CANOPY

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Journal of the MSc in Primate Conservation

Bushbaby painting by Joel Stapley
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Canopy

Journal of the Primate Conservation MSc

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Bushbaby painting by Helen Simmons (MSc Primate Conservation cohort 2007/2008)

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Content

Letter from the Editors

Welcome to the 2011 spring edition of Canopy, the in-house journal of the MSc in Primate Conservation at Oxford Brookes University.

This issue is dedicated to one of Oxford Brookes University's finest professors, Simon Bearder, who after 33 years of devoted teaching and hard work will be leaving for retirement. As the founder of the MSc Primate Conservation program, established in 2000, Simon has been teaching at Oxford Brookes University for 33 years, and is one of the world's leading authorities on nocturnal primates. He is one of the coordinators of the Nocturnal Primate Research Group at Oxford Brookes, which is known worldwide for its expertise in this area. He recently co-edited the second edition of the textbook *Primates in Perspective*.

This year's students have been hard at work preparing to carry out their MSc thesis projects, many of which are based in the field. Studies include an extensive range of topics in 14 countries, from captive care management in the United Kingdom to human-wildlife interactions in India.

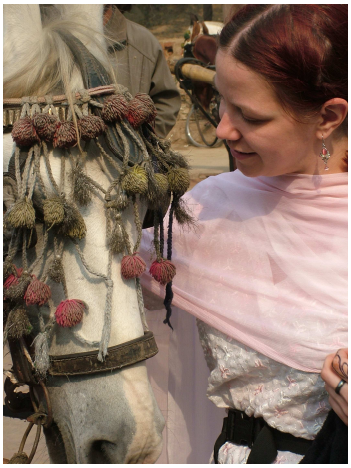
We hope you find this issue informative and inspiring. Thank you!

Best Wishes,

The Editors

Clockwise from top left: Julia, Sofia, Harry, Aoife, Rebecca, Magdalena & Allison.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to Magdalena Svensson, our student support coordinator, who has been extremely helpful and encouraging throughout the duration of this program.



Letter from the Course Tutor

Welcome by Dr. Anna Nekaris

Eleven years of modules, more than 300 students from more than 60 countries with an MSc in hand have studied half the world's primate species throughout most of their geographic range. All of this started as the dream of one man – Professor Simon Bearder – who will be retiring this year after 33 years service to Oxford Brookes University. An MSc in Primate Conservation? What sort of strange person would be attracted to such a specialised course? It would never take off the ground! It would be bound to fail! A course about monkeys? That caused a lot of giggles…but giggle they may. The MSc in Primate Conservation became the flagship course for conservation of the University, and a flagship course for the nation, receiving in 2007 the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Excellence in Higher Education, and its success was in no small part due to the enthusiasm, perseverance and dedication of Professor Bearder. Who was to know that primates – the order to which we ourselves belong – and conservation – a timely topic when global warming, oil shortages and global disasters streak across our headlines – would meet to formulate for eleven years passionate groups of students who would go on to be leaders in their field, and to change for the better the future of primates?

2010-2011 has proven no different and our MSc in Primate Conservation goes from strength to strength. Welcoming scholars not only from the UK, but from the Netherlands, the USA, Malaysia, Sweden, Nepal, Ireland, India, and Spain, our students have exerted their passion for conservation through practical coursework and field trips to the Cotswolds Wildlife Park, Apenheul, Wild Futures, Primate Society of Great Britain Meetings and not to forget our weekly seminar series. We have seen three MSc alumni complete PhDs – Dr Graham Wallace, Dr Angela Maldonado and Dr Matthew McClennan. We also have had other research students in primate conservation complete their degrees, providing support and inspiration to the MSc programme including Dr Ente Rood and Dr Josiah Razafindramanana, and Rachel Munds completing an MPhil in Primate Conservation. Several students from past cohorts have published their work in the past year including Camille Coudrat, Tim Eppley, Marie Hamard, Sophie Yang Martinez, Richard Moore, Magdalena Svensson, Johanna Rode, Lara Rogers, and Juliet Wright. Alumni working in their own conservation NGOs have also gone from strength to strength. Notably, Sam and Noga Shanee's Neotropical Primate Conservation in Peru was selected this year to be supported by the Primate Society of Great Britain's Conservation Working Party's conservation fund.

We have always been asked how can we have so many students wanting to save primates? Well we must always ask—then why are primates still in danger of disappearing? I believe one of Professor Bearder's tenets that has always made our course work is that there can never be too many people in the world who want to save it. I wish each of this year's cohort the best of luck with their final projects as they move off to the field, the lab, to schools and to zoos. Every one of them has a part to weave in the delicate fabricate of primate conservation, be it ever so small.

Dr. Anna Nekaris
Reader in Biological Anthropology, Course Tutor, MSc Primate Conservation

Accolades for Simon Bearder

By Aoife McQuinn
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Aoife Healy, holding 'Monks' an orphaned vervet monkey in her care who was subsequently successfully integrated into a troop.

A few weeks into the MSc, after one too many lectures on just how doomed the planet is, and why various attempts at helping had failed, I went to talk to Simon, because, to me, he is a force of positivity and that's what I needed. Simon told me what he felt conservationists were like – a few lemmings trying with all their might to convince the rest of the horde to stop in their sprint to the edge of the cliff…a few lemmings that just may be pushed right over that edge with the others. You may wonder how this was the positivity I was looking for. He said that maybe all we are doing is monitoring species loss. But, one day when people realise what we do and do come to us, that we will have a lot to say and masses of data with which to back it up. This did make me feel better and made me want to know as much as I could so that when someone asks me one day how to make it better I'll have plenty to say.

Simon and I have had many interesting conversations about taxonomy, vervets and bushbabies (of course). He always encourages his students and I was delighted to have him as my supervisor. I am now trying to publish my dissertation and am very excitedly hoping to begin a PhD next January. Simon – Thanks for the encouragement and the chats and always smiling so much!

Daniel Huertas

Simon was my supervisor during the first year of the MSc course. He was calm, supportive and always positive, even in the face of 'student thesis stress'. He was unflappable even though I had to change from Guinea Conakry to Gambia a few weeks before departure to the field, and when half my research site was burnt in a bush fire days before my departure....."you can make it work!"...and we did. These experiences prepared me for a career in natural history television production. I worked for the BBC Natural History Unit before joining an independent production company called Icon Films. I am currently working as an Assistant Producer on a show for Animal Planet and feel as if I have my dream job. Completing the MSc gave me a huge amount of self confidence, after a pretty mediocre school innings. Studying under Simon showed me how to be positive in the face of adversity, to keep self motivated when things get tough and that being open and sharing information really is the way forward. Thank you Simon.

John Matkin

Starting an MSc can be quite daunting; particularly if you're not from a scientific background. I met Simon when I attended an Open Day for the course back in 2007- it was clear he had a passion for his subject matter, but perhaps of equal importance a keen interest and remarkable skill for educating others. It was enough to send me home sure that I wanted to enrol on the course, which I duly did the following year.

Having a lecturer as approachable and friendly as Simon helps keep you motivated and problems can be easily solved giving you the confidence to go out there and find your own area of interest, as I did when I spent a very memorable summer in various zoos studying king colobus monkeys.

Continuing on from my time at Brookes today I'm working in conservation and based in the UK- happily conducting lots of practical work, frequent educational work and occasional scientific fieldwork!

Magdalena Svensson, holding a night monkey about to be released again after a routine health check.

I enrolled on the Primate Conservation MSc in 2007 with a keen interest in conservation but with limited knowledge of primates. I had never thought of nocturnal research before I came to Brookes, but Professor Simon Bearder, along with Dr. Anna Nekaris, soon persuaded me to join "the dark side" with their passion and enthusiasm for nocturnal primates. For my MSc project I went to Panama to study night monkeys and Simon ended up being my supervisor. I could not have gotten a more helpful and encouraging supervisor! One of the things I remember most is going to Simon's office feeling worried or stressed but after talking to him over cups of tea I would leave every time feeling happy and like everything was going to be alright, even in the incredibly stressful time of the dissertation write up. I am now back at Oxford Brookes working as the Student Support Coordinator for the MSc Primate Conservation and often my job involves working with and helping Simon. It is an honour to both have studied under and working with Simon. He is one of the kindest and most inspiring people I met and I am truly happy to have him as a friend, role model and a college. Thank you Simon and I hope I get to work with you more in the future!

Gavin Boyland

It was not long after I arrived at Oxford Brookes that I was first struck by Simon's infectious passion and knowledge. By year three I was hooked for life. I truly believe that it is Simon's interest in how media can aid conservation that has guided my career.

