Ph.D. candidate, University of Toronto (Canada)
- Dr. Isabella Mandl, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Queens University (Canada)
- Dr. Melissa Schaefer, Associate Professor, Salt Lake Community College (USA)
- Dr. India Schneider-Crease, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Arizona State University (USA)
- Dominik Schübler, Ph.D. candidate, University of Hildesheim (Germany)
- Dr. Linda Taylor, Professor Emerita, University of Miami (USA)



(7) Mariarano Classified Forest
(6) Mahavavy Kinkony Reserve
(5) Ankarafantsika National Park

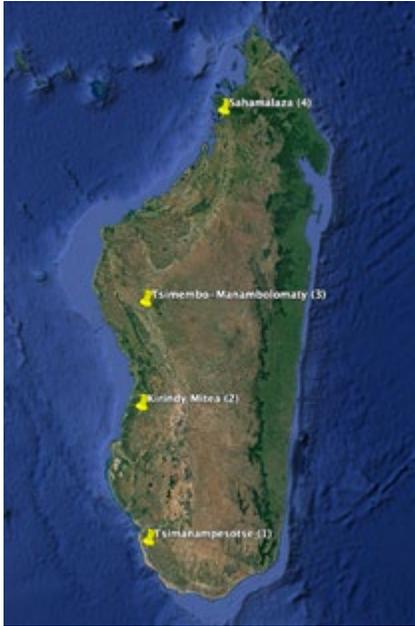
(4) Maromizaha Protected Area

(3) Kirindy National Park
(2) Kianjavato Classified Forest

(1) Manombo Special Reserve

22°14'37.64" S

COVID-19 PROGRAMMING FOR 2021



Tusk Trust, Wildlife Ranger Challenge Fund (Scheinberg COVID-19 Relief Fund)

Lemur Love was awarded USD\$12,000 to fund wildlife ranger salaries at four locations (see map) in Madagascar. We are working with trusted partners at WWF Madagascar (Andranovao Research Team), University of Texas Austin, Peregrine Fund Madagascar, and AAECCL (via the Dublin Zoo) to support forest rangers at the following protected areas:

1. Tsimanampetsotse National Park ('TNP', southwestern region),
2. Kirindy Mitea National Park ('Ankoatsifaka', western region),
3. Tsimembo-Manambolomaty Protected Area (TM PA, western region), and
4. Sahamalaza Iles Radama National Park ('Sahamalaza', northwestern region).

Our collaboration will oversee protection of 17 lemur species (IUCN Red List statuses: 6 Critically Endangered, 5 Endangered, 5 Vulnerable, 2 Least Concern, 1 Data Deficient) (Table 1 and photos on next page).

Table 1. Species of lemur (scientific and common name), their conservation status and location, supported by the Tusk Trust Wildlife Ranger Challenge.

Scientific name	Common name	Status	Location
<i>Cheirogaleus medius</i>	Fat-tailed dwarf lemur	VU	1
<i>Cheirogaleus</i> sp. (undescribed)	Dwarf lemur (undescribed species)	DD	4
<i>Daubentonia madagascariensis</i>	Aye-aye	EN	3,4
<i>Eulemur flavifrons</i>	Blue-eyed black lemur	CR	4
<i>Eulemur macaco</i>	Black lemur	EN	4
<i>Eulemur rufifrons</i>	Red-fronted brown lemur	VU	2
<i>Haplemur occidentalis</i>	Northern bamboo lemur	VU	4
<i>Lemur catta</i>	Ring-tailed lemur	EN	1, 2*
<i>Lepilemur leucopus</i>	White-footed sportive lemur	EN	1
<i>Lepilemur mittermeieri</i>	Mittermeier's sportive lemur	CR	4
<i>Lepilemur ruficaudatus</i>	Red-tailed sportive lemur	CR	2
<i>Lepilemur sahamalazensis</i>	Sahamalaza sportive lemur	CR	4
<i>Microcebus griseorufus</i>	Gray-brown mouse lemur	LC	1
<i>Microcebus murinus</i>	Gray mouse lemur	LC	2
<i>Mirza zaza</i>	Northern giant mouse lemur	VU	4
<i>Phaner pallescens</i>	Pale fork-marked lemur	EN	2,3
<i>Propithecus deckenii</i>	Van der Decken's Sifaka	CR	3
<i>Propithecus verreauxi</i>	Verreaux's sifaka	CR	1, 2

*possibly locally extirpated at this location. Last reliable sighting in 2008.



