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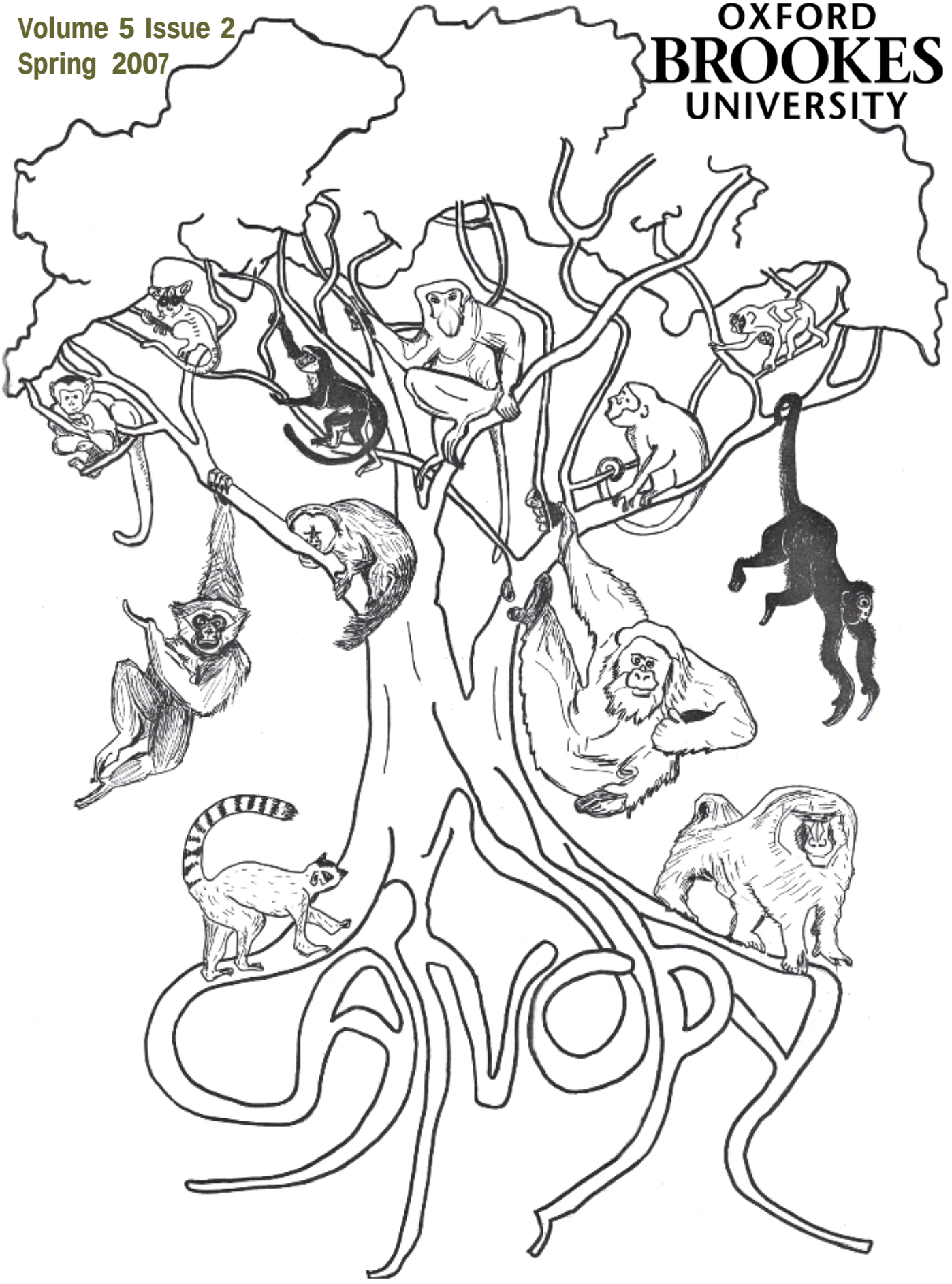

Primate Conservation MSc Newsletter

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MSc Programme
Oxford Brookes University

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Front cover illustration
Tallulah Bygraves

Page 1 illustration of gibbon
Tallulah Bygraves

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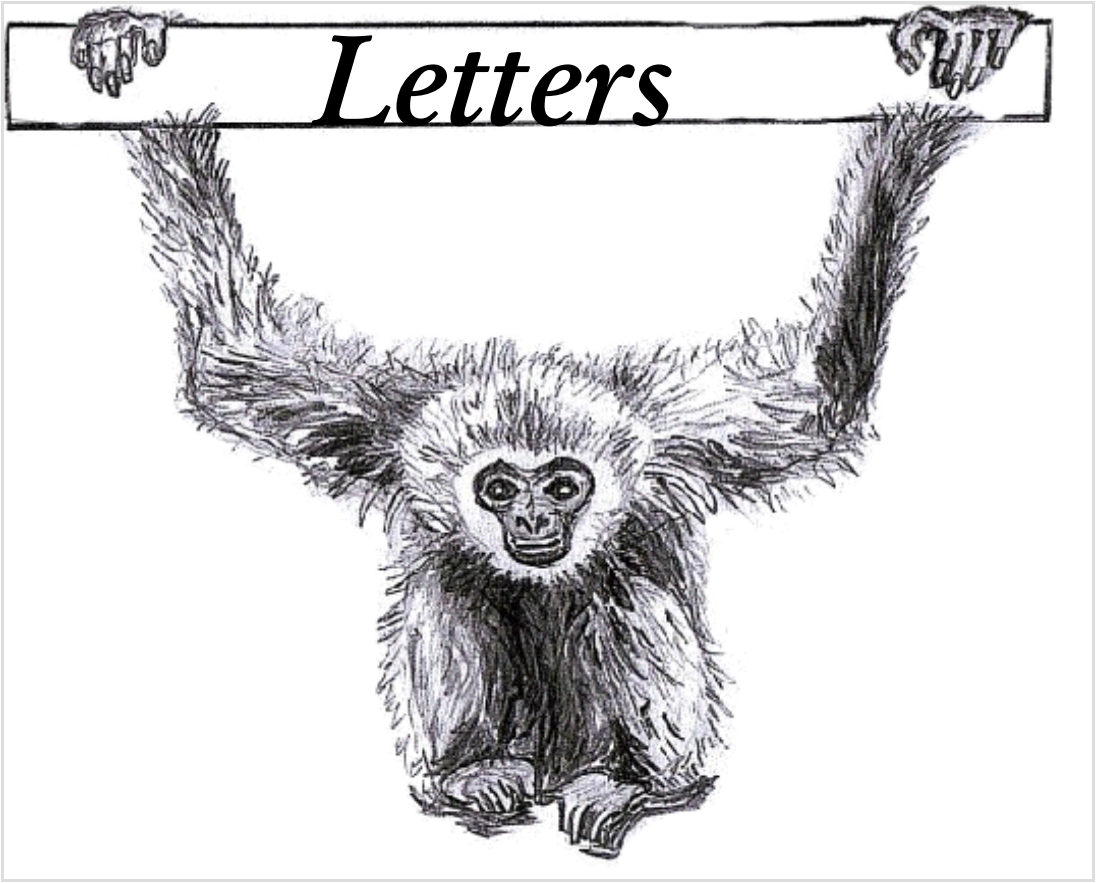
Letters



The students of the 2006-2007 MSc in Primate Conservation at Oxford Brookes University would like to invite you to join us in an exploration of both primatological and environmental issues that motivate this year's cohort to work towards creating a better world for ourselves and our primate relatives. Keeping true to the course's interdisciplinary approach, students this year are preparing to conduct research in areas all over the world, focusing on aspects of primate conservation including: primate behavioral ecology, human wildlife conflicts, conservation education, captive breeding, wildlife health, and population genetics.

