



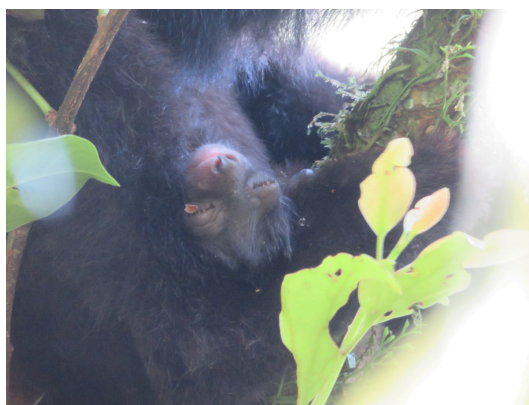
## Centre ValBio Newsletter

May 2025

### CVB News

#### Milne-Edwards's Sifaka Updates

The Props team has observed a new Milne-Edwards's sifaka (*Propithecus edwardsi*) infant in Group 4 TR. The infant was born on May 18. This is the earliest Milne-Edwards's sifaka born in Ranomafana National Park since 1986.



In other news, Tan Red (TALA Group 4) is the oldest female in the study site. Tan Red was born the first week of June 2004.

*Photo credit: MJ Ingmanson*

#### Stony Brook University Commencement

Stony Brook University Commencement was May 23. Congratulations to all graduates!

[Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy](#) came from Madagascar to be this year's Speaker at the Department of Anthropology ceremony.

"Jonah's accomplishments are multifold. As his PhD advisor, it was a sincere pleasure to have him return to be the honored speaker at this year's graduation ceremony. He is an inspiration to all students," said Dr. Patricia Wright.

Dr. Ratsimbazafy (SBU, 2002), a former student of Dr. Wright's, is now the president of the International Primatological Society (IPS).

"Returning to Stony Brook University 23 years after my own graduation was a deeply emotional and inspiring experience. The campus has transformed beautifully—so many places have changed that I almost didn't recognize them. The infrastructure is modern, the atmosphere vibrant—it's truly a better and more beautiful place.

"Stony Brook laid the foundations of who I am today. It shaped me, strengthened me, and gave me the tools to become the leader I am. I have never regretted choosing this university—it was a blessing. I was trained not to follow, but to lead.

"The graduation ceremony was magnificent—truly a grand event full of life and pride. I felt incredibly lucky to be there again. I hope this new generation of graduates feels the same: that Stony Brook is not an ordinary university, but it is among the best in the world.

"To the graduates, I say: follow in our footsteps with confidence. Carry forward the values and excellence of Stony Brook. As former President Shirley Strum Kenny once said: 'Wherever you go, whatever you do, keep Stony Brook proud.'"



– Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy

*Photo credit: Hannah Brown*

## **Biodiversity Survey after January 2025 Forest Fire**

Dina Andrianoely, CVB Head of Biodiversity and GIS, and his team have been monitoring biodiversity in areas that were affected by the January 2025 fire, including Amboditanimena and Vohiparara. The fire burned 122 hectares of Ranomafana National Park.





In the latest biodiversity survey, the team's main objective is to identify the areas and conduct research related to sifaka food and territory loss, assess insect species diversity, and develop a plant inventory.

Compared to last year, Dina and the team report there is no change in the composition of the followed study group, except that one juvenile female in Group 3 is missing. One sifaka group with several individuals lost their territory during the fire. From both burned sites of Amboditanimena and Vohiparara, 15 orders of insects were found and collected. Vohiparara has more fallen trees (331) and dead trees (472) than Amboditanimena. But only few trees were alive in the areas.

There are many impacts on wildlife in areas affected by the fire, such as damage to habitats and food sources, and especially the potential death of small species that cannot migrate (i.e., insects, frogs, and snakes). There was also disruption among various groups of lemurs due to migration during the fire, such as the sportive lemur and Milne-Edwards's sifaka.

The survey will help us better understand the fire's impact on the area and enable us to make informed recommendations for future prevention and restoration. This biodiversity survey was made possible through funds received following the fires earlier this year.

*Photo credit: Dina Andrianoely*

## Ring-tailed Lemur Translocation

During the expedition in Vohiparara to investigate the aftermath of the January 2025 fire, a ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*) individual was found by locals near the park entrance and was transferred to the CVB team. After going through necessary protocols with



Madagascar National Parks and the Chef Cantonment in Infanadiana, it was decided the lemur would be relocated, such as to Anja Reserve in Ambalavao. This process would take place after a 40-day quarantine stage, which may vary depending on the lemur's health, at a rescue where the individual could receive proper medical attention and first aid care.

This transfer was made possible by the collaboration between Centre ValBio, DREDD, Madagascar National Parks, Centre Reniala, Stony Brook University, and Dr. Patricia Wright.

*Photo credit: Dina Andrianoely*

## Ivohiboro: The Lost Forest at the Explorers Club in NYC

The film screening of *Ivohiboro: The Lost Forest* was sold out on May 5 at The Explorers Club in New York City.

The evening was filled with a reception; an introduction from Tony- and Emmy-award winning actress, four-time Oscar nominee, author and wildlife advocate Jane Alexander (pictured); the film screening; and a Q&A with Dr. Patricia Wright and researchers featured in the film. The group was joined by others who were instrumental in the production of the film and creation of the Ivohiboro Protected Area.



*Ivohiboro: The Lost Forest* will be screened again on Sunday, September 7 at the Museum of the Moving Image in partnership with Pioneer Works as part of MoMI's [\*Open Worlds: Science\*](#) series supported by the Simons Foundation's Science, Society & Culture division.

*Photo credit: Melanie Formosa*

## World Chameleon Day Celebrations

Centre ValBio celebrated International Chameleon Day on May 9 in Ranomafana with two activities.

At Ifanadiana High School, students had the chance to learn more about these chameleons through an official video released by the Ministry of Environment.



Then, at the Nature Center in Ranomafana village, younger students enjoyed drawing and coloring activities while also connecting with Eric Calendar from the U.S. for a fun and educational experience.

The CVB Education Department thanks Jocelyn and Eric Calendar for the collaboration.

*Photo credit: Lovasoa Razafindravony*

## **Stony Brook University Summer Study Abroad**

Stony Brook University's Summer 2025 Study Abroad program is underway! The group of nine students left from JFK on May 24 accompanied by Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy (SBU, 2002) and Dr. Amanda Rowe (SBU, 2024); both SBU PhD graduates advised by Dr. Patricia Wright.



The summer group arrived safely in Antananarivo and were quickly immersed in the unique wonders of Madagascar with a trip to the forests of Andasibe where the [Indris sing](#) their haunting morning calls. Indris are Madagascar's largest lemur species. Afterwards the group made the day-long drive to Centre ValBio in southeastern Madagascar.

The Summer program will keep the students busy with a course on methods for studying primates, another on comparing Madagascar's ecosystems—which includes a 10-day cross country trip to the Mozambique Channel—and an opportunity to put all that knowledge to work with an Independent Research project component. This final course will culminate in an academic level presentation to an audience of faculty, CVB staff, and researchers at CVB.

SBU's Madagascar Study Abroad programs are truly academically and life-enriching experiences. A generous grant from the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation has facilitated the participation of four Malagasy students this year. We look forward to seeing the relationships that are built and the career paths taken by all of these intrepid students.

Students from across the U.S. can apply to any of Stony Brook University's three Madagascar Study Abroad programs: Summer, Fall and



Winter. Follow this [link](#) to learn more. Malagasy students should contact Centre ValBio at [ask@valb.io](mailto:ask@valb.io) for information on how to participate.

*Photo credit: Patricia Paladines*

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