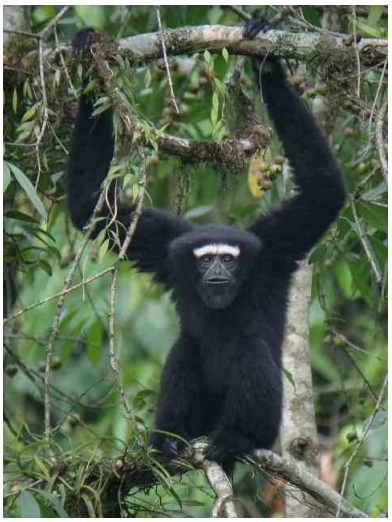
After a short period watching lemurs, I thought it was about time I got on with it. After gaining some experience I was lucky enough to land a job at the BBC's Natural History Unit. I've never looked back, and have since been lucky enough to film mountain gorillas (with Sigourney Weaver no less), lemurs and Japanese macaques, amongst many other wonderful experiences.

Simon was huge inspiration whilst I was studying and during my career. I still occasionally pick up the phone to ask the odd tricky question and he is always as open, friendly and helpful as he was when I first knocked on his door as a fresh faced and over eager undergraduate.

Ian Redmond

Don't let Simon Bearder's mild-mannered exterior fool you! Beneath that unassuming, gentle 'Clark Kent' façade is a primatologist super-hero. Simon took on the primatological equivalent of LBJs (the birder's 'little brown jobs') and has shown nocturnal prosimians to be no less fascinating and complex cousins than the bigger and more popular diurnal primates.

Along the way he has built up an award-winning department, a global network of dedicated conservation masters and re-written prosimian taxonomy (more than once!). And yet he remains as down-to-earth and practical as ever, the perennial fieldworker who will eat whatever is available and sleep wherever expedient in order to pursue the goal of studying and protecting primates and their habitat. As he steps down from the helm of the Oxford Brookes Primate Conservation course, I can't wait to see where he will direct his energies next.



The Behavioural Ecology of Western Hoolock Gibbons in a Teak Plantation

By Alice A. Brindle
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The western Hoolock gibbons (*Hoolock* hoolock) of Bangladesh are in trouble. This strictly arboreal species has been reduced to approximately 300 individuals in 22 isolated forest pockets containing populations ranging in size from 2 to 84 individuals. Forest clearance due to logging and agricultural expansion has led to this situation. Some of the remaining populations no longer live in natural forest but instead in agroforests (forests under cultivation) of exotic tree species used for timber such as teak (*Tectona grandis*) and ironwood (*Xylia kerrii*).

Methods

I studied a group of gibbons living inside a teak plantation surrounded by tea estates, rice paddy fields, and houses in Sylhet Division of north eastern Bangladesh. My goal was to compare the group's feeding ecology and activity patterns to those reported for gibbons living inside protected areas of natural and regenerating forest. I also studied the group's microhabitat use patterns to identify what habitat attributes they preferred during different activities. This allowed me to examine how western hoolock gibbons modify their behaviours to survive in plantations and recommend possible conservation measures to protect populations living in such habitats.

Results and Conclusion

The gibbons of the teak plantation rested more, fed less, sang on fewer days, and ranged over a smaller area than groups living in protected forests. They also preferred using the forest's interior over edge habitat. These results suggest the gibbons may have modified their behaviours in response to the human disturbances in and around the plantation because they displayed similar behaviours to those reported for other primate species affected by logging and agricultural encroachment. Consequently, gibbons living in fragmented plantation habitats would most likely benefit from conservation efforts aimed to protect important gibbon feeding and sleeping trees from being harvested, to grow forest corridors between fragments, and to provide local people with alternatives to illegal resource collection within plantations.

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Exploring Capacity of Eco-Hotels for the Conservation of the Sri Lankan Grey Langur (*Semnopithecus priam thersites*) Through a Study of Ranging and Feeding Behaviour

By Alice Martin
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Sri Lanka is one of Asia's most biodiversity rich countries and alongside the Western Ghats, has been classified as one of the world's 25 biodiversity hotspots. Sadly this assemblage of unique flora and fauna is under threat, with less than 5% of vegetation cover surviving the last 200 years (Pethiyagoda, 2005). Sri Lanka continues to witness the highest rate of habitat loss of all countries in South Asia, and contains the most rapidly growing population of the biodiversity hotspots (Cincotta *et al*. 2000). With little natural forest remaining, companies owning large plots of land, like hotels, are beginning to play a more prominent role in offering long-term protected areas to wildlife, including primates (Erdelen, 1988). Yet this forces primates into close proximity with humans, exacerbating the potential for negative interactions and conflict.

Methods

I employed a multi-faceted study to investigate how tourism initiatives can be tailored towards conserving Sri Lanka's endemic primate taxa, with an emphasis on the Endangered Sri Lankan grey langur (*Semnopithecus priam thersites*) (Nameer *et al*. 2008). The temporal and spatial use of hotel grounds by two groups of *S. p. thersites* were investigated employing the Ranges 8 software for 100% Minimal Convex Polygon (MCP) and 95% and 20% Kernel analyses. Behavioural observations of feeding activities were recorded employing instantaneous scan samples at 15 minute intervals (Altmann, 1974).

Results

Results suggest that home ranges are small and primarily confined to the hotel grounds. MCP created larger home ranges of approximately 20 ha for both groups due to the inclusion of outlying fixes and rarely visited areas within the range (Pimley *et al*. 2005). Kernel cores of 95% generated smaller home ranges between 14 and 16 ha. As Kernel analysis provides information on the temporal use of home ranges, 20% cores were employed to identify areas of high-use. Four areas were identified ranging between 0.4 and 1 ha. Home ranges overlapped extensively. Both groups were primarily seed predators, actively biting, crunching and swallowing seeds. Seeds constituted up to 36% of diet. Young and mature leaves were the second and third most utilised food items. *Semnopithecus p. thersites* fed on 28 vegetation families, comprising of 64 species. Ten heavily exploited tree species were identified for each group.

Conclusions

Home ranges for *Semnopithecus* species are reported to range between 10 and 106 ha. Non-human primates who occupy tourist areas often occupy small areas that result in increased intra-group aggression, food competition and infant mortality (Berman & Li, 2002).

Following the identification of four cores areas I propose that guided tours and education material are instigated in these areas to promote conservation messages and provide a controlled environment to ensure the safety and welfare of both human and non-human primates. As seed predators, *S. p. thersites* are likely to contribute little to habitat heterogeneity, as seeds will not be able to survive the fermented digestive system characteristic of colobine primates (Davies, 1991). Analysis of feeding behaviour identified five vegetation species that can be planted on-site to maintain resources, enhance habitat quality and to act as food lures away from man-made structures. As *Semnopithecus* species' ranges and diets are seasonally variable (Hladik, 1977) further research is required to refine tourism recommendations. This study indicates the potential for private sector industries to promote conservation within Sri Lanka and elsewhere.

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The Effect of Food Presentation on the Feeding Behaviour and Activity Levels of Captive Black and White Colobus (*Colobus guereza*)

By Nicola Smith
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Research in zoos is becoming more important as many wild species of primate are becoming even more threatened by the actions of humans. Primates have been kept in captive settings for hundreds of years, and through time their husbandry and care has dramatically improved. However, some primate species are still unable to be kept in captivity, mainly due to their highly specialised dietary needs (Oates & Davies, 1994). As zoological establishments, today, play a more educational and conservational role, they need to provide their visitors with a positive experience (Hargrove, 1995). Animals on display need to behave in as natural a way as possible, and be provided with a natural environment and diet, so the public can be educated about their natural behaviours and needs (Hosey, 2005).

Colobus species are notoriously difficult to maintain successfully in captivity. However, Black and white colobus (*Colobus guereza*) seem to cope relatively well, and are a popular choice of primate species for zoos in the UK. Considering their classification as a 'leaf-eating' primate (Oates & Davies, 1994), captive diets mainly consist of vegetables and some fruits. As there are no specific nutrition recommendations available for colobus species in captivity (Smuga, 2002), it is no surprise that many individuals have health problems, such as obesity and gastrointestinal disease (Goodchild & Schwitzer, 2008).

My study looked at two groups of captive *C. guereza*, 4 individuals housed at Colchester Zoo (Essex) and 10 individuals at Banham Zoo (Norfolk). Each group was fed very similar diets, consisting of mainly vegetables, with fresh browse given regularly. However, the group at Colchester was provided with whole foods, whereas the Banham group was given their food chopped. I investigated whether these two different food presentation techniques had any effect on the feeding behaviour or activity levels of the two groups of *C. guereza*.

Results indicated that there was no significant difference in the amount of time the two groups spent foraging, when fed using the two different feeding methods. However, there was a significant difference in the amount of time spent feeding, with the group at Banham spending considerably more time feeding than the group at Colchester. The group fed on whole food did display some aggressive behaviours at feeding times, but this only occurred on 2-3 occasions, so could be due to individual personality, rather than the feeding method used. Activity levels were also significantly higher in the group fed on chopped food. The group at Banham spent significantly more time moving around their enclosure than the *C. guereza* at Colchester. The juveniles at Banham Zoo also spent significantly more time playing with each other, whereas the *C. guereza* at Colchester spent more time grooming each other. These differences in types of affiliative behaviours performed could be due to the differences in group size and social structure

of the two study samples. As group size and enclosure design differed in each establishment, it is possible that these factors could instead be responsible for the results obtained, rather than the different feeding methods themselves. Overall results suggest that neither of the feeding methods has considerably more advantages for use in captive *C. guereza* than the other, and that either method could be used successfully, providing it was managed correctly.