As exciting as what is to come, is what has recently been done. In this issue, the work of several past students is described (pages 9-14), and habitat student David Lekeaka writes about his experiences living in Cameroon (pages 6-7). Following on from this is a list of the projects that the students this year are preparing to conduct (pages 3-5). Inspiring these endeavors are our module leaders (pages 15-16), guest speakers (Ian Redmond, page 18), newly published literature (pages 19-20), and supportive organizations (PSGB, page 20).

We would like give thanks to those who have contributed their work and experience to this issue of Canopy.

Best Wishes,

The Editors

Letter from the course tutor

The MSc in Primate Conservation is approaching the end of its 6th year, one that has been full of exciting change. This year has seen us welcome Dr Corri Waitt to teach our module in Captive Management. Our course has been nominated by Oxford Brookes University to be the single programme to be put forward for 'The Queen's Award' – a high honour to unique programmes within universities. For the first time we were able to offer three habitat country scholarships under the kind auspices of the Whitley Laing Foundation. The recipients, David Lekeaka, Innocent Mulenga and George Owoyesigire, have brought immense knowledge and experience to this year's cohort. Two of our students (Patricia Gilmore and Jennifer Miller) were also recipients of the highly competitive John Henry Brookes scholarships. The 2005-06 cohort was examined at a January examinations meeting, with Heidi Douglas receiving this year's Alison Jolly Prize for best contribution to conservation, through her study of Endangered Sri Lankan toque macaques and purple-faced leaf monkeys.

This year's cohort is now preparing for their fieldwork. Some of them are staying close to home, working in zoos, with school children, or in the genetics lab. Others are travelling to some of the world's most remote ecoregions, with some students focussing on the world's Top 25 Most Endangered Primates (Abigail Baird – brown-headed spider monkey *Ateles fusciceps fusciceps*; Robin Cooley and David Lekeaka –Cross River gorilla *Gorilla gorilla diehli*; Caitlin Eschmann – Western purple-faced leaf monkey *Trachypithecus vetulus nestor*; Mariah Mandelman – Western Hoolock gibbon *Hoolock hoolock hoolock*; Andrea Molyneux – Sumatran orang-utan *Pongo abelii*; Jo Msindai –highland mangabey *Rungwecebus kipunji*; Elise Queslin – the silky sifaka *Propithecus candidus*). The staff and course committee wish our students safe, adventurous and successful field seasons.

2006-07 has also been a rewarding year for members of staff. Simon Bearder saw the publication of his co-edited text book, *Primates in Perspective* Campbell C.J., Fuentes A., MacKinnon K.C., Panger M., Bearder SK, Editors. New York: Oxford University Press. 2007. Anna Nekaris also saw the publication of a volume edited with Sharon Gursky, *Primates and Their Predators*, Springer: New York, 2007. Debbie Curtis saw the publication of special issue in *Folia Primatologica* co-edited with Giuseppe Donati and Michele Rasmussen, The Third Activity Pattern in Primates: Cathemerality. *Folia Primatologica.* 77, No.1-2. 2006. Kate Hill and her team of PhD students have been working in Uganda on her project regarding human-wildlife interactions funded by The Leverhulme Trust, North of England Zoological Society, PSGB, and a Rufford small grant. Mika Peck continues his Darwin Initiative project, with its flagship species, the brown-headed spider monkey, in Ecuador. Nancy Priston joined us at the beginning of the academic year with a prestigious five-year RCUK postdoctoral research fellowship to continue her work on human-wildlife conflict in Buton, Indonesia.

Our students continue to produce novel and excellent work in the field of primate conservation. We hope that you enjoy reading about it in this issue of *Canopy*.

Dr. K.A.I Nekaris

Dr Anna Nekaris with red slender loris taken in Sri Lanka. Photograph by Elisabeth Pimley.

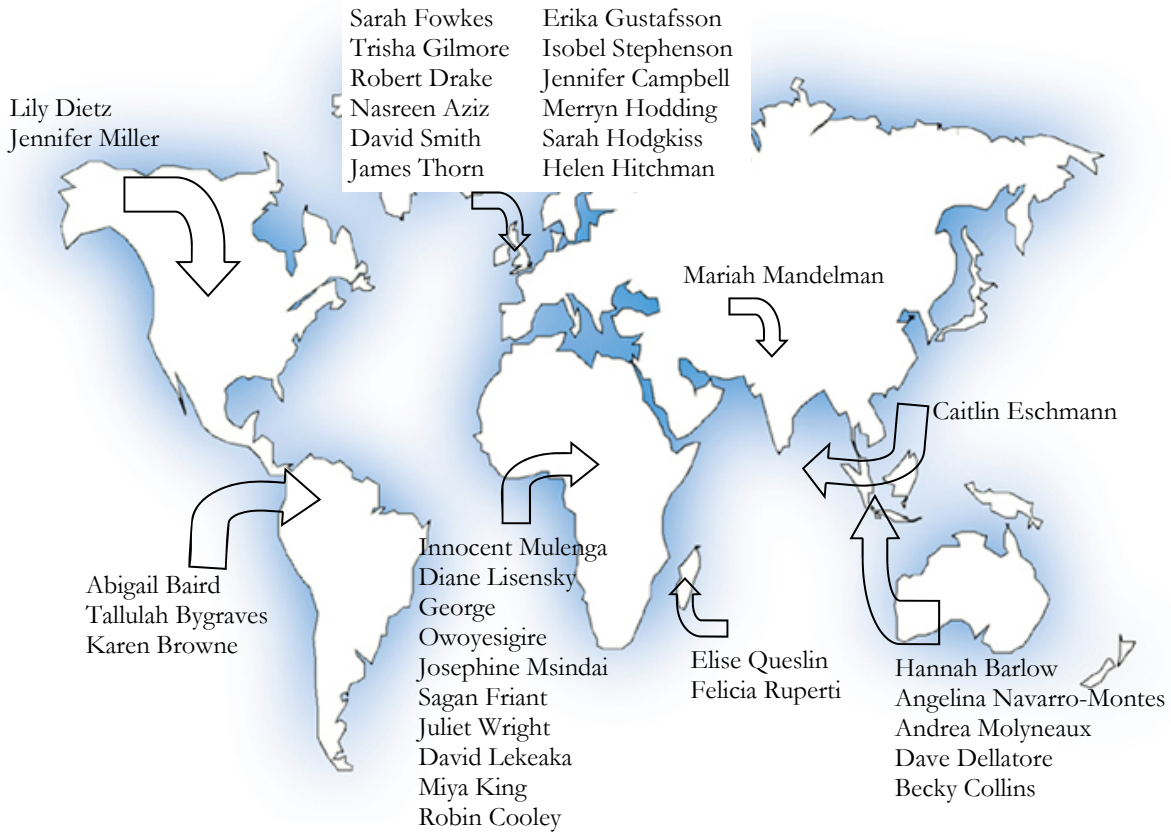
Students Final Projects Titles and Location of their Research-

Continent/ Country	*Project title*	*Student's name*
AFRICA		
Cameroon	A workbook of art and stories from local children for conservation.	Robin Cooley
	An assessment of local perceptions on the role of NGOs in community-based conservation in the South West Province of Cameroon	Miya King
	Comparing nesting ecology of chimpanzees *(Pan troglodytes vellerosus)* in two isolated habitats in the Lebialem Division, South West Province.	David Lekeaka
	The value and significance of primate bushmeat to rural communities in the Lebialem highlands of Cameroon	Juliet Wright
Nigeria	An investigation of gastro-intestinal parasites in captive and wild Cercopithecine primates in Southern Nigeria	Sagan Friant
Tanzania	Identifying the economic and social impact of crop-raiding non-human primates on local livelihoods, in Mount Rungwe	Josephine Msindai
Uganda	Interaction between habituated chimpanzees and local people around Kibale National Park.	George Owoyesigire
Zambia	Social behaviour, repertoire, frequency of play and antagonisms in orphaned chimpanzees at Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage	Diane Lisensky
	Determining geographic origins of captive chimpanzees from mitochondiral DNA sequencing	Innocent Mulenga
Madagascar	A pilot study on the diet, feeding behaviour and ecology of silky sifaka *(Propithecus candidus)* in the humid rainforest of Marojejy National Park.	Elise Queslin
	Population density and habitat preferences of the Sahamalaza sportive lemur *(Lepilemur sahamalazensis)* in four forest fragments on the Sahamalaza Peninsula.	Felicia Ruperti
ASIA		
Bengladesh	PEACE- Primates, environment and conservation education: development, implementation and assessment of an environmental education program in Bangladesh	Mariah Mandelman
Indonesia	Comparative behavioural study of lorises *(Nycticebus coucang and N. javanicus)* at the Schmutzer Primate Centre, Jakarta.	Becky Collins
	Determining the causes of high parasite levels in ex-captive orangutans in northern Sumatra	Dave Dellatore

