



Female *Eulemur albifrons*, can you see it? Photo by Jeff. He was very proud of this picture!

Why is this update called "Tana encore?" Because it is a call to anyone out there with enough capital and influence to create an airline that can compete with Air Madagascar. We spent all day yesterday (Tuesday April 4<sup>th</sup>) on an old Air Mad plane. The flight itinerary was from Tana to Tamatave to Antalaha to Maroantsetra (then the same plane back to Tamatave and Tana). There was one point between Antalaha where I started whimpering and kept glancing at the nun behind me who was saying her Hail Marys. The plane was bouncing up and down; there was one rather scary drop in altitude. I really hate flying. We landed in Antahla where it was raining. The next stop to Maroantsetra is only a 20 minute plane ride. Jeff announced we had 4 minutes left...but as we started to descend, Jeff asked, "It looks like we are going up." He was right. The captain announced that he could not see the runway because the weather was too bad. He had descended as far as was allowed by federal standards and immediately ascended. We were heading back to Tamatave. At Tamatave, all the Maroantsetra passengers were angrily trying to negotiate with the Air Mad staff. Air Madagascar in Tana told them to send us all back to Tana where they will "take care" of us. I made a scene and said I refuse to go back to Tana. There were four other people who work for ANGAP (they manage the park I work near) who came from Antalaha hoping to land in Maroantsetra. They were not allowed to go back to Tana; they had to stay in Tamatave and wait who-knows-how-long for a flight to Maroantsetra. The regular flights are only Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. One could take a boat to Maroantsetra, but the boat schedules are unreliable. One could try to take a taxi brusse to Maroantsetra, but this could take anywhere from 2-20 days. Here in Tana, the Air Mad office was not aware of the problem,

of course. So, I spent all morning trying to convince them that we need to be on one of the 2 flights leaving tomorrow (they arranged a special flight for us, but they said both planes were booked). So, tomorrow we may or may not get on a flight to Maroantsetra. The Malagasy student who is working with me has been waiting there for me since last Saturday. I am supposed to provide her with food money, but I didn't give her enough for a week...

Hopefully the next update will be in a month or so because that means I made it to Maroantsetra!