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Ring-tailed lemur by Lucy Radford
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A Comparative Feeding Ecology of Two Cercopithecine Species – *Cercopithecus mona* and *Cercocebus torquatus torquatus*.

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red-capped mangabey

mona monkey

A study investigating the feeding ecology of two Cercopithecine species – the mona monkey (*Cercopithecus mona)* and the red-capped mangabey (*Cercocebus torquatus torquatus)* was undertaken in Rhoko Forest, Cross River State, Nigeria. The project was based at the field research centre of the conservation NGO and charity CERCOPAN (Centre for Education, Research & Conservation of Primates and Nature) in the Iko Esai Community Forest.

The aims of the project were to:

- To gain experience of observing and recording dietary behaviours of Cercopithecine primates.
- To contribute useful information to the conservation community regarding the little studied subject species.
- To compliment and aid the ongoing research projects at CERCOPAN, Cross river State, Nigeria.
- To explore ways in which the provisioned subjects (*C. mona* and *C. t. torquatus* groups) exploit additional resources for supplementary nutrition.
- To explore what differences in food resource exploitation or foraging strategies between the two subject species, and between demographic groups within the species groups.
- If differences are found between the age and sex groups, do these differences represent a response to specific and distinct nutritional pressures that the subgroup would be subject to?
- To investigate whether the diets of *C. mona* and *C. t. torquatus* conform with predictions based on the Jarman/Bell model of the relationship between body size and metabolism, and thus diet.

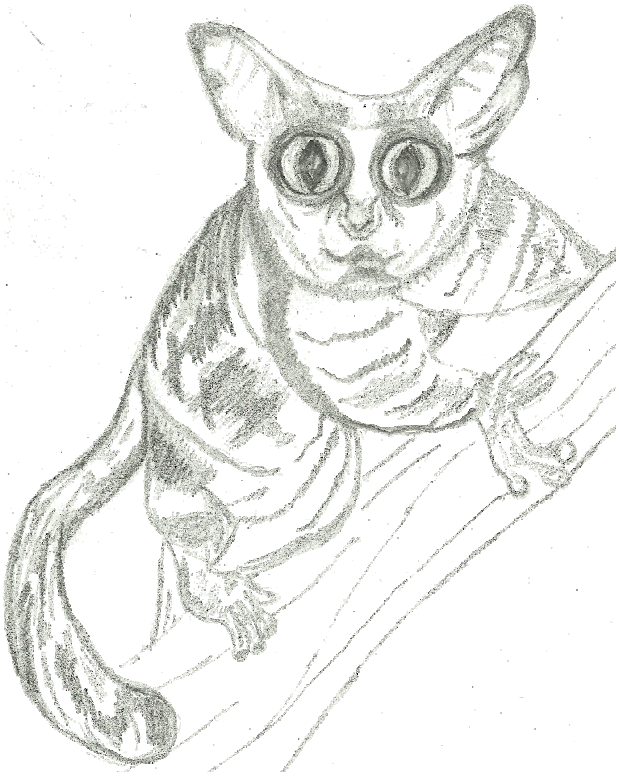
Methodology

Over 90 hours of behavioural observation were conducted spread between the two subject species using 10 minute focal animal samples. Data were collected on the general and feeding behaviours to gain insight into the dietary composition and quality of the two species. 882 wild food samples

were collected from the local forest and presented to the monkeys as wild food tests, to compare each species dietary limits, variability and preferences. Data recorded included, food type (fruit, flower, bud, seed, bark, etc,) vegetation type (shrub, tree, climber etc.), species name (if known). Provisioned food preference tests were also conducted on the *C. mona* and *C. t. torquatus* groups.

Results

There was a significant difference between both the overall diets of the subject species (based on the total time each species spent feeding on each food type within the enclosures) and well as significant difference between the two species propensity for eating wild food samples: Mangabeys ate a wider range of food types, and had a lower overall quality diet than the mona monkeys. *C. t. torquatus* diet consisted of 53.6% of structural plant parts (monas=6.8%), 34.9% reproductive parts of plants (monas=31.1%) and 3.9% animal matter (monas=61.9%). These results conform to the predictions afforded but the Jarman/Bell model of body size and metabolism, which put simply states: energetic requirements of animals are a positive function of body size in that the metabolic rate of animals increases with body size, but at a decreasing rate. Although large animals have greater overall energetic requirements, less energy is actually required per unit of body mass. Therefore, large animals can survive on a lot of low quality food whereas small bodied animals can subsist of high energy but sparsely distributed foods such as insects.



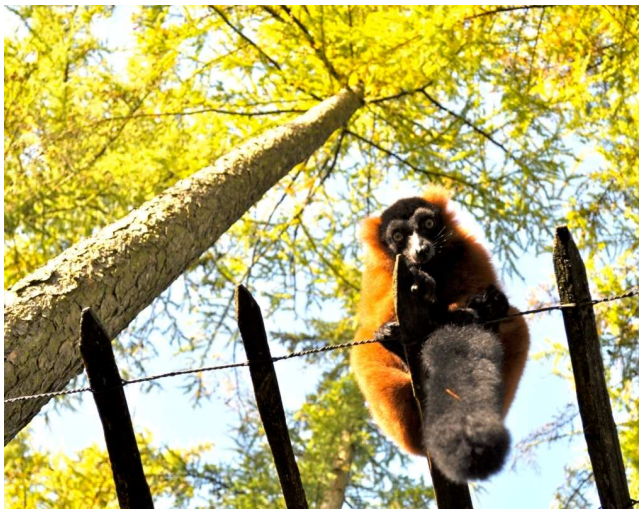
Bushbaby drawing by Rebecca Bernard
r_barnard@hotmail.co.uk

Apenheul Photo Competition Winners

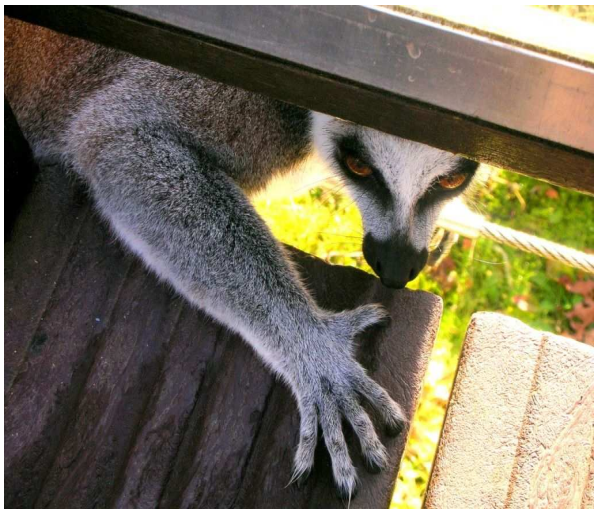
In October 2010 the current cohort of MSc students visited Apenheul Primate Park in Apeldoorn, The Netherlands. Apenheul opened in 1971 with free roaming primates able to mingle with the visitors. The Apenheul Foundation supports environmental education and in-situ conservation projects and has become an important position in the international zoo community.

There were many opportunities for photographs at the centre of which we took full advantage. A competition was organized by student support coordinator Mandy Archer for the best photographs taken over the weekend, judged by professional photographer Warwick Upton. The photos were of superb quality and there were so many great entries, making judging the competition very challenging. We hereby present the winners of the competition – well done all!

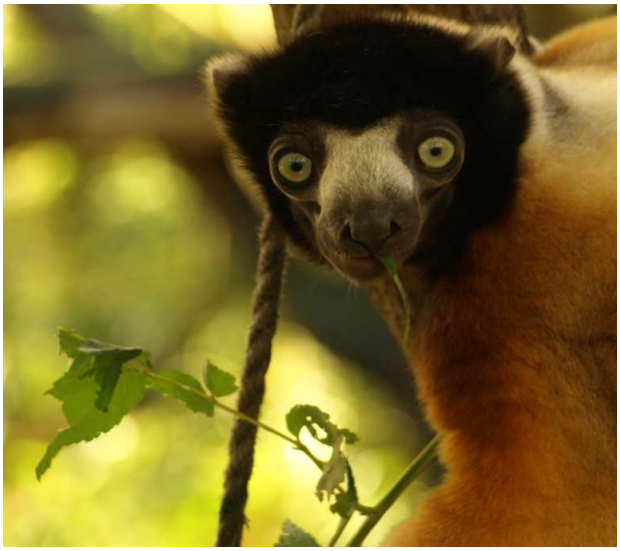
First Prize: Allison Hanes
Red-ruffed lemur (*Varecia variegata*)