ASIA	Orangutan survey methodology and implications for conservation	Andrea Molyneaux
	Assessment of trade in slow lorises within Sumatra and implications for conservation	Angelina Navarro-Montes
	Piloting an educational pack for school children in Indonesia, focusing on the issue of primates as pets (with particular emphasis of macaques *Macaca fascicularis* & *M. nemestrina* and slow lorises *Nycticebus spp.*).	Hannah Barlow
Sri Lanka	Inter-population differences of western purple-faced leaf monkeys (*Trachypithecus vetulus nestor*): a case study in Talangama, Sri Lanka	Caitlin Eschmann
EUROPE		
United Kingdom	The environmental impacts of the DRC war on primate habitats	Nasreen Aziz
	Using sound as a possible enrichment method for Javan langurs	Jennifer Campbell
	Implications of implementing the 2006 IPS guidelines on captive breeding of non-human primates, with regard to premature weaning	Robert Drake
	Foraging and tool use in orangutans at Dudley, Twycross, Colchester, Blackpool and Jersey zoos	Sarah Fowkes
	A comparative study of primate vocalizations in the wild and captivity, illustrated by an orangutan case study	Trisha Gilmore
	Existing reintroduction guidelines for neotropical primates: availability of, access to, and uptake in Central -and South America	Erika Gustafsson
	An evaluation of the effect of human and non-human primate interactions at the Cotswold Wildlife Park, on visitor knowledge and attitudes towards lemur conservation	Helen Hitchman
	What are the effects of visitor noise levels and density on the behaviour of captive gorillas at Howlett's Wild Animal Park	Merryn Hodding
	Characterising the hormonal, behavioural and physical correlates of the ovarian cycle in female Javan gibbons (*Hylobates moloch*) at Howlett's Wild Animal Park	Sarah Hodgkiss
	An assessment of land use and conflict facing endemic colobines of Kalimantan, using G.I.S. (Geographic Information System)	David Smith
	Raising awareness of galago taxonomy and the use of hand pad morphology	Isobel Stephenson
	Slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp.) distribution in Indonesia and implications for conservation priority areas	James Thorn

CENTRAL AMERICA		
Costa Rica	Preliminary study on the impact of food handouts by tourists to red-backed squirrel monkeys (and implications for local conservation education) in Southern Costa Rica	Karen Browne
NORTH AMERICA		
United States	Assessing environmental awareness in 11 to 15 year olds (UK and USA)	Lily Dietz
	Positional behaviour and substrate utilization of captive Coquerel's sifakas *(Propithecus verreauxi coquereli)*	Jennifer Miller
SOUTH AMERICA		
Ecuador	Development of rapid survey methods (playback) for the Critically Endangered brown-headed spider monkey *(Ateles fusciceps)* in Ecuador.	Abigail Baird
Guyana	Surveying primate communities inhabiting differently managed zones within Iwokrama forest and the north Rupununi, Central Guyana: The balance between human resource use and primate conservation.	Tallulah Bygraves

Map depicting locations of student projects



Working with local people in Cameroon-the highway to sustainable conservation

By David Lekeaka

I volunteered for a community-based non-governmental and non-profit organization, The Environment and Rural Development Foundation (ERuDeF) whose mission is to protect wildlife and its fragile ecosystem. Before I became fully involved in ERuDeF's activities, I had interned with WCS-Nguti Cameroon. During the internship and later with ERuDeF, I participated in assessing the density of medium and large sized mammals and identifying areas of high conservation priority. We employed local community members, some of whom had been notorious hunters in the region.

I would like to share my experiences and challenges in engaging local people in conservation activities.

Forest surveys along the Cameroon Nigeria Borders.

This survey was characterized by seven hours of trekking each day for six months. It involved camping under the rains for the entire period. The contiguous forest surveyed is a viable refuge for medium- and large-sized mammals, including monkeys and great apes. More than 60% of youth in this area practiced large-scale hunting as their main occupation, while others engaged in agricultural activities. As a result of the high hunting pressure practiced in this part of Cameroon and this background information, our target recruits for the project were the youth and other notable forest users. They served as local guides, cooks and porters. Our aim was to test the hypothesis that hunters and most forest users can be made to embrace conservation initiatives, abandon hunting, and practice other forms of livelihood.

Encounter with injured juvenile chimpanzee

At the beginning of the project it was very difficult working with freshly-recruited people. They wondered how possible it would be to spend many days in the forest without their gun beside them to exploit any hunting opportunity while in the forest. We made it clear to them that our project policy did not allow carrying guns while in the forest. After a few days of our survey, we encountered a juvenile chimpanzee struggling for its life, presumably after its leg had been injured by hunters. Our hired team of local people were excited by the "ready meat" as they were heard lamenting on the final assault to the innocent animal. Unfortunately, their dreams were shattered when we rescued the chimp, administered some first aid, and later moved it to Limbe Zoological Gardens for proper treatment. We also explained to our team the reason for our rescue, emphasizing that wildlife, like humans, had the right to life. We were also able to highlight benefits that could accrue from wildlife, including employment quoting them as first beneficiaries. The explanation given was not satisfactory to them. They had initially been surprised and not happy about having been denied the opportunity of exploiting such a golden advantage. This put our lives in danger too. We were now being threatened by the fierce hunters, for "depriving them from exploiting the good fortune provided to them by their ancestors". As we did not relent our efforts, persuading and indoctrinating them about conservation, we finally succeeded to convince them and continued our mission in the forest. This tedious and most challenging field trip ended successfully with our mission achieved. Interestingly, more than 75% of hunters who participated in this survey for a period of six months since then, have abandoned hunting. The majority are currently engaged in bee-keeping. One of them declared that: "I have indeed been touched

from the amount of efforts, energy and money invested just to let animals live. I can notice that the number of animals is reducing drastically…. If we don't protect them the way we are currently doing, then our children will not see some of them…. My one-day with a research team can solve my problems better than five hunting days. I will now strongly apologize for my past activities and declare an end to hunting practices"

Surveys across the Lebialem Highlands (LH)

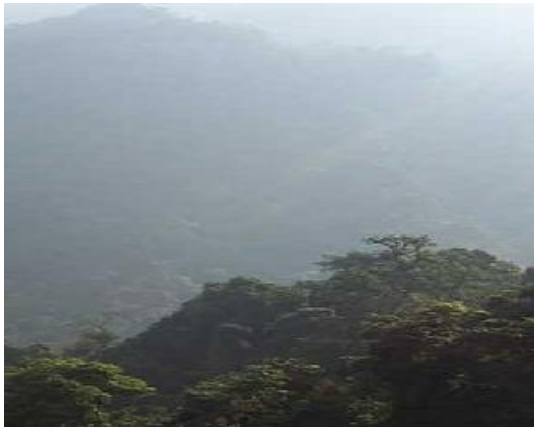
I had worked in this area under the auspices of ERuDeF. This local non governmental organization created in 1999 is one of the fastest growing community-based conservation organizations, implementing a broad range of conservation programs amongst which are great ape conservation, ecotourism, environmental education, landscape restoration and rehabilitation, community forestry, and sustainable livelihood programs across the Lebialem Highlands which covers a surface area of 1,323sq km. My main responsibilities were cataloguing the wildlife species of this area and educating the local people to stop the astronomic rise in poaching and habitat destruction. During one of our community consultation meetings in Fossimondi village, the local people reported the previously unrecorded Cross River Gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla deihli*) in their forest. This gorilla specie is one of the 25 most endangered primates in the world, and numbers less than 300 in the wild. The discovery added to the many monkey species and chimpanzee present in the Highlands.