Photo credit: Becca Lewis



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Marni LaFleur



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Marni LaFleur



Photo credit: Becca Lewis



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Becca Lewis



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Thorsten Milnse



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Marni LaFleur



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar



Photo credit: Chris Kirk



Photo credit: Lemurs of Madagascar

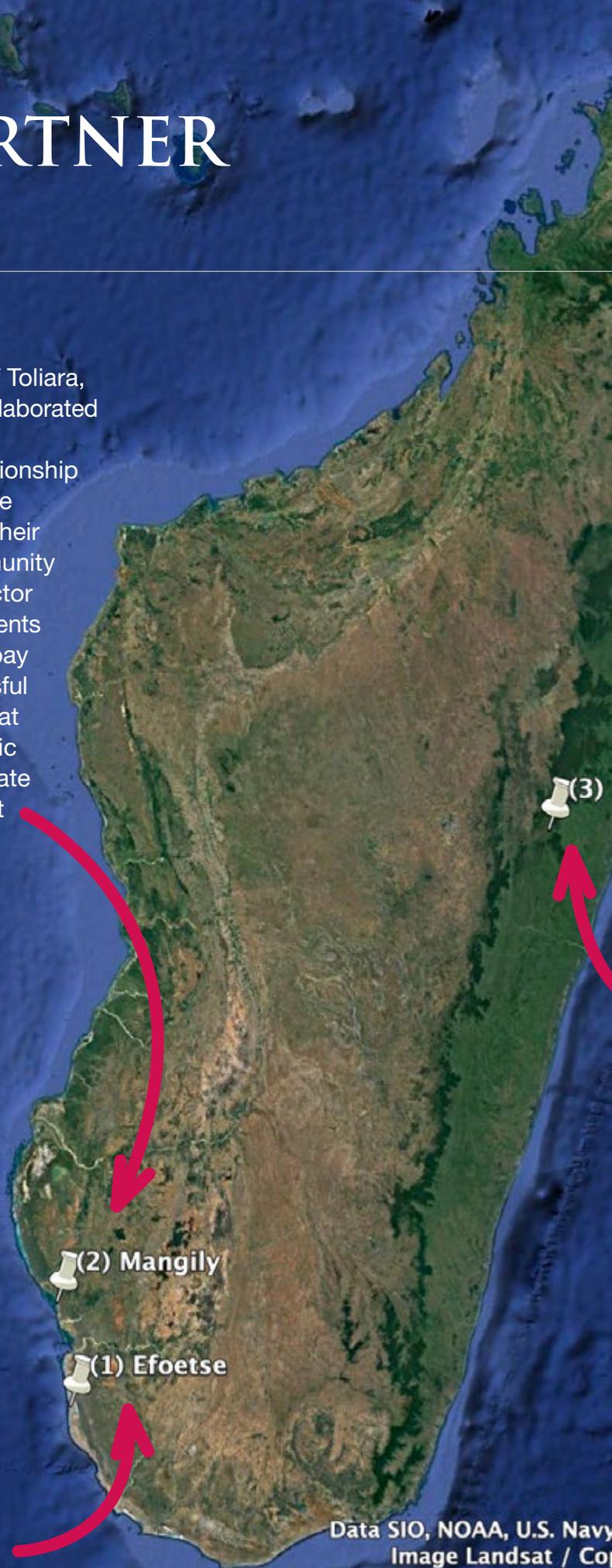
ABOUT OUR PARTNER COMMUNITIES

MANGILY:

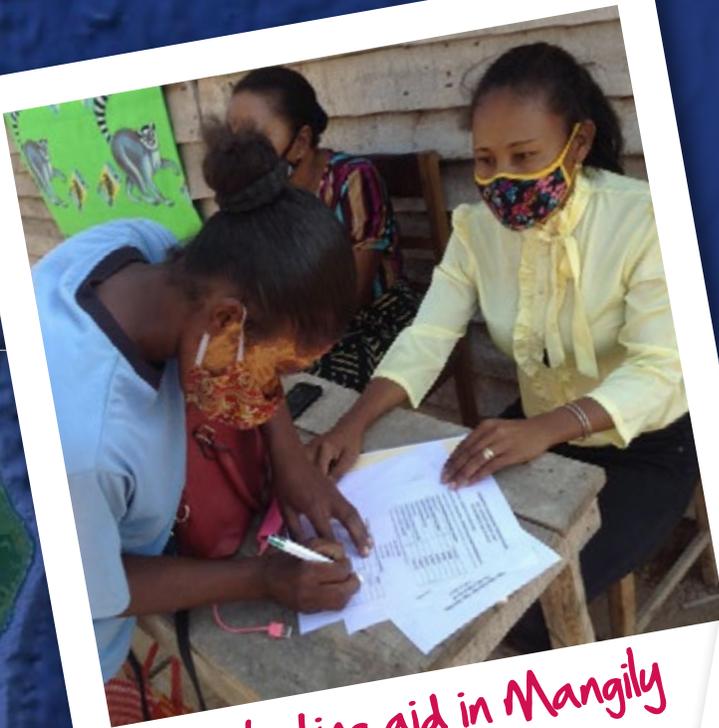
Mangily (2) is a village approximately 20 km north of Toliara, in southwestern Madagascar. In the past, we have collaborated with the ONG Reniala Lemur Rescue Center which is located in Mangily. Additionally, we formed a relationship with La Marmaille primary school in Mangily because of their commitment to environmental education in their curriculum. Mdm Angellia Razandriny is our Community Advisor to Mangily and is also the founder and director of La Marmaille school. Families of La Marmaille students experienced severe food insecurity and inability to pay school tuition fees. We have an ongoing and successful relationship with Mdm. Razanadrainy and believe that children are key to preserving Madagascar's endemic treasures for the future, if they are taught to appreciate and love them! Investing in children is an investment in Madagascar's future.

EFOETSE:

Efoetse (1) is the village nearest to the Tsimanampesotse National Park. (TNP), in southwestern Madagascar. Our long-term field research takes place in TNP and we have thus come to know people from the village of Efoetse. This area is remote, extremely arid and frequently impacted by drought, and suffers from food insecurity. Following the COVID lockdowns and associated local travel restrictions in Madagascar, Efoetse suffered economic collapse and significant interruptions to the supply chains of foods and household goods. We relied on information from Filoma Laha (Mayor of Efoetse), our Community Advisor Lanto Vonimalala (Lanto has also been managing Lemur Love's annual field camp for over a decade!), and partnered with the Conseil Diocesain De Development (CDD) to implement distributions of food and cash to community members, primarily to the most vulnerable members of the community.



Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy,
Image Landsat / Copernicus



*Distributing aid in Mangily
(Thank you to our partners
at La Marmaille primary school)*



*Distributing aid in Efoetse
(Thank you to our partners at
Diocesan Development Council)*



*Handwashing station at the aid
distribution center in Andasibe
(Thank you to our partners at Association Mitsinjo)*

Andasibe

ANDASIBE:

Andasibe (3) is a popular tourist destination approximately 100 km from Madagascar's capital of Antananarivo. Although we do not conduct research in this region, we recognize Andasibe's importance in terms of lemur conservation, and responded to information suggesting that local people were suffering from a loss of tourist revenue and food insecurity due to the COVID19 pandemic. A remarkable 11 species of lemur can be found in Andasibe, including the iconic indri. We partnered with Association Mitsinjo in order to distribute one-time disbursements of food to women and their families living adjacent to lemur habitat.