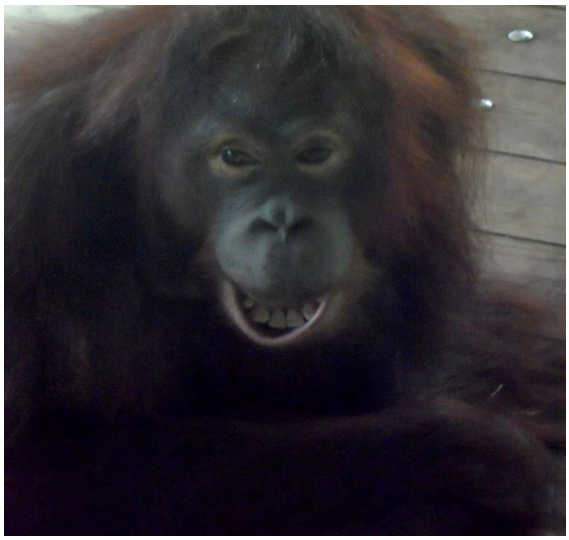
Second Prize: Beth Richards
Ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*)

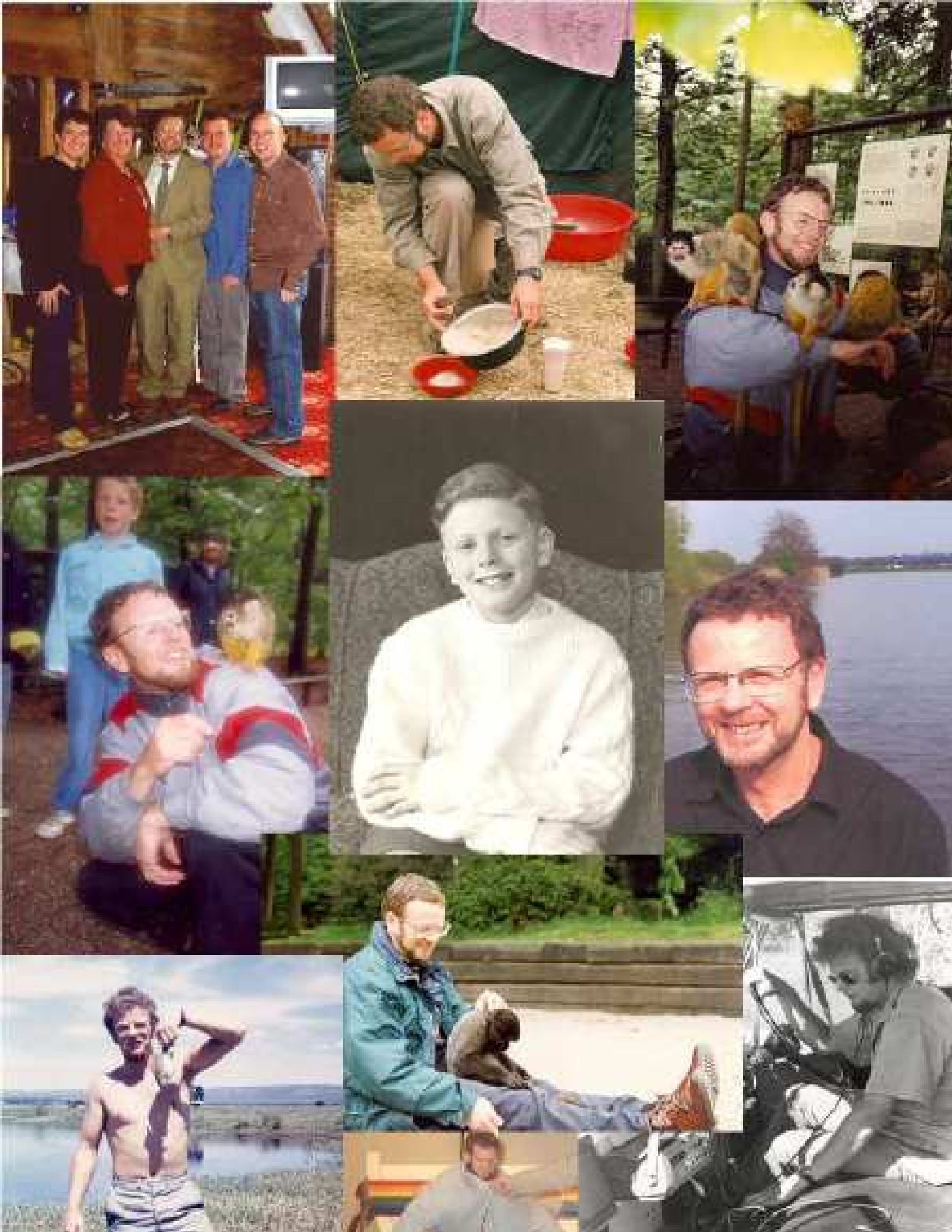


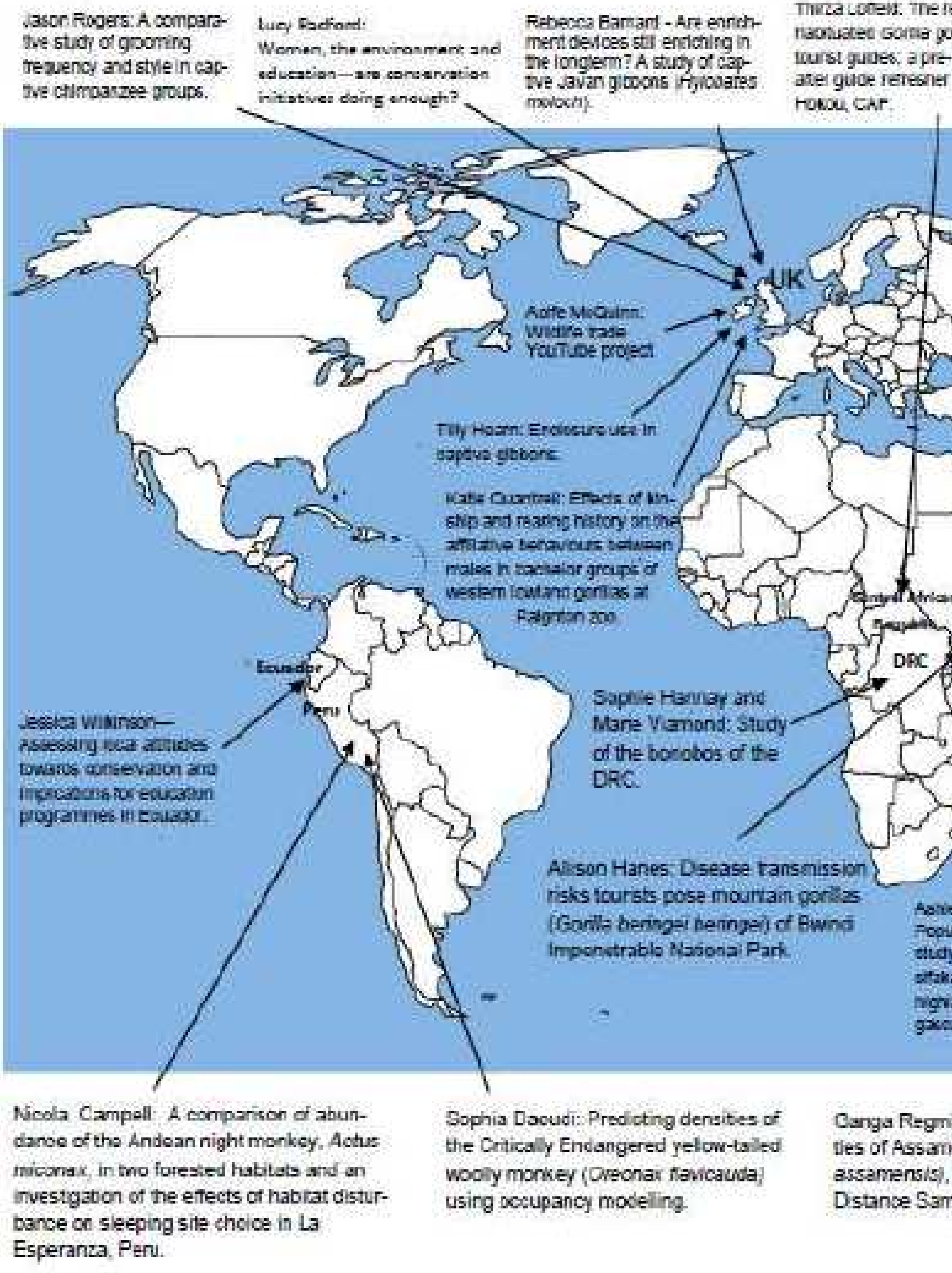
Third Prize: Sofia Yang Martinez
Crowned sifaka (*Propithecus coronatus*)