Local perception on great apes

Unlike other parts of Cameroon where apes are being hunted for bush meat, in LH, there is an extraordinary and interesting perception of the indigenous people. The local people here have some spiritual beliefs and perceptions of chimpanzees and gorillas. They believe that these animals are not only our closest ancestors, but totemic creatures. Because of these spiritual beliefs and perceptions, the poaching of great apes in the area has been scaled down to almost zero while hunting of other monkeys has reduced drastically due to the tremendous and relentless efforts of ERuDeF. ERuDeF, a strictly community based local conservation organization, is currently exploiting and researching details on these spiritual beliefs to plough back this knowledge and add more value to the conservation of these apes. Though these apes are virtually free from being hunted, habitat fragmentation, snares and shrinking of their home ranges pose a lot of conservation demand. The young organization with its very limited resources is doing all it can to halt these practices

Lessons learned

- Hunters, forest users, and other people involved in environmental degradation malpractices can be influenced to change their negative attitude towards biodiversity and the environment in general by involving them in research and other conservation commitments, constant sensitization of conservation ideas and providing them with conservation incentives so that they begin to face the challenges involved and appreciate the need for conservation.
- Local people who have been living in their native areas for decades have primitive and first-hand conservation knowledge which can only be exploited and used to design a more effective, modern sustainable conservation programs if, and only if, they work very closely with them and consider their indigenous ideas.



Forest in Cameroon. Photograph by David Lekeaka

Primate Conservation MSc Students Volunteer at the Natural History Museum

by Jennifer Miller

On certain days of the week, it might appear that there is a steady stream of MSc students wandering up and down Parks Road in Oxford. Are they directionally challenged? Perhaps. Are they lost? No. They are on their way to or from the Oxford University Museum of Natural History where they have been volunteering under the supervision of Malgosia Nowak-Kemp. In fact, ten MSc students are currently volunteering in the zoological collections at the museum on Monday mornings and throughout the day on Thursday.

Happy MSc students. Photograph by Jenni-

The current cohort is not the first group of MSc students to volunteer at the museum. In fact, the museum has quite a long history of supporting our MSc students in gaining knowledge and skills in the area of museum collections. According to Malgosia Nowak-Kemp, the curatorial officer of the zoological collections, students from the MSc Primate Conservation program have been volunteering with her for the past five years. It all began when Malgosia was approached by a member of staff interested in setting up a practical session for the MSc students. She offered to hold the practical on-site at the museum. After the first practical session, Mrs. Nowak-Kemp had several students approach her about opportunities for volunteering at the museum. Since the first group of MSc students, Malgosia has had a steady supply of volunteers who assist with necessary activities within the zoological collections while gaining a diverse combination of knowledge and skills. The volunteers assist in various tasks, including cleaning specimens, cataloguing specimens, and checking specimens for damage.

Jo and Tallulah volunteering at the Natural History Museum. Photograph by Jennifer

With all of the pressures associated with completing the MSc in Primate Conservation, it may be unclear why each cohort yields seven or eight students who choose to volunteer at the museum in their spare time. Based on responses from the current MSc students, there are plenty of great reasons to be involved. Everyone is unanimous that volunteering looks great on your curriculum vitae. The majority of the current students have little or no previous experience working in a museum so volunteering provides a unique opportunity. In addition to gaining experience, several respondents noted that the museum provides a great way to escape from the pressures of course work while taking advantage of the chance to view specimens stored behind the scenes in the vast museum collections.

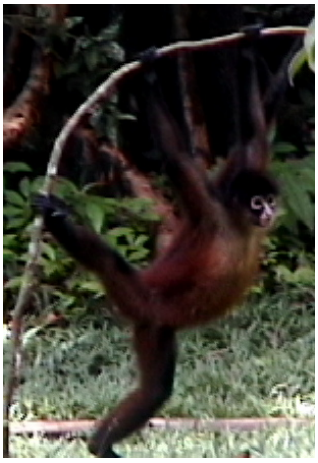
The majority of current students would be interested in working at a museum after graduation. In fact, two past MSC students, Nadine Svoboda and Ruth Parkinson, have gained employment as a result of the experience. With so many students actively volunteering at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, more MSc students may find themselves employed as museum staff in the future.

Tracking Ex-students in the Field: Katie Mann (Class of 2004-2005)

by Karen Browne

In 2005 Katie Mann conducted a pilot study for her Masters project assessing the need for primate conservation in northern Punta Burica in Southwest Costa Rica. In 2006 Katie returned to Punta Burica to begin work with the Ngäbe (Guaymi) people implementing a community-based effort called 'Amigos de los Monos' (Friends of the Monkeys). The Endangered Panamanian red spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi panamensis*) has been chosen as their flagship species because Katie's study revealed its near extirpation. This helps attract much needed funding which is used to protect the natural resources of the Rio Coco and Rio Cana Blanca communities of the Conte Burica Ngäbe Indigenous Territory.

Local primate populations are threatened by habitat fragmentation and hunting, which are fostered by a lack of law enforcement. Katie's preliminary interviews with the Ngäbe have revealed that community support for conservation of the spider monkey relies on the complexities of the socio-economic elements in the region. The local inhabitants have the familiar and immediate consideration of supporting the needs of the community versus protecting the natural environment.



*Picture of a juvenile red faced Panamanian spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi panamensis*). Photograph by Alison Mann*

There are now funds in place thanks to the fundraising effort of photographer Kimberly Nixon. The money raised has helped to complete the building of a school in the Rio Coco community and Katie is hopeful that this will offer them incentive for further conservation efforts.

'Amigos de los Monos' anticipate that in six months there will be a community action plan for conservation in place and the funds to implement it. Currently Katie is supported by a small grant from Primate Conservation Inc. in order to build the foundations of the project. She is also collaborating with Dr. Robert Horwich, the catalyser of the Community Baboon Sanctuary in Belize and the director of Community Conservation Inc. He is serving as an advisor to the project and is helping to secure funding. One of the resolutions already being precipitated is to strengthen the capacity of the COVIRENAS who are a group of volunteer forest guards

The MSc has provided Katie with the skills needed to assist in this project. Apart from enabling her to understand the complexities of conservation initiatives, the course afforded her the practical skills of the world of grant writing, planning and conducting conservation work and preparing publications. The Masters course has developed her skills as a conservationist and has given her the confidence to develop her vision.

Katie's enthusiasm will no doubt encourage other researchers to become involved. At present people from a variety of fields such as agro-forestry, cultural anthropology, environmental education, conservation biology and primatology are needed to contribute their expertise and energy to the project which is still in its infancy of development.

For more information on 'Amigos de los Monos' email Katie at katiemann@planetsave.com or katiemann@yahoo.co.uk

Tracking Ex-students in the Field: Sheena Hynd (Class of 2002-2003)

Monitoring Rehabilitated Orangutans in Malaysian Borneo

by Karen Browne

Sheena Hynd completed her MSc in Primate Conservation in June 2003. She took her first trip out to Sabah in Malaysian Borneo during her Easter break to work with The Sepilok Orangutan Appeal UK as their liaison officer at the Sepilok Rehabilitation Centre. Later she returned to work as liaison officer until September 2004 when the charity employed her to monitor orang-utans released onto the reserve.

Sheena now runs the project in Sabah that involves translocating orang-utans by helicopter from the Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve to the Tabin Wildlife Reserve. The project is managed from a post-release monitoring research base camp. There she leads a team of eight local research assistants who follow the apes from 5am to 7pm daily. The juvenile orang-utans are monitored until they are fully-adapted to life in the wild.