THE IMPACT OF OUR COVID-19 EMERGENCY PROGRAMMING

“ Thanks to Lemur Love, mothers are able to feed their children. And even if it’s only for a short time, seeing their children have enough to eat gives them hope that maybe tomorrow will be better.”

– The community of Mangily



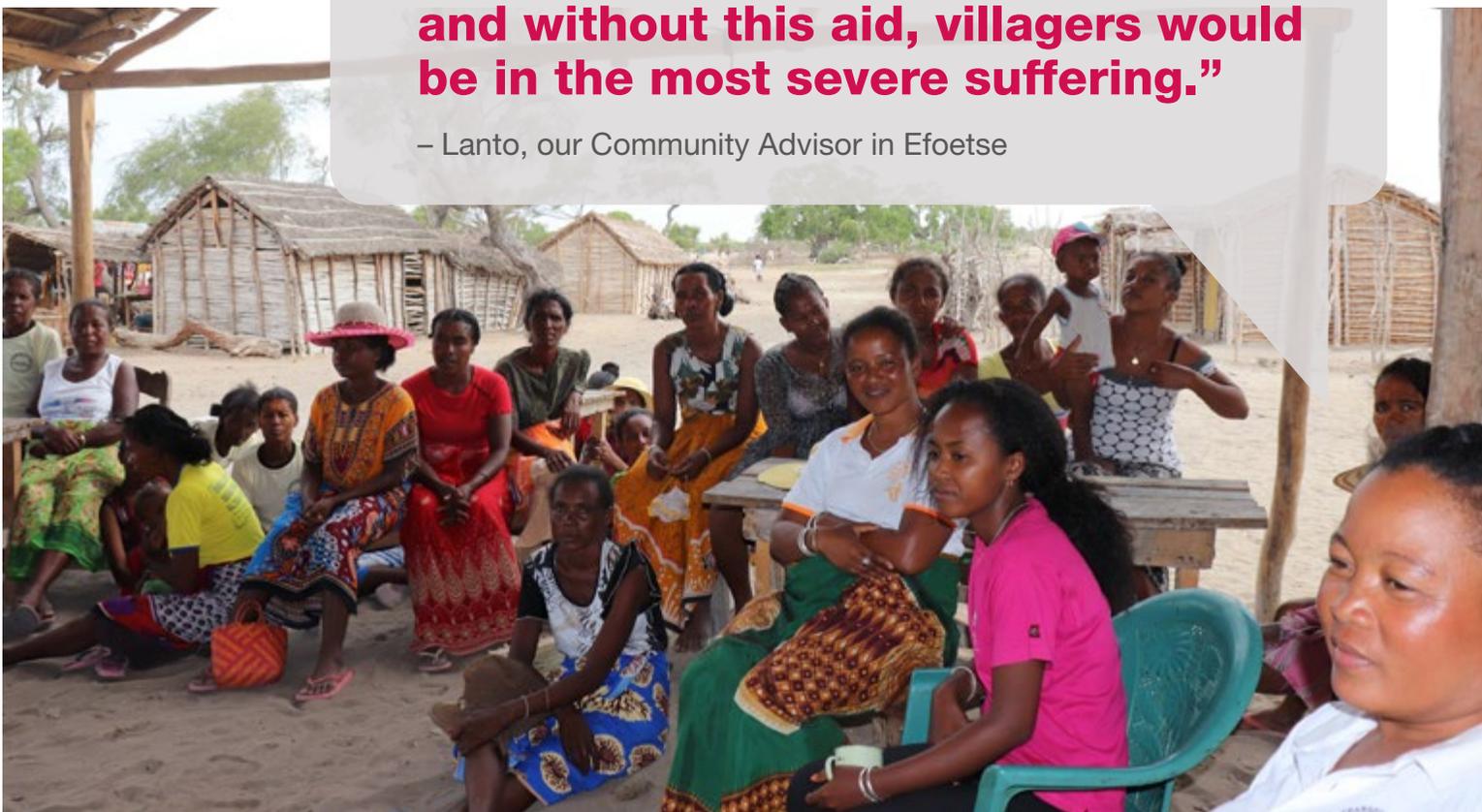
“ The situation is getting worse as taxi-brousses stopped and some villagers have to walk in Betioky to buy food (cassava, as they cannot afford rice). Lemur Love’s aid is now their only hope. The situation is very terrible in Efoetse. There has been no rain since December.”

