



I can't believe the first scheme is over. It feels like a lifetime ago that Sheila and I landed in Fort Dauphin and our first volunteers arrived! I wanted to write this newsletter quarterly to highlight the importance the assistance that volunteers brings to ACP, without your blood, sweat and occasional tears we would not have progressed as far as we have and, I hope this allows you to keep up-to-date with the progress of the research that you were so heavily involved in during your time with Azafady. I personally would like to thank you all for being so patient and understanding with the development of the new research as Sheila and I ironed out the inevitable issues that arise with setting up a new research project.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed S9 diurnal lemur studies
- Extended the research to S8
- Assisted QMM with biodiversity surveys – *Brookesia* (chameleon) and genetic Brown-collared lemur
- Conducted 10 educational lessons
- Designed an environmental education scheme of work
- Built 7 fuel efficient stoves
- Located 82 new *Dypsis saintlucei* individuals
- Caught a glimpse of the endemic *Phelsuma antanosy* twice



LEMURS –Over ten weeks we have accomplished so much – even completing diurnal studies in S9.



From 15 of the 30 transects walked, we saw 126 lemurs, with almost equal numbers of both collared-brown and southern-woolly lemurs. The majority of which were sighted from transect 1 with transect 4 having only one sighting over the whole ten week period. 94% of the lemurs were seen resting, at an average distance of 7.25m from the transect, with 28% spotted 'huddled together', 22% on same tree but above one another. Lemurs were inhabiting areas where 91% of the trees were less than 5cm DBH, though the DBH of the trees they were found residing in was substantially larger averaging at 16.2cm. Half of the lemurs observed were under at least a quarter canopy cover with the greatest proportion recorded with half of the canopy over their location covered by foliage. Half of the habitat plots recorded directly under the lemurs had the presence of stumps, 2 stumps per plots was the average.



COMMUNITY CONSERVATION – Fantastic development of the environmental education aspect of the module has occurred this scheme. Many thanks go to all who participated in the evolution of the lesson structure and the scheme of work. This will guide future volunteers to prepare environmental lessons that build on key themes to children 5-15yrs. To date we have conducted ten sessions; six to 10-14yr olds, four to 5-9 yr olds. I am very proud of what has been developed and can't wait for it to continue.



BUSH STORY!! -It was a typical Saint Luce morning, we were out in S9 collecting habitat data on T2 when Andreas heard an unusual chirping noise, it sounded like a bird. However, after an investigation, at which point curiosity got the better of us all and we all headed in the direction of the 'chirping' we were shocked to discover it was not a bird, but a mouse lemur that had just been caught by a *M. Colubrinus* snake. Nature can be cruel and yet fascinating at times. More pictures are on the Azafady facebook for those who are less squeamish.

Final word from Sarah: *I am leaving Azafady and Madagascar with a heavy heart. I know I will return, if for nothing more than to spot a lemur before Solo, to see the library built at the primary school and to gorge on the caramel pie at Samsara! I would dearly like to thank my sidekick, Sheila, for whom without I would have been lost, to Tsina for helping me adjust to Malagasy customs to, to Vayah and Ninette for keeping us all well fed, to the guides, Sylvie, Hoby and Andreas for helping me find my feet and for the many laughs and smiles we had along the way! To Lala for his guidance and Lisa for always being there whatever time of day! Finally to all you volunteers for joining us in our research which without your help would not be possible and to all those in Ambandrika that made us all feel so welcome, even me, when wearing 'the' tutu! Thank You!*

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