Whilst looking at all aspects of their behaviour, the researchers are particularly interested in feeding, ranging and nesting activities. Instantaneous point sampling and focal animal sampling are used for data collection while ranging behaviour is collected using GPS. Report writing and statistical skills learned on the Masters course have been invaluable. The local research assistants have all been trained in appropriate data collection procedures, data inputting and use of GPS units.

The camp at Tabin Wildlife Reserve. Photograph by Sheena Hynd

Due to the isolation of the reserve and in particular the camp, supplies are only delivered once every three months by helicopter, which means that food is either dried, preserved or tinned. When the chance presents itself, someone is always willing to go to the nearest town to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

'The main highlight of working there is being surrounded by the rainforest and being able to watch the orang-utans every day and see them develop. You get to observe their individual characters and personalities and it is a joy to be part of their world. The amount of wildlife that is within the reserve is lovely to see and living in the forest means that I wake up to the sounds of gibbons singing, elephants calling to one another and the haunting sounds of the orang-utan long calls, what more could you want?'

The project at Tabin is estimated to run for four years, funding permitting. There are plans to develop a volunteer programme and as the project grows there may be a need for additional researchers. Sheena is committed to monitoring these serene and fascinating apes and plans to continue making a difference in the field of primate conservation for many years to come. To read more about the work of the appeal and the rehabilitation centre please see their website;
www.orangutan-appeal.org.uk

Sheena Hynd

Past student projects (2005-2006)

Microhabitat variables influencing abundance and distribution of the southern purple-faced leaf monkey and dusky toque macaque in a fragmented rainforest network in Sri Lanka

By Pamela Heidi Douglas
highland_chimp@yahoo.ca

One of the fundamental goals of ecology is monitoring and predicting the abundance of species (Pollock, 2006). As burgeoning human populations, deforestation, and habitat fragmentation continue to threaten the existence of nonhuman primates in Southeast Asia, it becomes increasingly important to document their numbers as a means of assessing their current status and survival potential (Pabla & Mathur, 1999). My project was conducted in Sri Lanka's arduous and relatively unexplored Wet Zone, and focused on the purple-faced leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus vetulus vetulus*) and dusky toque macaque (*Macaca sinica aurifrons*).

*Purple-faced leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus vetulus vetulus). *Photograph by Heidi Douglas*

Sri Lanka has been classified as a Biodiversity Hotspot and one of the world's eight hottest hotspots (Myers et al, 2000), with the Wet Zone harbouring a high proportion of the island's endemic flora and fauna. My aim was to address the paucity of information that has been published both on Sri Lanka's Wet Zone and its endemic primates, by conducting a survey of the purple-faced leaf monkey and toque macaque. Vegetation analysis also formed a significant component of my study, as primates cannot be conserved without an understanding of their surrounding habitat, and knowledge of how the primates and the rainforests are interconnected and mutually dependent. Eleven forest fragments, located along a proposed biological corridor, were surveyed using the point-quarter technique of plotless vegetation sampling, and by employing both line transect and auditory sampling methods to survey the presence of primates.

Dusky toque macaque (Macaca sinica aurifrons). *Photograph by Heidi Douglas*

Both species of primates were found in six of the surveyed fragments. Vegetation parameters which were positively correlated with primate presence included canopy continuity, tree height, and tree DBH. Additional parameters, which were not quantified but were believed to serve as indicators of primate presence/absence, were anthropogenic disturbance and the level of isolation of the forest fragment from other forests. Two forest fragments were completely isolated from neighbouring forests. Primates were found in neither of these sites, where the ramifications of edge effects were suggested to be detrimental and unusually high. The group size of the purple-face leaf monkeys was also remarkably low, with only one or two individuals sighted in a group, and infants and

juveniles absent from all sightings.

Due to the conspicuous nature of the purple-faced leaf monkey, auditory sampling using triangulation proved to be far more successful than line transect sampling. These monkeys were sighted in only three patches, but their loud calls were documented in six patches. Loud call bouts were recorded on several occasions and occurred most frequently just after daybreak. Spectrographic analysis of the calls revealed both intrasite variation (suggesting that calls may reveal individual characteristics) and intersite differences. Variation in call structure and composition may be influenced by habitat parameters or the structure of their social groups, and awaits further study. If information regarding the caller's social status (solitary male or alpha in a harem group) and habitat can be discovered through the analysis of loud calls, it could greatly enhance the effectiveness and scope of auditory sampling in the continued monitoring and conservation of these endangered primates.

Outcomes of this study suggest that the loud calls of purple-faced leaf monkeys present a plethora of possibilities and questions for future study, and that it is essential to consider the surrounding vegetation and habitat matrix in order to conserve the primates in this region. The presence or absence of primates is often intricately tied to the status and composition of the forests, and the health and ability of different forest patches to sustain viable populations of primates is of key importance in the continued development of corridor initiatives.

Myers, N., Mittermeier, R. A., Mittermeier, C. G., da Fonseca, G. A. B., and Kent, J. (2000). Biodiversity hotspots for conservation priorities. *Nature*. 403(6772): 853-858.

Pabla, H. S. and Mathur, V. B. (1999). Planning for conservation of biological diversity: lessons learnt from Sri Lanka. *Loris*. 22(5): 30-36.

Pollock, J. F. (2006). Detecting population declines over large areas with presence-absence, time-to-encounter, and count survey methods. *Conservation Biology*. 20(3): 882-892.

Comparative Analysis of Vocalizations in three Populations of Galagoides (Primates, Galagidae)

by Johan Karlsson
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The speed of discovery of previously unknown species of galagos (Primates, Galagidae) over the past two decades has led to a systematic turbulence without comparison in any other primate group (Groves 2001). The primary factor behind the discoveries of new species stems from the application of galago vocal analysis in species identification (Bearder *et al.* 1995; Grubb *et al.* 2003). Based on theories of the Recognition Concept of Species all species have a specific-mate recognition system (SMRS) that is species-specific (Paterson 1985)-

Mountain dwarf galago (Galagoides orinus)
© Nocturnal Primate Research Group

which in galagos include distinctive advertising calls used by both males and females (Bearder 1987; Zimmerman 1990).

The aim of this study was to qualitatively and quantitatively assess existing recordings from the Nocturnal Primate Research Groups's sound archives of advertising calls of the two poorly researched galago species *Galagoides* sp. nov. 1 (Kalwe galago) of Nhkata Bay, Malawi; G. sp. nov. 3 (Ukinga galago) of Mt Rungwe, Tanzania; and the possible subspecific population of *G. rondoensis* (Rondo dwarf galago) at Pugu forest reserve (Pugu dwarf galago), Tanzania, in order to establish their taxonomic rank. To achieve this, advertising calls of the target species were compared to homologue calls from established sister taxa. Since finer grained information of specificity can be derived from other loud calls (Zimmerman 1990; Bearder et al. 1995; Honess 1996), complementary comparisons of other parts of the vocal repertoire were also compared where relevant.

The Kalwe and Ukinga galago differed interspecifically in their advertising calls compared to their sister taxa on several established intraspecific stabile call variables (Zimmermann 1990; Masters 1991). However, few available advertising calls in the Ukinga galago's sister taxon, the mountain dwarf galago *(Galagoides orinus*), limited the number of possible comparisons resulting in a lack of statistical power due to small sample size. This warranted certain precautions in interpretations of the result until further advertising calls of the mountain dwarf galago could be tracked down and comparatively analyzed.

The Pugu dwarf galago advertising call was found to differ completely from its subspecific counterpart, the Rondo dwarf galago. This finding raised suspicions on whether the recordings analyzed actually originated from the Pugu dwarf galago or from the sympatric (geographically co-existing) population of Zanzibar galago (*Galagoides zanzibaricus*). The recordings were specifically identified through field notes – something that had worked fine when the galago call recordings originated from allopatric (geographically separated) populations. However, the suspicion of species identification confusion was confirmed by Professor Simon Bearder and Mr Andrew Perkin after the completion of the dissertation. It was clear the analyzed recordings originated from both the Rondo dwarf and the Zanzibar galago.