– The Mayor of Efoeste in June 2020



“ The aid Lemur Love provided in June was the only aid they received and without this aid, villagers would be in the most severe suffering.”

– Lanto, our Community Advisor in Efoetse



LOOKING FORWARD



Whatever 2021 will bring, we are committed to continue our work in southwestern Madagascar. In addition to seeing our Lemur Love Fellows submit their articles for publication in mid-2021, we are thrilled to have received the funding from the Oak Foundation to support several programs including humanitarian aid, construction of a building for skills and entrepreneurial training and activities with women, as well as the grant from Tusk Trust to support ranger salaries in four protected areas in Madagascar. We aim to quantify the impacts of COVID-19 on wildlife trafficking in Madagascar, and continue to build capacity of our within-Madagascar “Global Troop” who range from children in remote villages to scientists holding doctoral degrees.

Thank you so much to all the donors who made this work possible and have allowed us to dream bigger and have greater impact in Madagascar. Much of this was made possible by small donations and merchandise purchases from many people around the world. We are truly grateful for your trust and your belief in our small but mighty organization.

With your support, we look forward to doing even more in 2021!

Looking forward spotlight:

Lemur Love is building on the pilot project started by Sibylle Westbrook to provide lunches for students at La Marmaille Primary School in Mangily. Of the 400 students at this school, most eat only one meal per day – dinner. This means that they are frequently hungry and have difficulty concentrating during the day. Though childhood nutrition is not a primary focus of our work, we wanted to help because La Marmaille prioritizes environmental education including content about Madagascar’s biodiversity (this is not commonplace and another legacy of colonialism). Also, only it costs about \$5USD to provide 10 lunches! In Dec 2020 you helped us raise enough to sponsor 10,100 lunches between January and July 2021, but even this isn’t nearly enough for all students. If you would like more information or to contribute to the lunch program at La Marmaille, please let us know!





Dr. Sehen meeting with the Tanalana Miraike Women's Association in Efoetse



Photo credit: Mandy Fischer

Thanks for purchasing our merch!



Sticker design: Lauren Petronaci



Pin design and photo credit: Taylor Maggiacomo

OUR PARTNERS IN 2020

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORTED OUR WORK IN 2020

- Global Wildlife Conservation
- Population Connection
- Cartledge Foundation
- Cape May County Zoo AAZK
- Kansas City Zoo AAZK
- Fidelity Charitable Donor Advised Fund – Ariel Waldman Charitable Fund

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING OUR WORK IN 2021

- Tusk Trust
- Oak Foundation

INDIVIDUALS THAT SUPPORTED OUR WORK IN 2020 THROUGH DONATIONS AND/OR PURCHASES

Elora Smith (major gift), and over 330 other individuals made donations or supported our work through merchandise purchases.

