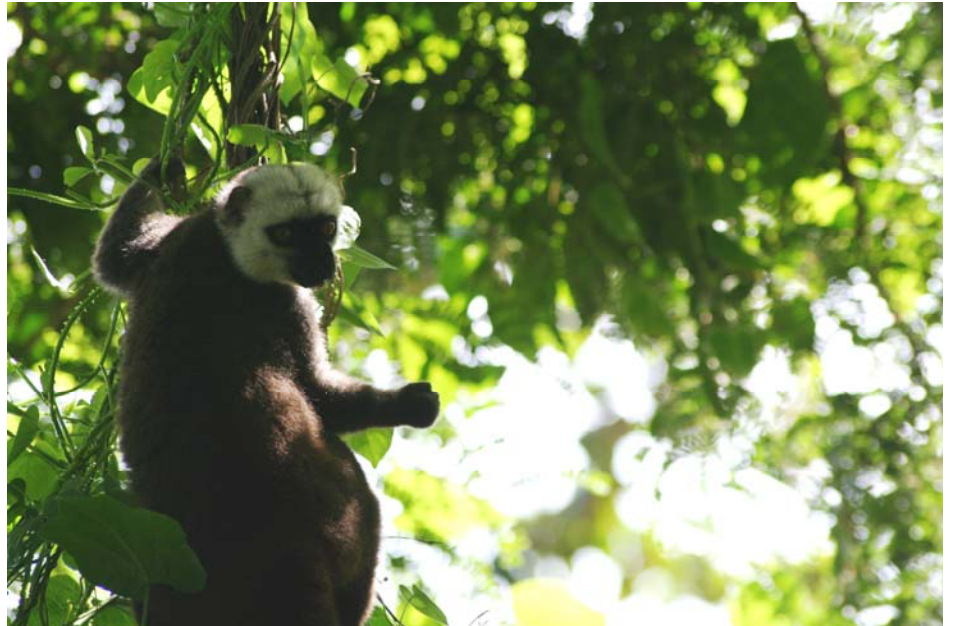


Alas, there are lemurs.

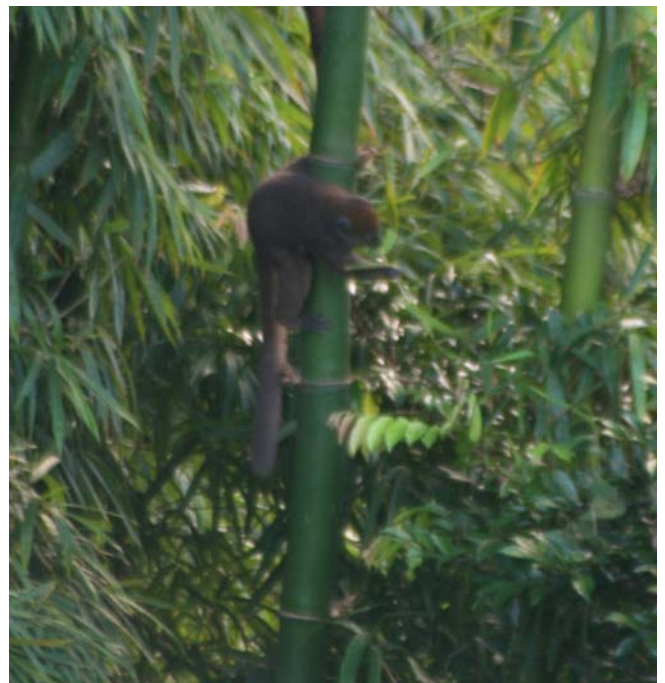
However, I could never get any good photos of them in Fampotobe because they are terrified of people and it rained a lot so I hardly had my camera with me. Also, my camera is rather bulky. I can't use that as an excuse anymore because people are starting to wonder if I really am seeing lemurs. In the surveyed fragments of Fampotobe, I found most of the nocturnal lemurs one would expect in the area and 2 of the 3

diurnal lemurs. *Varecia rubra*, the red-ruffed lemur, sadly is not present in any of the surveyed fragments. They are living nearby in the big forest—this is what we all call the continuous-canopy forest. We did get glimpses of white-fronted brown lemurs (*Eulemur albifrons*) hanging out in fragments. Once I had a guide try to stay with a group that was sleeping. They woke up, saw us, grunted, and ran across the tree-tops. He followed them as long as he could. The group crossed a marsh (about 10m) to another very small fragment and then crossed a large expanse (about 80m) of marsh mixed with old rice fields interspersed with short *Harongana* trees (this is a common secondary forest tree). Unfortunately, there is no photo to accompany this account.

There are also bamboo lemurs (probably *Hapalemur griseus*) in the fragments. We came across a trap one day set up by some young boys trying to catch *Hapalemur*. They had just finished it. We disassembled it and then one of my guides (who also happened to be related to the boys) told them not to hunt lemurs anymore. He really scared them, too, by telling them it's illegal and the police would take them away. I'm not sure if it was the right technique, but they certainly



A handsome male *Eulemur albifrons* on Nosy Mangabe. They are not terrified of people like the ones in Fampotobe fragments!



Slightly out-of-focus *Hapalemur* in a patch of bamboo outside of the big forest.

won't be setting anymore traps for the bamboo lemurs.

Originally this project was a study of red-ruffed lemur behavior in forest fragments. I won't say I was not warned, as Natalie Vasey, *the* expert on red-ruffed lemurs, did say she doubted I would find any in fragments...

I debated carrying out the same study with white-fronted brown lemurs. However, they are hunted in this region. The fragments are outside of park boundaries in a community-managed forest. I have heard that people like to couple logging for precious wood with hunting lemurs by gun. The study required habituation. Probably if I did habituate the lemurs, once I left the area they would become food. So, I continued to sample the vegetation and completed surveys in the big forest from the edge to the interior. Data are not yet analyzed; I am still waiting for an eager data-entry volunteer.

The local guides I worked with are all farmers in the region. They want to establish an association to protect the forest for the lemurs through educating their peers. They have plans for an ecotourism trail to try to fund the association. I was really happy to hear their ideas. I am trying to help them out with the process, even though the next phase of research will take place further north of the Fampotobe site.



The Fampotobe team sans Paul (next photo) who had to leave before the photo was taken.