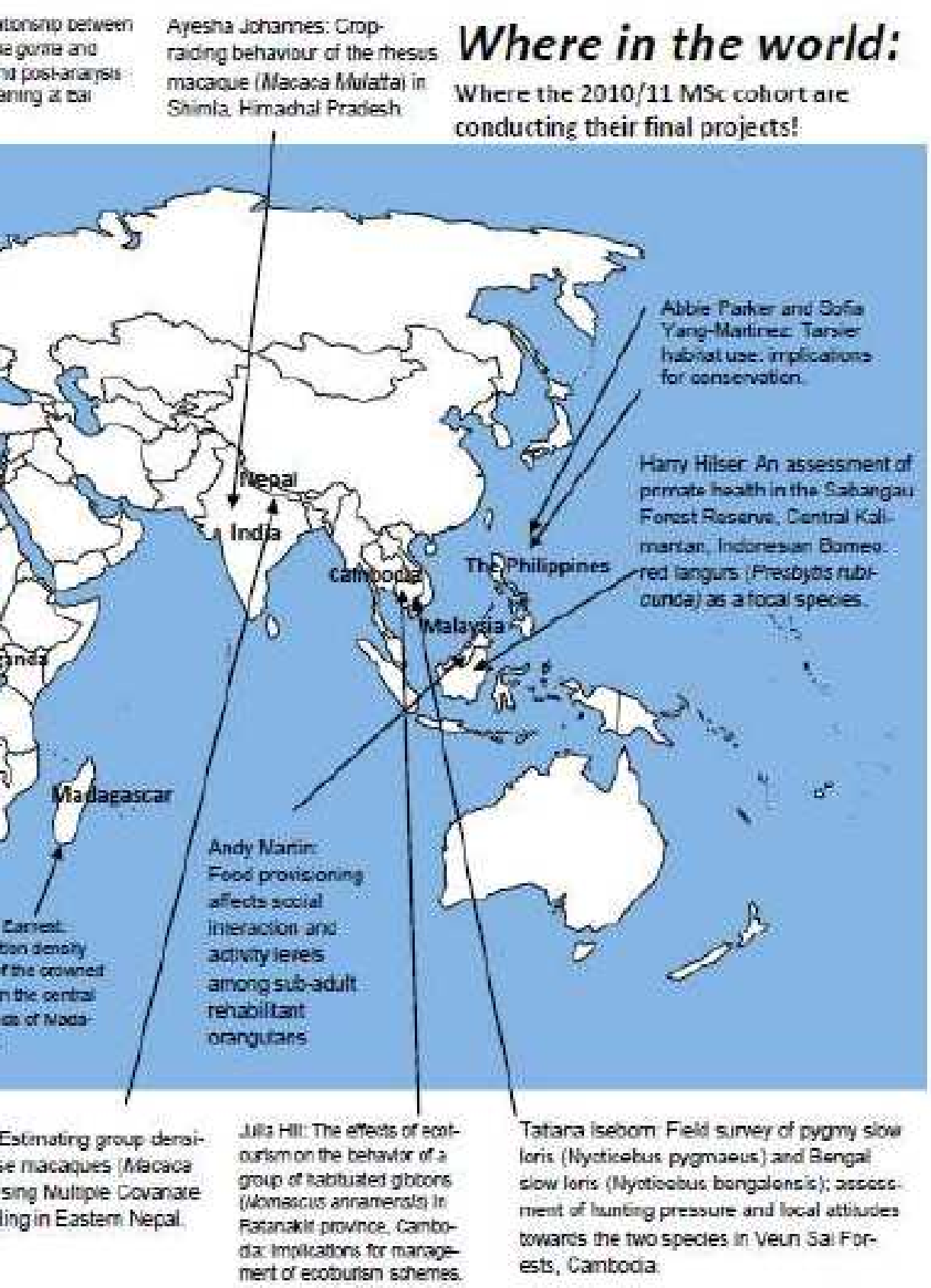


Funniest Picture Prize: Jessica Hone
Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*)






Jason Rogers: A comparative study of grooming frequency and style in captive chimpaszee groups.
Lucy Radford:
Women, the environment and education—are conservation initiatives doing enough?
Rebecca Barnard - Are enrichment devices still enriching in the longterm? A study of captive Javan gibbons (Hylobates moloch).
UK
Aoife McQuinn: Wildlife trade YouTube project
Tilly Hoarn: Enclosure use in captive gibbons.
Katie Quantrell: Effects of kinship and rearing history on the affiliative behaviours between males in bachelor groups of western lowland gorillas at Paignton zoo.
Ecuador
Peru
Jessica Wilkinson—Assessing local attitudes towards conservation and implications for education programmes in Ecuador.
DRC
Sophie Hannay and Marie Viamond: Study of the bonobos of the DRC.
Allison Hanes: Disease transmission risks tourists pose mountain gorillas (Gorilla beringei beringei) of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.
Nicola Campell: A comparison of abundance of the Andean night monkey, Aotus miconax, in two forested habitats and an investigation of the effects of habitat disturbance on sleeping site choice in La Esperanza, Peru.
Sophia Daoudi: Predicting densities of the Critically Endangered yellow-tailed woolly monkey (Oreonax flavicauda) using occupancy modelling.


Where in the world:
Where the 2010/11 MSc cohort are conducting their final projects!
Ayesha Johannes: Crop-raiding behaviour of the rhesus macaque (Macaca Mulatta) in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh
Abbie Parker and Sofia Yang-Martinez: Tarsier habitat use: implications for conservation
Harry Hilser: An assessment of primate health in the Sabangau Forest Reserve, Central Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo - red langurs (Presbytis rubicunda) as a focal species.
Nepal
India
Cambodia
The Philippines
Malaysia
Madagascar
Andy Martin: Food provisioning affects social interaction and activity levels among sub-adult rehabilitant orangutans
Julia Hill: The effects of ecotourism on the behavior of a group of habituated gibbons (Nomascus annamensis) in Ratanakiri province, Cambodia: Implications for management of ecotourism schemes.
Tatiana Iseborn: Field survey of pygmy slow loris (Nycticebus pygmaeus) and Bengal slow loris (Nycticebus bengalensis); assessment of hunting pressure and local attitudes towards the two species in Veun Sai Forests, Cambodia.








An interview with Prof. Simon Bearder

By Allison Hanes
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Primate Society of Great Britain winter meeting 2010 (Dr .Jane Goodall, Allison Hanes, Prof. Simon Bearder)

What are some of your most memorable experiences within your career? As an educator?

The most memorable times within my career have been when I was in very isolated areas for long periods of time. One instance I was working alone at night in the forest with no people for three weeks in Africa having only two litres of water a day. There was no water supply and that was why there were no people there. It was very exciting. There were leopards, bush babies, and one time this large animal I still am not sure of today, I think could have been a genet. Very remote places are very exciting and also a bit scary. As an educator it is the feedback of the students. There was a student lead society (at Oxford Brookes) named in my honour, which was amazing. It was called the "Simon Bearder Appreciation Society", a very unusual thing and a highlight of my career. It is very rewarding, teachers often like the feedback. Relationships with my students has been very important, receiving good feedback is very rewarding to me.

What made you decide to become an educator and start the MSc in Primate Conservation?

I decided because of mainly having the time. I think we often have great ideas but don't have the time. I was the Deputy of Social Sciences and Law for four years because I had to but then following this position I had a lot more time to concentrate on research and teaching. We had always wanted to set up a postgraduate course as well. The conservation idea came from working at Durrell (DICE). I knew young people were keen to protect last remaining wildlife and to do conservation and knew it would be popular. I worked at the Jersey Zoo every summer for ten years as an educator as the summer school director or leader. I knew there would be an interest and a market in conservation and because primatology courses were also popular at Oxford Brookes, we combined the primates and conservation.

You have told us you were very shy and never planned on teaching, was becoming a formal educator challenging for you?

Yes, it is very challenging. I had a deep fear of standing up in front of people and every time you stand up you have that fear. You practice hard and put a huge amount of effort. It did not come naturally but I was excited about having a job, it got me started and it was quite liberating even if it wasn't natural. When you have to do something you do it. I'd write out every sentence for a lecture in the beginning until it became more natural. The amount of effort you put into it you reap the benefits in return.

What will you miss most?

I intend to concentrate and do a lot of research so I will not miss that. I will miss my immediate colleagues and students and miss the feedback. I will miss the staff within the institution, meeting a lot of people and being encouraged to do research and teaching the things I love. There is a lot of encouragement to do the things I love.

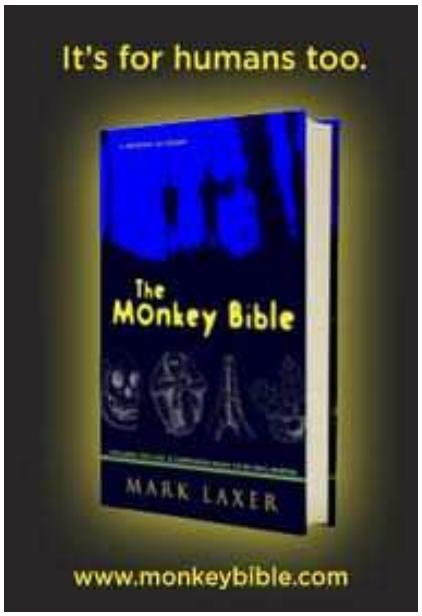
What is your favourite primate species? Non-primate animal?
I think the leopard. I don't have one primate favourite, the animals I have studied I have grown to love. I have many favourite primate species not just nocturnal primates and never intended to be a primatologist. I was interested in all plants and animals, I could have been a botanist or zoologist. I know many other fields and have been examined in many fields such as botany etc… I have somehow narrowed it down to nocturnal animals. I studied hyenas for a while. Hyenas are nocturnal so I saw many leopards and I grew to love them.
What is your favourite book?
There are so many but recently I keep recommending Baboon Metaphysics. It tells you so much about animal communication in one of the best-studied primates and helps you get into the mind of another species probably more than any other book.
What are your plans after this last year of teaching at Oxford Brookes University?
Research, but also to reinvent myself in some other way, not to dwell on what I have been doing up until now but do something new and be healthy. My ultimate aim is to carry out research and I would like to carry out field work until I am 80 for about 15 more years. I would like to do a lot of exercise, more than I do now. I go to the gym, swim and cycle now. I am still considering to cycle across the United States for about three months.