OUR 2020 TEAM

BOARD:

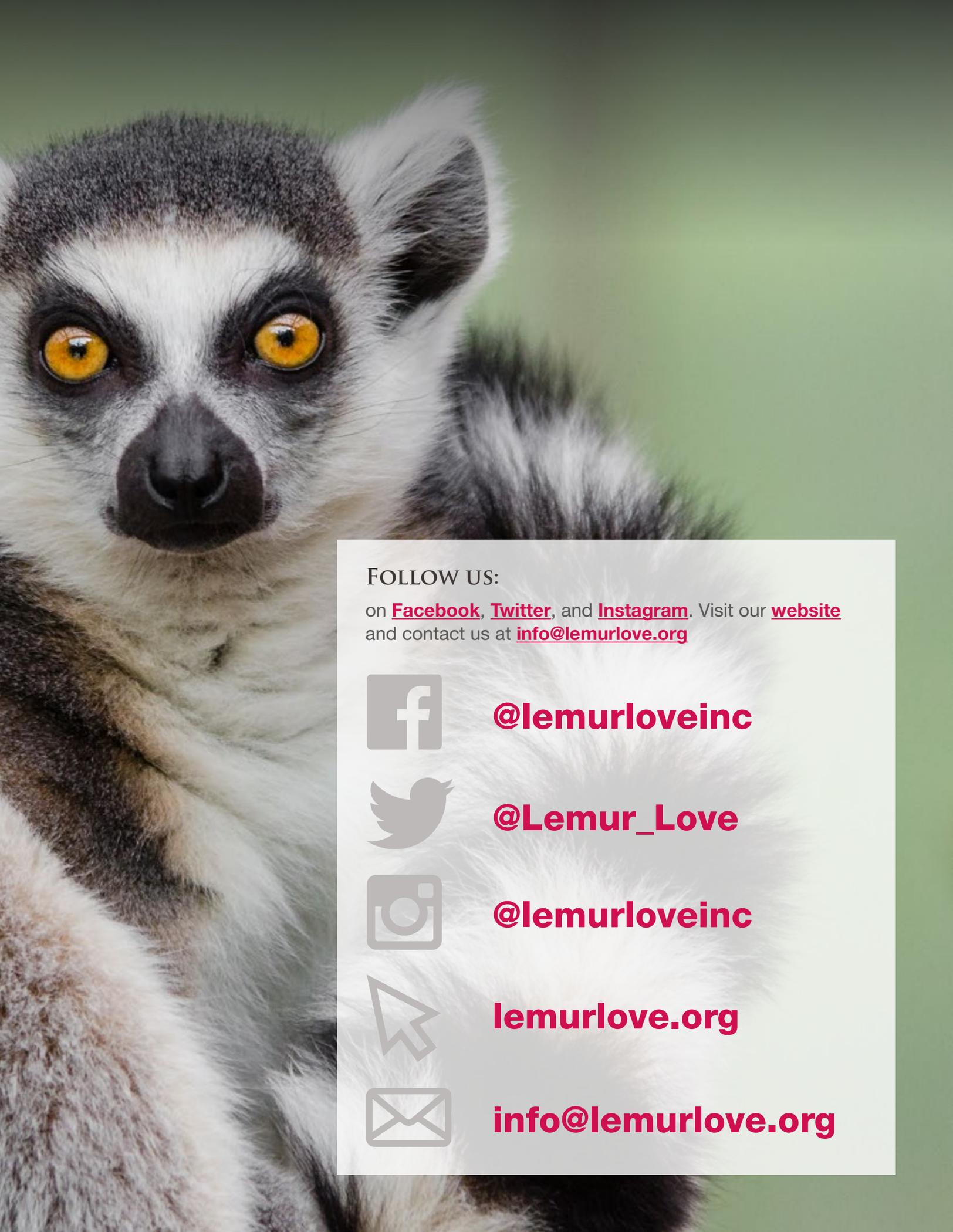
- Dr. Marni LaFleur
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- Ms. Holly Schneider Brown

ADVISORS

- Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy
- Ms. Lynne Venart
- Ms. Lauren Petronaci
- Mdm. Lanto Vonimalala
- Mdm. Angellia Razanadrainy

VOLUNTEERS

- Ms. Sybille Westbrook
- Ms. Andrea Haverland
- Ms. Liz Bonsey



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Lemur Love is a CA (USA) registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN 46-1174853).

Donations to support our research, conservation, and development in Madagascar can be made through PayPal on our website (www.lemurlove.org). Please contact us for alternative ways to donate.