In spite of the mishap in that last comparison the findings from this study emphasize the recognized species diversity within the primate family Galagidae and stress the importance of elucidating its taxonomy for current and future habitat preservation and conservation efforts.

Rondo dwarf galago (Galagoides rondoensis)
© Nocturnal Primate Research Group

Reforestation feasibility study around the Los Cedros Biological Reserve North- Western Ecuador

by Noga Shanee

The brown headed spider monkey (*Ateles fusciseps fusciseps*) is Critically Endangered with an estimated 250 individuals left in the wild. It is currently restricted to a small number of protected areas in the Choco-Darien floristic region of north-western South America, one of which is the Los Cedros Biological Reserve in Ecuador. The area is one of the most threatened ecosystems in the world. It is known as a biodiversity hotspot and conservation priority because of its species richness, high levels of endemism, and threat from human activities. The threats to this area and species are closely linked to human land usage resulting from increased population growth and poverty. I have tried to assess the feasibility of a large scale reforestation and restoration project aimed at supplying economic alternatives for the local communities to lessen the pressures of logging on primary forest and increase the quality of previously degraded areas.

I set up a tree nursery and direct seeding plots to identify the most suitable and cost-efficient propagation techniques for four native tree species, *Ocotea sp. (Lauraceae) Cedrela odorata (Meliaceae), Gracinia madruno (Gutiferae) and Otoba gordonifolia (Myristicaceae).* Direct seeding is a technique in which seeds of primary forest fruit trees are sown in secondary forests to accelerate succession. The species were chosen according to their usefulness to both human and non-human primates. The limited time of the research did not allow for conclusive results, but it seems that direct seeding and the cultivation of seedlings that had previously germinated in the wild (wildlings) are both promising techniques for further investigation. I also produced a reforestation video guide, accompanied with a printed handbook to provide local communities and future volunteers at the Los Cedros Reserve with accessible and concise knowledge needed for the initiation of larger scale reforestation work.

I surveyed people's ideas and attitudes toward economic alternatives to logging of primary forest. People mainly utilised hard-wood, primary forest trees for both commercial and private consumption, but suggested fast growing native and non-native trees to be planted for future use. I encountered high levels of enthusiasm within local communities toward alternatives to their current logging practices, but also a feeling of helplessness that has resulted from the lack of opportunities to develop alternatives. This would seem to be incompatible with the fact that the area is considered a high priority for conservation with a large number of integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs) in the area.

I conclude that reforestation of the area is feasible and desirable if started at the grass-roots levels. A good way to facilitate this would be by initiating community-based nurseries and promoting economic enterprises that include reforestation. The Los Cedros Reserve is expected to become a research centre for reforestation techniques and information distribution, as well as a seed bank for neighbouring communities.

Young Ocotea seedlings in the nursery. Photograph by Noga Shanee.

Staff Profile: Mika Peck

by Dervla Dowd

Mika Peck has a multidisciplinary background ranging from environmental science to tropical ecology. He graduated with a degree in Environmental Science from the University of Sussex. He then completed an MSc in Water Resource Systems Engineering from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. He followed on from this with a PhD in Tropical Ecology at the University of Stirling.

Following on from his PhD, Mika Peck was involved in a number of research projects which included: The risks of uranium mining and tourism on aquatic systems of the Kakadu National Park, Australia (Hogan et al 2005; Peck et al 2002); The impact of altitude and landuse on Ecuadorian aquatic macroinvertebrate fauna (Monaghan et al, 2000); Identification of 'gender bender' chemicals in UK and French riverine systems and The development of a genetic biomarker of marine contamination for the Iberian Peninsula.

Today Mika Peck is focusing his main research and conservation interest on the establishment of the DARWIN INITIATIVE PRIMENET PROJECT in North-West Ecuador, an ongoing scheme that has developed over the last four years. The main goal of this project is to develop a sustainable network for primate conservation, with particular emphasis on the Critically Endangered brown-headed-spider-monkey *(Ateles fusciceps fusciceps),* while using an interdisciplinary approach through monitoring, education and sustainable livelihoods of the local communities.

Mika Peck is currently teaching the Genetics and Population Management module for our MSc in Primate Conservation.

Publications

Hogan, A., Peck, M., and Kennet R. (2004). Screening for endocrine disrupting compounds in Kakadu National Park plunge pools. *Report to Ecological Risk Assessment, Environmental Research Institute of the Supervising Scientist*, Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia.

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Menezes, S., Soares, A.M.V.M., Gulhermino, L. and Peck, M.R. (2006). Biomarker responses of the estuarine brown shrimp Crangon crangon L. to non-toxic stressors: Temperature, salinity and handling stress effects. Journal *of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology,* **335** (1), 114-122.

Monaghan, K., Peck, M., Brewin, P., Masiero, M., Zarate, E., Turcotte, P. and Ormerod, S.J. (2000). Macroinvertebrate distribution in Ecuadorian Hillstreams: the effect of altitude and land-use. *Archive fur Hydrobiologie,* **149**(3), 421-440.

Peck, M., Coterill, Blanco, F., Ferraz, A., Cotrim, A. da Silva, F. and Wilkins, R. (1995). Field experiments to compare the movement of diuron from wettable powder and controlled release formulations in a Brazilian soil. A. Walker, ed. In *Pesticide Movement to Water Monograph No 62.* BCPC Publications.

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Peck, M., Klessa, D., and Baird, D.J. (2002). A tropical sediment toxicity test using the dipteran *Chironomus crassiforceps* to test metal bioavailability with sediment pH change in tropical acid-sulphate sediments. *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*, **21**(4), 720-728.

Peck, M., Labadie, P., Minier, C., and Hill, E.M. (2007). Profiles of environmental and endogenous estrogens in the zebra mussel *(Dreissena polymorpha). Chemosphere.* Accepted 2007.

Staff Profile: Corri Waitt

by Dervla Dowd

Corri Waitt has an academic background in Anthropology (BSc) and Psychology (MSc, PhD). She has pursued two main areas of research throughout her career. The first, primate welfare, stemmed from research conducted during her MSc, in which she examined how caretaker routines could be changed to enhance primate welfare. Following on from this, her research has expanded into other important areas of captive primate well-being such as behavioural rehabilitation, the effects of capture and transport on primate health and welfare and the issue of surplus primates in captivity.

After her MSc, Corri Waitt began a study of rhesus macaques on Cayo Santiago. This experience helped her develop a deeper understanding of their behaviour, which proved extremely useful when advising on enrichment plans and behavioural rehabilitation protocols. She therefore encourages those of us who work as primate caregivers to take any opportunity to work with wild populations of the species in our care, as this may allow for a better understanding of their behaviour as well as ways in which their captive environment and care can be improved.

Her second main area of research is reproductive ecology and the factors influencing mating patterns. This topic of interest has led her to investigate the brilliant, hormonally-based displays of colouration which occur in primates and how such displays are involved in mate-choice and competition.

More recently, Corri Waitt has extended her animal welfare interests to farms animals. She is now working in collaboration with Professor Marian Dawkins on DEFRA-funded projects, looking specifically at the welfare of farm ducks and sheep.

Corri Waitt would finally like to advise the 2006-2007 cohort that although, we, as a group, have shown a keen interest to work with primates, we should never pass up any opportunity to work with other animals. Through this we may gain further insight and gain knowledge of new ideas and methods which may be applied back to primates.