Bushbaby drawing by Hellen B
rasta.hellen@gmail.com

Do you still rock climb?
I haven't done much recently but a couple of years ago with my sons at Brookes climbing wall. It is better to go with a partner to go on the ropes so since they have been gone I do not go as much. I like how it gets you fit quickly because you don't want to fall off; you have to work at it in order to stay on the rock.
Any plans for travel?
Travelling is always difficult because of the carbon footprint. However, having worked in Africa there are ten sites I am interested in. They are key sites with specific research questions such as unidentified species and some in dangerous areas. Ideally I would like to live in Africa again. My wife is a member of The European Parliament so I can work in Africa but not all the time. I would like to go back and clear up some research questions. For instance we found pygmy species living by another and that needs to be further investigated. Perhaps I can go once for a long time to reduce my carbon footprint.
Perhaps on a bike?
Yes, perhaps on a bike!
What is one place you have not been to yet and would really like to visit?
Again Africa, but this is a really hard one. I would like to see tarsiers. I think the place I would most like to go would probably be the DRC where the bonobos are located and the Sudan, both areas to see nocturnal primates. Mainly because I haven't been, they seem like interesting places and I have students there. I already have worked in 18 countries in Africa so to visit more countries in Africa would be really rewarding and I would learn a lot going back. African people are very friendly.
What is your favourite hobby outside of work? Will you be doing more of that?
Exercise is my hobby and don't mind what kind of exercise. I usually don't go for organized sports but individual sports like running and swimming, like 1-2 person small groups or alone.
What is your advice to new primatologists, conservationists, biologists, and anthropologists in this interdisciplinary field?
To collaborate! So much more needs to be done even if the course recruited ten times as many people. Try not to fight and find your own interest, find your own ecological niche. If you are interested in conservation try to help instead of fighting. If you are interested in conservation try to help each other and work together. Also avoid duplicating work by collaborating, develop your own areas, there is plenty to be done! At the beginning of a career some feel threatened because there are so many other primatologists, out there but there is a lot to share. Even repeating work is not a bad thing; you can do it in a different way or add to it. Training and experience is very important, to participate and do things will always be helpful in your career.
Anything you would like to say to wrap up the interview?
When I look back on 33 years at the university I think I've been very happy here. I think university life is an amazing way of life that enables you to think about almost anything under the sun, because you have academic freedom to discuss and think about anything, and no matter how controversial or crazy those ideas may be you are allowed to develop those ideas. I think academic freedom is the most important ingredient.

Book Review
Mark Laxer, The Monkey Bible

By Harry Hilser
hhilser@yahoo.com



I present here a review of the 2010 publication of The Monkey Bible: A Modern Allegory. I have attempted to be honest and critical whilst praising what is actually a thoroughly readable page-turner which develops a strong and innovative underlying message.

This novel from Mark Laxer, author of the popular 1994 new age non-fiction *Take Me for a Ride: coming of age in a destructive cult* presents an imaginative approach to the Creationism vs. Darwinism debate. It follows a journey around the world of a young Christian called Emmanuel, who seeks to discover his origins and help save his primate cousins as he finds out that the story of his creation is not what he had thought it was. An intimate account is portrayed of the relationships Emmanuel has with Lucy, a course-mate who rewrites Genesis from a biological perspective after joining his global adventure, and with Evelyn who believes in his continued faith for the church.

I will begin by expressing that I have mixed feelings about this book. Laxer has cleverly presented an informative, stimulating and colourful account of an emotionally diverse exploration into philosophy, biology and religion. However, flaws are apparent in the narrative and the story loses clarity as you continue through the text, the roots and structure of the tale lacking substance and a vivid framework. Whimsically written with an air almost of neglect for direction and clarity, the character development is loose but maintains mystery throughout. It is a strangely addictive read, leaving one with many questions and yearning for the next stage in the adventure.

The book is accompanied by a CD of music from singer/songwriter Eric Maring. At first listen the light, carefully constructed sounds invite one into what may be expected to be an audible journey of world fusion and contemporary ambience. However, I couldn't avoid gritting my teeth at the soft country-orientated vocals and tacky guitar-led song structures. I apologise for being over-zealous with my criticism, but I just can't shake the sense of idealisation and cheesiness, which in fact unavoidably epitomises the majority of the novel. The tunes are catchy with a wide selection of accompanying instruments, but are perhaps more fitting to a young target audience. The end result is a well-produced and potentially good musical accompaniment, falling short of being listenable.

That's the mean part over. In hindsight, this book is an enjoyable read, written in a playful style with plenty of humour throughout. There are some interesting ideas presented such as Ecotourism and 'Signing the forest' for facilitating habitat protection. Laxer is co-founder and president of Chimp-n-Sea, a conservation organisation based in the US supported by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) with the objective of '*combining conservation science, habitat preservation, education, music and storytelling in innovative and creative ways to protect wildlife'*. The Monkey Bible raises awareness and acts as a platform for the organisation's

objectives, directly supporting and promoting its projects. I admire Laxer's drive and enthusiasm for conservation which is apparent in his writing. I am particularly fond of the Traveller's Circle initiative, also promoted in The Monkey Bible, which is a wildlife and travel storytelling gathering which aims to promote environmental awareness.

Although at times seemingly idealistic, the themes and concepts presented are relevant, topical and intriguing. Lest we forget that ultimately the impetus of this book is one of conservation; fostering support for forest preservation, collaboration of organisations and individuals, environmental awareness and a greater recognition of our interrelatedness throughout our phylogeny. The lessons presented are well-construed and insightful, raising questions about how we treat our fellow primates and the rest of the biodiversity of the planet. The subject Laxer has tackled is a complex and highly controversial one, but I feel he has proposed evidence and arguments sensitively and fairly whilst upholding respect for both parties, attempting to bridge the gap between biology and faith. In supplementation to this novel, might I recommend '*The Creation'* by E.O Wilson for a clearer and more intellectually attentive portrayal of how to marry religion and conservation.

In conclusion The Monkey Bible is a brave approach to an inherently complicated and multifaceted argument which has been taken with sensitivity and which is eloquently formulated. Although at times confusing and misleading, the humour, excitement and simplicity of verse add a fun element to this tale. Certainly worth a read.

Chimp-n-Sea
Wildlife Conservation Fund

www.chimp-n-sea.org : Author's conservation organisation

www.monkeybible.com : Website for the book. Visit for more information on the author, the story and for some interactive elements.

GRASP-ing for Survival

Can the United Nations help save the Great Apes?

Ian Redmond OBE
Ambassador for the UN Year of the Gorilla 2009 and GRASP Envoy

2009 was designated as the UN International Year of the Gorilla. This was a joint campaign by the UNEP Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) with WAZA and GRASP, the UN-led Great Ape Survival Partnership (www.unep.org/grasp). But what is GRASP and how does it work?

How GRASP began

In the closing years of the twentieth century, reports of ape populations in decline caused increasing alarm among conservationists. Not everyone was convinced at first, because broad trends were being extrapolated from patchy data. Many of the reports were anecdotal, and dealt with the fate of individual apes rather than populations; long-term research sites, however, yielded relatively accurate figures over time. Eventually, more and more eyewitness accounts from researchers, conservation field-workers and investigative journalists drew the same conclusion: our closest relatives in the animal kingdom were facing extinction in a matter of decades unless the causes of their decline were addressed.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The causes were, and still are, human activities. Most of these - hunting, logging, agriculture and warfare - have been practiced for millennia at self-evidently sustainable levels. The difference today is one of scale – especially when the activities are driven by international commerce and demand from the developed world for resources such as timber, wood-pulp, palm-oil and minerals from ape habitats. Even natural threats such as disease are being exacerbated by the impact of the modern world on the apes' habitat. If these pressures continue unchecked, local extinctions will increase leading to total extinction in the wild within our lifetime.

Attention was drawn in the 1990s to the rise of the commercial bushmeat trade in Africa linked to expansion of logging concessions into previously inaccessible forests, especially in the Congo basin (Redmond, 1989; Pearce & Ammann, 1995). Bushmeat – the meat of wild animals – varies from caterpillars to elephants. It provides the main source of protein for millions of people, and much of it is legal, though increasingly unsustainable in the face of modern hunting methods and rising demand in urban markets and restaurants. Great apes, however, are protected by law in every one of their 23 range states (countries in which they occur naturally). Unfortunately, wildlife law enforcement and prosecutions are rare in most range states, so this is little deterrent. In addition to direct hunting, apes are also maimed and killed by snares and traps set for other species, even in parts of Africa where ape-meat is not eaten. Moreover, there is also a less well publicized trade in ape body parts (fingers, hair, genitalia, skulls, etc) for use in traditional African medicine. Live infants may be a lucrative by-product of bushmeat hunting or captured on demand. In short, selling apes – dead or alive - is seen as a source of easy money in places with few job opportunities

Similar fears were also being expressed for the orangutans of Borneo and Sumatra. There, the main threat was the loss and degradation of habitat from logging – much of it illegal - and conversion of forest to agriculture, coupled with the killing of crop-raiding adults and the capture of infants for the illegal wild animal trade (see for example Galdikas, 1995; Rijksen & Meijaard, 1999).

In both Africa and South-east Asia, the very visible and photogenic problem of confiscated orphan apes drew the attention of the world's media, but less attention was given to addressing the underlying causes that brought these orphans into human care. Shocking images (especially photographs by Karl Ammann) and a growing body of independent evidence galvanized many primatologists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) into action. Among the many initiatives worldwide, the Ape Alliance was convened in 1996 as an international coalition of NGOs and individuals working for the welfare and conservation of all apes (www.4apes.com). Its first bushmeat report painted a bleak picture for African apes and made recommendations for governments, NGOs and timber companies (Ape Alliance 1998). The Bushmeat Crisis Task Force was established in the USA (www.bushmeat.org) and became a source of reliable information for policy makers (see for example BCTF, 2000). A prominent group of scientists surveyed all great ape research sites and revealed that 96 per cent of them were recording declines (Marshall *et al*. 2000). They successfully lobbied the US government for support, resulting in the establishment of the Great Ape Conservation Fund. In Japan, primatologists raised awareness and funds though annual conferences and lectures organized by SAGA – Support for African and Asian Great Apes (www.saga-jp.org/indexe.html). But the decline seemed to worsen as new factors emerged – Ebola outbreaks in Africa and forest fires in Borneo and Sumatra linked to illegal logging and clearance for oil palm plantations.

A Global Strategy

What was needed, it seemed, was a global strategy that unified and coordinated the many disparate efforts, a strategy that all concerned helped to develop and implement. Discussion of such a strategy grew out of Ape Alliance meetings and was the subject of an international workshop in Mweka College of Wildlife Management, Tanzania, in December 2000 (Redmond & Abe, 2002). The rationale was that a global strategy would give cohesion to the existing work of many agencies, organisations and individuals. It was hoped that each would gain by seeing their work in the context of a whole that was greater than the sum of the parts, whilst respecting all that they were doing; it should also enable resources to be applied more effectively and identify neglected areas.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was approached by the Ape Alliance in April 2000, seeking a high-level intervention, inspired by the precedent of the UN Special Envoy for Rhinoceros Conservation being appointed by UNEP when rhino populations were facing a similar catastrophic decline in the early 1990s. After broad consultation amongst interested parties, UNEP launched GRASP, the Great Ape Survival Project, in 2001, inviting each government to designate a Focal Point and begin preparing a national policy document to guide decisions relating to apes or their habitat. The following year at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, with the help of UNESCO, GRASP became a 'Type II Partnership' bringing together UN bodies, conventions, governments, NGOs, academics and the private sector (so far mainly eco-tourism companies that take people to see apes in the wild).

Early efforts were hampered by lack of funds, but strove to build the partnership and win support among local communities. Links to sustainable development were critical because 16 of the 23 great ape countries are 'Least Developed Countries' - defined by the UN as having a per capita income of under $800 per annum. Clearly, the message must get through that great apes (and their habitats) are great assets. Some countries are already well aware of this. In Uganda for example, tourism is now the largest earner of foreign exchange, and 20 per cent of ape-viewing permit fees are shared with surrounding communities. This 'gorilla and chimpanzee money' from 20,000 visitors per year has paid for 181 community projects, including new clinics, schools, community centres, maize mills, water projects and roads, and created a positive attitude to protected areas hitherto coveted for agriculture. With hotels and other services, over 70,000 jobs have been created and altogether, tourism brings on average approximately US$ 300 million dollars per year into the country according to the Uganda Wildlife Authority. But tourism also brings new risks to apes, such as the potential for disease transmission between visitors and the apes, and easier poaching of habituated individuals. Moreover, tourism revenues can shrivel in the event of war or political unrest, and more than half of great ape range states have seen such upheavals in recent decades. Clearly it won't necessarily work everywhere, but where it has worked it has made a huge difference on many levels.

Nevertheless, as a result of GRASP efforts, there is now a high-level commitment to ensure great apes do survive. This is encapsulated in the 2005 Kinshasa Declaration and Global Strategy, signed by 30 governments and all the relevant UN bodies, NGO partners and a few private sector interests. In order to implement the Global Strategy, a Programme of Action was developed and a business plan to attract new sources of conservation finance for apes and ape-friendly development projects. The latter projects aim to improve the lives of people who might otherwise have little option but to hunt apes or destroy habitat. In this way, GRASP aims to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals as well as secure a future for great apes.

Mountain gorillas at Virungas national Park
© UNESCO/Ian Redmond

The Year of the Gorilla 2009 campaign (www.YoG2009.org) is one example of how the strengths of the different GRASP partners can work together. The CMS assisted the ten countries with gorilla populations to negotiate a legally binding treaty in 2007. Six of the ten have already ratified it and all are expected to do so eventually. The Gorilla Agreement has an Action Plan (based largely on existing IUCN and GRASP plans) and the YoG campaign was to raise funds, awareness and political will to implement the Plan.

Despite all the above efforts, however, the fact remains that the economic pressures destroying ape habitat are several orders of magnitude greater than current available conservation finance. There are some successes on record, most often associated with long-term research sites; not only does the study population benefit from a higher level of incoming resources, the world also hears about their plight through articles, books and documentaries. The reality, though, is that the heroic efforts of outstanding individuals can do little more than hold back the tide here and there.

What is needed is an equivalent economic incentive to counter the clearing of land and pay for the enforcement of wildlife laws against hunting apes and other endangered species.

Can Combating Climate Change Help Save the Apes?

Ironically, this economic incentive may be an unexpected result of the new threat to the survival of all apes, human and non-human, i.e. climate change. In the new multi-billion dollar carbon markets, forest ecosystems now have a potential cash value for carbon capture and storage. But in addition to rising sea-levels, human-induced global climate change also seems likely to affect rainfall patterns. If they alter with rising temperatures, the ecological conditions that lead to forests may move or disappear from areas currently considered to be priority sites for great apes. This is most significant in areas of fragmented forest, where fences and other human obstacles will inhibit apes from crossing open areas. Reforestation of corridors between forests could ameliorate this risk, and also help to absorb atmospheric carbon. Protection of standing forests, or 'avoided deforestation' should also be valued in a system of total carbon accounting, recognizing the carbon in soils and peat as well as wood. Many feel that the best way to achieve this is through private sector trading of forest carbon credits, bringing significant new resources for the sustainable management of forests (Swingland, 2003). GRASP is exploring ways to use carbon finance to fund the better management of forests in the 23 great ape range states, in particular the 94 priority sites identified by the GRASP Scientific Commission as the locations for the most important populations of all great ape taxa. Protecting these high conservation value forests will not only ensure a future for gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos and orangutans, it will bring employment and sustainable development to forest-dependent human communities, and by keeping carbon in trees and underlying soils and peat, help to mitigate against climate change. When the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change met in Copenhagen in 2009 and in Cancun in 2010, negotiators from every government on the planet failed to reach consensus on the text of an agreement to follow the Kyoto Protocol, which runs out in 2012. Kyoto does not recognize the value of carbon in tropical forests, even though up to 20 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions (estimates vary on the exact proportion) are from deforestation and forest degradation. Fortunately, more and more political leaders are now convinced of the importance of forests, and significant finance is being directed towards preparing for a scheme called REDD+, or Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, with the + signifying additional benefits such as biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation. The exact mechanism for paying to keep carbon locked in forests is still being worked out, but if all the necessary safeguards are in place, REDD+ could play a significant role in stabilizing the climate, slowing biodiversity loss and contributing to the Millennium Development Goals for forest-dwelling communities.

ACTION POINT: All those who care about these forests should write to their elected representatives, urging them to ensure that forest ecosystems are central to our efforts to slow climate change, with a fair and equitable distribution of revenues to bring sustainable development to forest communities (for further information, visit www.4apes.com/carbon, www.forestsnow.org, www.forestcarbonportal.com and www.forestcarbonportal.com).