Publications

Waitt, C., Gerald, M.S., Berard, J. (2004). Transfer from natal group related to presence of immature relatives among orphaned male rhesus macaques (*Macaca mulatta*). *Folia Primatologica*, 75, 101-103

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Waitt, C., Buchanan-Smith, H.M., Morris, K. (2002). The effects of primate-caretaker relationships on primates in the laboratory. *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, 5, 309-319

Primate Conservation Seminar Series

Each semester a group of MSc Primate Conservation students form the Speakers Committee and organise a weekly seminar series of guest lecturers who present talks on topics of relevance to primate conservation. The seminars are open to all that are interested and are held every Monday at the Headington Campus of Oxford Brookes University from 6pm until 7pm. To keep up to date with our seminar programme and for further details please visit our website:

http://ssl.brookes.ac.uk/primate/lecture-series.htm

If you would like to share your research and experiences with us and are interested in becoming a guest speaker please feel free to contact Professor Simon Bearder -

Email: skbearder@brookes.ac.uk
Tel: 01865 483760

Below is a list of the guest lecturers that presented talks during the spring semester of 2007:

Monday 29 January
Dr Mike Bruford, Cardiff University
Molecular ecology goes ape: what we have learned over the last decade

Monday 5 February
Richard Ranft, British Library, National Wildlife Sound Archives
Sonagrams – tips and pitfalls

Monday 12 February
Dr Andrew Smith, Anglia Ruskin University
Primate colour vision

Monday 19 February
Dr Crickette Sanz, Goualougo Triangle Chimpanzee Project
Conserving apes in the northern Congo

Monday 26 February
Greg Cummings, The Gorilla Organization
Community-based conservation around gorilla habitats in central Africa

Monday 12 March
Ian Redmond OBE, GRASP/Ape Alliance
GRASP - the last chance for great apes

Monday 19 March
Dr Simon Underdown, Oxford Brookes University and Dr Chris Taylor, Sense about Science
Handling the media to promote conservation

Monday 26 March
Prosper Uwingeli
Mountain gorilla conservation and the experience of regulated tourism in Rwanda

Monday 16 April
Rachel Hevesi, The Monkey Sanctuary Trust, Looe, Cornwall
Evolution of a primate sanctuary - a focus on Cornwall and South America

Primate Conservation Seminar -

Ian Redmond OBE

© Gordon Poole Agency Ltd

by Juliet Wright

On Monday 12th March, the MSc students had the pleasure of welcoming Ian Redmond to Oxford Brookes to give a talk entitled 'GRASP - the Last Chance for Great Apes'.

As one of the most respected advocates of great ape conservation and as somewhat of an iconic figure in his field, it proved to be an inspiration and a privilege to listen to Ian's experiences and hopes for the future. Ever since he became Dian Fossey's research assistant in 1976, Ian has been greatly involved in conservation efforts to save the mountain gorillas that he studied and the other great apes from extinction.

Making the feared but necessary leap from field biology to politics, Ian has now almost abandoned his beloved shorts for a suit in the name of conservation. In 2001 he ambitiously entered into the political arena at the highest level in an attempt to change environmental policies world-wide. As a direct result of his efforts, the Great Ape Survival Project (GRASP) was launched as an international initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme and UNESCO.

Established as a global partnership alliance of stakeholders, GRASP aims to inform policy makers, mobilise and pool resources for effective action and provide a communication platform to bring the decline of great ape populations to a halt. Technical support to great ape range states has been given a priority and National Great Ape Survival Plan (NGASP) workshops have helped governments to develop strategies for conserving their great ape populations.

Information and awareness raising has also formed a backbone of GRASP activities over the last six years. During his seminar, Ian stressed the importance of raising public awareness through the popular media as the key to influencing political opinion. He actively encouraged the MSc students to find ways of making their research meaningful and compelling to both decision makers and the general public.

Aside from GRASP, Ian also founded and chairs the Ape Alliance, which is an international coalition of organisations and individuals that work for the conservation and welfare of apes. Ape Alliance Working Groups are currently tackling the palm-oil issue and promoting carbon trading systems that focus on the preservation of tropical forests.

The Ape Alliance has played a central role in bringing the bushmeat crisis to the attention of academics, conservation organisations and the global media. Their most recent report entitled 'Recipes for Survival: Controlling the Bushmeat Trade' reveals how much has been achieved over the last decade and what still desperately needs to be done. Available to download from the Ape Alliance website, this is a must read for all who care about the future of Africa's great apes.

Ian's services to conservation were publicly acknowledged in 2006 when he was appointed an Officer of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, a recognition he duly deserves. It gives us all great encouragement that primate conservation is finally being recognised as the important field of endeavour that it truly is.

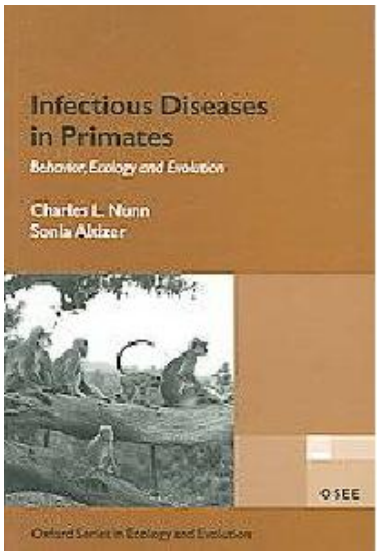
For further information please visit -

- GRASP - www.unep.org/grasp
- Ape Alliance - www.4apes.com

Book Review

Infectious Diseases in Primates: Behavior, Ecology and Evolution

Review by Sagan Friant



A recent surge in literature exploring primate parasite interactions reflects an increased interest in the field and has lead to this much-desired synthesis of information. By combining knowledge from the often disparate fields of anthropology, ecology, veterinary care, and epidemiology, this book explains the important and often overlooked role of disease in shaping primate behavioral ecology.

Nunn and Altizer illustrate the myriad ways in which infectious disease has and continues to shape primate behavioural ecology, evolution, and conservation. This book delves into evolutionary theory and presents a sound argument for the role of infectious disease in the history of our closest living relatives. Predation and competition for resources are traditionally accepted as the primary forces shaping primate evolution. This book describes ways in which primate behavior can be explained partially as avoidance mechanisms for infectious disease. From group size to self-medicating behaviors, theories are set forth and supporting research cited. Although recent publications have begun to test theories, surprisingly very little is actually known about infectious diseases in primates.

In addition to playing an important role in primate evolution, infectious disease has some very important implications for conservation, and thus the future of primates. While habitat destruction and hunting continue to have massive detrimental impacts on primate conservation, the damage can be exacerbated by infectious disease in the remaining and often fragmented populations. Conservation concerns include the effects of disease in captive breeding and re-introduction efforts; ecotourism and the spread of foreign pathogens; wild population declines and altered host-parasite dynamics; and the increased encroachment of humans and domesticated animals into primate habitats.

A great deal of research still needs to be done to test theories and to monitor wildlife in order to understand parasite host-dynamics and plan conservation strategies. This book provides numerous avenues for future research and also highlights challenges in carrying out such endeavors.

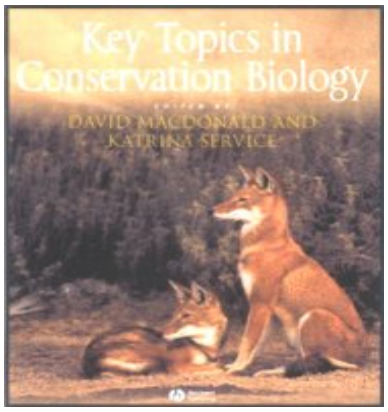
<u>About the Authors</u>

Charles Nunn is a research scientist at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Integrative Biology at the University of California in Berkeley, USA. His research interests include primate behaviour, disease ecology and comparative biology.

Sonia Altizer is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Ecology of the University of Georgia, USA . Her research focuses on the ecology and evolution of host-pathogen interactions in wild animal populations.

Book Review
Key Topics in Conservation Biology

Review by Karen Browne



Key Topics in Conservation Biology
Edited by David MacDonald and Katrina Service.
Published by Blackwell 2007.

Aimed at conservation biology students and conservation practitioners, this book critically examines current key topics including human-wildlife conflict, prioritisation, relevance of animal welfare and non-government organisations plus the roles of modelling, meta-population processes and technology. The essays cover the human dimension, fundamental principles of the topic and its associated methodologies. The chapters address crucial questions about managing conservation in the light of climate change and the impacts of modern molecular techniques.