This new pro-forest economic pressure should win the support of those who wield power over land-use planning decisions, large scale development projects and wildlife law enforcement. Only if these key decision makers and the communities they serve understand the importance of apes

and ape habitat will they take the necessary steps to ensure they survive. The role of long term research projects is critical to this process, for without accurate information and scientific understanding, how can informed decisions be made?

Great apes are not, however, just interesting research subjects. They are the gardeners of the forest - keystone species in the ecology of African and Southeast Asian forests, dispersing seeds, creating light gaps and pruning branch-tips whilst feeding. In other words, the forests need the apes as much as the apes need the forest. And their habitat happens to comprise two of the planet's three major tropical forest blocks that are essential for global climate regulation and the global carbon cycle. More than a billion of the world's poorest people depend directly on these same forests and every person on the planet benefits indirectly. If we are serious about slowing climate change and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, we *need* those forests to continue providing ecological services for the whole of mankind. Ergo, we *must* find the resources to implement the Global Strategy – including scientific research and monitoring programmes - thereby ensuring healthy populations of apes, to maintain in perpetuity the health of the forests for the benefit of all.

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Note: an earlier version of this article appeared as the Foreword in "Science and Conservation in African Forests: the Benefits of Long-term Research" Edited by Richard Wrangham and Elizabeth Ross, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Global Primate Network: The First NGO Working for Primate Conservation in Nepal

By Ganga Ram Regmi
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Five species of primates have been reported from Nepal. They are: rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*), assamese macaque (*Macaca assamensis*), lesser hill langur (*Semnopithecus hector*), Nepal gray langur (*Semnopithecus shistaceus*) and Kashmir gray langur (*Semnopithecus ajax*) (Groves, 2001; Molur *et al*. 2003; Brandon-Jones *et al*. 2004). All of these primate species are known as crop-raiders and this is frequently reported in the literature, both inside and outside protected areas in Nepal (Chalise, 2003; Chalise & Johnson, 2005; Regmi & Kandel, 2008).

Agriculture is the backbone of the Nepalese economy, and the well-being of both people and wildlife depends on effective and sustainable agricultural practice (Nepal Biodiversity Strategy, 2002). This is especially true inside the protected areas and their buffer zones as well as some rural areas outside the protected areas which harbour the strongholds of many rare and endangered animals, including crop-raiding primates. In the rural areas, seasonal staple agricultural crops are the only sources of household income and form the basis of livelihood for subsistence farmers. Monkeys frequently raid crop-fields, especially during harvest time and thus farmers cannot tolerate this loss and kill the monkeys. Therefore, crop-raiding and its consequences are the major problems for primate conservation in Nepal.

Considering these facts, the young Nepalese field biologists led by Ganga Ram Regmi set up the NGO 'Global Primate Network' in 2008 which is completely dedicated to primate research and conservation in Nepal. Mr Ganga Ram Regmi is the founding president of this organisation and has more than five years experiences in wildlife research and conservation from tiny amphibians to the top carnivore of the Himalayan ecosystem; the snow leopard. Currently, Global Primate Network is focusing on a people awareness programme, highlighting the role of primates as seed dispersers to maintain the healthy forest ecosystem. This entails a community outreach and conservation education programme in Nepal. The project has been supported by The Rufford Small Grant Foundation, UK and Idea Wild, USA.

Organisation's logo

Organization Details
Name of Organization: Global Primate Network
Location: Nepal
Date of establishment: 24/11/08
Registered Charity Number: 524/2065/2066 (Government of Nepal)
Founder President: Ganga Ram Regmi
Address: GPO Box 26288, Kathmandu, Nepal

Email: info@primatelife.org
Website:www.primatelife.org

Future projects of the organisation are:

1. Spatial and temporal patterns of primate crop-raiding in Nepal.

2. Promoting alternative cash crops unpalatable to monkeys in and around crop-raiding areas for alleviating people-primate conflict in Nepal.

3. Density surface GIS modelling of primates, using multiple models for comparing efficacy and effectiveness in Himalayan landscape.

4. Testing prediction accuracy for primates' distribution in Nepal using 'Random Forest'.

5. Taxonomic confirmation of Nepalese assamese macaque.

6. Climate change and its impact on ecology of Himalayan langurs.

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Pages of Positivity

By Harry Hilser
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Scan through any newspaper and you will inevitably be presented with reports of tragedy, with depressing stories dominating the pages. Similarly, conservationists face the reality of the struggle against global environmental exploitation, biodiversity loss and the incessant news of ever increasing threats to the world's natural ecosystems. I would like to encourage a shift in focus on the positives, to benefit from those experiences and take the lessons learnt to empower and facilitate further conservation drive. As hope is often repressed by the onslaught of ill-fated future predictions, the unfaltering support for conservation grows whilst a fresh collaborative society is formed with increased and collaborative power. I don't advocate hiding from the realism of the severity of the issues facing the world, rather I wish to avoid being beaten down by these challenges and instead nurture the action of some incredibly hard working and determined people.

There are countless examples of positive work being done around the world and hope for the future of our planet. Philanthropic and conservation movements such as these are encouraging an interconnected, powerful voice from society with tangible progress being achieved:

Positive News: Exactly as its name says! An encouraging and motivating site with reports of good things happening! Who would have thought it?!
Visit www.positivenews.org and take a look at some of the great things happening in the world.

Following the impetus of Positive News I have gathered some article headlines that show hope for conservation and the ultimate protection of primates.

1. Agreement reached at COP10 meeting.
At the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP10) for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya, Japan, delegates from 193 governments agreed to take new steps to tackle the global biodiversity crisis. 20 objectives were laid for 2020 that included: zero tolerance for species extinction; protection of 17 percent of all inland water and terrestrial areas and 10 percent of marine areas; restoration of 15 percent of degraded ecosystems; reducing habitat loss by at least 50 percent.

2. Record lows for deforestation in Brazil.
Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon fell to the lowest rate on record last year, putting Brazil well on track to meet its targets for reducing rainforest destruction.

3. IUCN Report shows that conservation works
A substantial report from IUCN found that conservation action does work: in the first analysis of its kind, researchers found that the global biodiversity decline would have been 18% worse if not for conservation attention

4. Break for Sabah forests as GAR prevent destruction.
Golden Agri-Resources Limited (GAR), has signed an agreement committing it to protect tropical forests and peatlands in Indonesia. The deal—signed with The Forest Trust, an environmental group that works with companies to improve their supply chains—could have significant ramifications for how palm oil is produced in the country, which is the world's largest producer of palm oil.

5. New reserve created in Cambodia with REDD in mind
Cambodia declared the creation of the Seima Protection Forest, a 1,100 square miles (2,849 square kilometres) park home to tigers, elephants, and endangered primates. The park's creation was developed in part by the Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS) "Carbon for Conservation" program, which intends to protect high-biodiversity ecosystems while raising funds through carbon sequestration schemes such as Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD).

[News sources: MongaBay.com]

‘Let us quickly move beyond alarmism, for that shuts off the lines of listening by those publics, politicians, and surveyors we need to reach. Instead, as a wildlife profession, we can assert a positive vision of wildlife conservation that builds on legacies of knowledge and ecosystems alike. As our numbers grow, we can point to incredibly bold new moves in wildlife conservation that beg respect and emulation. India, which has surpassed 1 billion people since our second edition was published, in an attempt to save the last of its parks and wildlife communities has essentially outlawed clear-felling of forests and most sport hunting, and has given non-timber forest resources great economic and social focus. China has instituted policies of family size constraints and a massive reforestation program in many of their degraded and desertified lands. The Nature Conservancy has successfully run innovative programs of swapping portions of national debt for conserving critical natural areas in some developing countries. Major ecosystem restoration programs have been instituted, such as those in the Everglades of Florida. Top predators—carnivores—have been successfully reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park and elsewhere. There now are more national parks and sanctuaries, and more recovery plans for threatened and endangered species in place than ever throughout the world.’
- Preface to Wildlife-Habitat Relationships, 2006

~ Let’s not allow pessimism to inhibit conservation action ~

University Events

Seminar Series

The seminar series is a weekly event which invites guest speakers to present their research. We are currently in the process of recruiting speakers for our autumn/winter semester. If you are interested in attending or presenting please do not hesitate to get in contact with us. Contact details are provided within the contents page.

Here is a list comprising of the guest speakers from the spring semester:

31 January – **Dr. Claudio Sillero** (Wildcru, Oxford University)

7 February – **Jamie Craig** (Cotswold Wildlife Park)

14 February – **Magdalena Svensson** (Oxford Brookes University)

21 February – **Ian Redmond** (Ape Alliance, Hope4Apes)

28 February – **Dr. Amanda Korstjens** (School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University)

7 March – **Harriet Waters** (Sustainability Manager, Oxford Brookes University)

14 March – **Zinta Zommers** (Wildcru, Oxford University)

21 March – **Prof. David Chivers** (Dept. of Physiology, Development & Neuroscience, Cambridge University)

28 March – **Dr. Christian Capelli** (Dept. of Zoology, Oxford University)

2010-2011 Cohort of the MSc Primate Conservation

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http://ssl.brookes.ac.uk/primate/home.htm