Each subject is dealt with by three international experts, who examine the issues from theoretical and practical perspectives. This up-to date collection of articles is by a number of distinguished authors including: David Brown, Stephen Cobb, Sandra Baker, John E. Fa, Gordon Luikart, David MacDonald, Chris Newman, Stuart L. Pimm, Andrew Rowan, Adrian Treves, Robin Waples and Stephen Cobb.

This book reflects the interdisciplinary nature of biodiversity conservation requiring the collaboration of specialists from a broad spectrum of disciplines.

Primate Society of Great Britain

Celebrating 40 Years!

by Juliet Wright

2007 marks the 40th anniversary of the Primate Society of Great Britain (PSGB). The forthcoming Winter Meeting to be held in London promises to be a memorable event with a plethora of prominent primatologists speaking on a diverse range of topics. However, so as not to spoil any surprises and let more than I should out of the bag, I will leave any curious minds with the website address - www.psgb.org - and the instruction to read the next edition of *Primate Eye* to find out more.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the newly-appointed Student Representative of the PSGB. It is my role to raise student issues with committee members and provide useful information to students interested in primatology. My email address is jhwright@brookes.ac.uk; please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any comments or questions regarding the PSGB and primatology issues in general.

Juliet working as a volunteer at the Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund. Photograph by Tony Moulsdale, Tigress Productions

Opinion -

Is it ethical to collaborate with international corporations on conservation issues?

by Elise Queslin

The natural resources of the world and biodiversity are gifts to humanity. Everyone should feel concerned and responsible for their survival and prosperity. However, the future survival of natural resources is increasingly being placed in the hands of a few international corporations.

Companies such as Shell, Rio Tinto, Total and B.P. make huge profits by mining and exploiting natural resources like wood, gold, diamond, coal and oil. Unfortunately, some of the extraction zones are located in areas where both the environment and biodiversity are flourishing. People living in those regions are dependent on forest products, and industrial actions have negative repercussions on their work and life.

Although companies argue that their activities create employment for locals, the consequences on the land can be catastrophic on various levels. Effects on the environment due to extractive processes can include: the destruction of areas with high endemic biodiversity, water pollution and the displacement of local people and disruption of their lives. In addition, some worry that jobs created by the industries will provide only short term employment for local people, if indeed these jobs are given to local people at all.

The weight of money is more powerful than local villagers fighting to defend their land or environmental associations trying to raise awareness and conserve the ecosystems. Due to the amount of money these companies bring to a country, most of the projects will go forward despite protests and the possibility of irreversible consequences.

Many of these companies reserve a proportion of their annual budget to support conservation, environment protection or human rights projects. This money is usually donated to non-governmental organisations, funding agencies and universities to support environmental and ecological projects, scholarships, environmental education and local development. Therefore, one may question whether associations acting for the protection of the environment should accept this money. What are the moral issues involved? Is it ethical for organizations advocating protection of the environment to work with these corporations?

On one hand, some people will argue that it is completely illogical for conservation agencies to be associated with these industries. It does not fit with their beliefs; therefore they should not accept the money. Large companies often engage in destructive activities with limited concern for the environmental consequences. Donating to conservation projects portrays concern for nature in order to mask the harmful effects of their actions on the environment. Ultimately, it seems completely unfair that people who suffer as a result of the actions of mining and logging companies are not those who actually benefit from resource use.

If environmental associations accept the money, it could be argued that they are indirectly encouraging the destruction of the environment and closing their eyes to the real situations in the field. Nevertheless, conservation is a field where funds are lacking. It can be argued that not taking the offered money will not stop the actions of the company. The association between environmental groups and big companies may be the only way to influence them and make them realise the importance of protecting ecosystems and wildlife. We have to work with them rather than against them. Although we cannot make their activities stop, conservation agencies can have some kind of impact on their decisions and perhaps make them change.

One of the moral issues associated with accepting funding is to ensure the money is not given solely to benefit the company. For instance, when a budget is offered to assess the effects of a mine on the land or to monitor the environmental conditions before mining, it should be obligatory that those involved in the research have no vested interest as a result of their association with the donor. An example may help shed some light on the situation. A PhD student, sponsored by a French logging company, conducted a density survey on a chimpanzee population in Cameroon. He compared the number of nests in both long-term and short-term concessions and in non-logging parcels. Some of his results were unfavourable to the sponsoring company, highlighting the negative consequences of logging on the chimpanzee population. However, the company did not stop the funding and did not try to stop the publication. Their only request was to read the piece of work beforehand. Therefore, complete freedom in the way the money is spent and complete freedom in publishing articles should be the most important points if funding is considered ethical.

Ethical considerations must to be taken into account when deciding whether or not to accept money from an industrial company. Some will consider this partnership unethical and contrary to the purpose of the conservation agency. This is only a personal opinion, but it seems more appropriate to work with these corporations and provide them with scientific information regarding the environmental consequences of their actions rather than step back for ethical reasons. Furthermore, people and economics still rely heavily on coal, gas, oil and wood. Constant growing human population creates an overwhelming demand and pressure for the resources. While it is important to work in habitat countries along with local communities on sensitive issues such as bushmeat trade or habitat degradation, as conservationists one of our main missions must also be to raise awareness for environmental protection and energy consumption in occidental countries.

"Westerners" are massive energy consumers in general. Wealthy people tend to have a preference for luxurious and expensive wood to decorate their home, interior with little regard to the origin of the wood or the repercussions of this extraction for both the land, its wildlife and local people. Unfortunately, this consumption creates an important market and generates loads of money. The mining and logging companies are given a good reason to continue their work. In a perfect world, human beings would not consume natural resources at such a high level or waste non-renewable energies. They would ask questions about the consequences on the environment and the future of next generations. But it seems that conservation is still not a priority for most people. It is our challenge to reverse this tendency in an attempt to change behaviour and way of consumption. Only then will mining companies have no interests in extracting at such a high rate and expanding their activities.

At the moment, large companies have the money; and conservationists need the income to continue their indispensable work. If part of the tremendous profit of large companies can help a noble cause, support researchers, finance projects and protect what can still be protected, this money should be accepted without any remorse providing these companies do not have control over the use of monies donated.

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International Congress Prosimians 2007

(Ithala, South Africa, July 15–19, 2007)

Chair and general organization:

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The 2nd Congress of the European Federation for Primatology (EFP) will be organized on September 3 – 7, 2007 by the Department of Biology and Environmental Education of the Faculty of Education, Charles University in Prague in cooperation with the Czech Group of Primatologists at the Faculty of Education, Charles University in Prague.

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Project Site: Ecuador

Research opportunities are available at the Los Cedros Biological Reserve (NW Ecuador) and local communities surrounding the Cotocachi-Cayapas Ecological reserve within the framework of the Darwin Initiative PRIMENET project.

The project aims to use the critically endangered brown-headed spider monkey (*Ateles fusciceps*) to develop education, habitat conservation and primate conservation initiatives. A key component is the training of 'parabiologists' to devolve conservation initiatives to the community level. Primates available for study at these sites include mantled howler monkeys (*Alouatta palliata*), white-faced capuchins (*Cebus capucinus*), and spider monkeys (*Ateles fusciceps*).

One members of staff (Mika Peck) is the principal investigator on the PRIMENET project.

MSc-students that have worked in Ecuador on the PRIMENET project:

- Noga Shanee
- Sam Shanee
- Fionn Magnusson
- Vicki Hughes

Related websites

PRIMENET
The aim of the Darwin Initiative PRIMENET project is to develop a comprehensive strategy for the critically endangered Brown-Headed Spider Monkey (Ateles fusciceps), vulnerable primates and habitats in NW Ecuador based on a programme of monitoring, education and sustainable livelihoods within local communities.

Visit website >>

Los Cedros Reserve
Los Cedros Reserve consists of 6000 hectares of premontane wet tropical forest and cloud forest. The reserve is a southern buffer zone for the 2000 km2 Cotocachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve, and both are part of the Choco Phytogeographical Zone. The Choco region is one of the most biologically diverse and endemic habitats on Earth.

Visit website >>