



Simias concolor

Primate Conservation Inc. UPDATE

1998

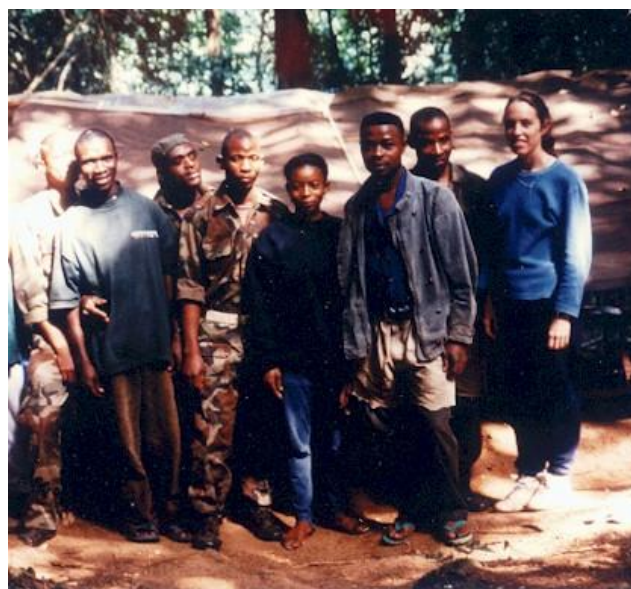
Director's Report

This summer PCI will celebrate our fifth year of giving support to research and conservation projects on the least know and most endangered primates. To date we have awarded funding to 75 projects in 23 different countries. Over 86% of our budget goes directly to field projects in habitat countries. Projects in Asia have received 42% of our funding, African projects 27%, Madagascar 25%, and South America 6%. Our grants have gone to study monkeys (43%), apes (22%), lemurs (19%), lorises (6%), and tarsiens (5%). We couldn't have done this without generous contributions. Thank you for helping us assist primate researchers in their important work. They are some of the hardest working people I know. Without their dedication under difficult physical conditions some of these endangered primates will be lost. We must do all we can to prevent the extinction of primate taxa. Please continue to give generously.

Selected Reports from the Field:

West Africa

Perhaps the saddest news we have to report is that both the Ivory Coast survey by Scott McGraw and the Ghana survey by Michael Abedi-Lartey for Miss Waldron's red colobus were unable to locate a single individual of this subspecies of red colobus which is known only from this region. Although it is not possible to say with certainty that this is the first primate taxon to disappear this century, the likelihood of finding this taxon seems to diminish with time. Even the local hunters interviewed had not encountered it recently. Though the forests where it thrived 10 years ago are degraded, they are still intact. Overhunting for the commercial bushmeat trade has taken a heavy toll on the mammalian inhabitants of these forests and throughout much of Western and Central Africa.



Kelley (right) with her field research team and camp staff.
Photo by J. Oates

Kelley McFarland is studying gorillas in Nigeria. This isolated population is found in the most western and northern part of the range of lowland gorillas. Kelly is currently studying the diet of these wary gorilla by following their trails, and by analyzing fecal samples. She is also collecting hair samples from nests for genetic analysis. There is recent evidence from skull measurements that this gorilla population may have been isolated for a long time. DNA studies of its hair may help substantiate the hypothesis that this is a fourth subspecies of gorilla. These gorillas are threatened by local hunters who kill gorillas, smoke the meat, and sell it. Kelly, who's project partially funded by PCI in 1996, has managed to stop the poaching for the 2 years. She has asked PCI for a renewal grant to continue her research and conservation

work into 1999. If you would like to help sponsor her project please call the director.

Katie Gonder has been studying the chimpanzees that inhabit Gashaka-Gumti National Park in the northeast Nigeria and in nearby Cameroon. Her preliminary results, which were published in Nature last fall, indicate that this population of chimps appears to be genetically quite different from the three known subspecies of chimpanzee and maybe recognized as a fourth subspecies when the analysis is completed.

Madagascar

Jonah Ratsimbazafy is a researcher from Madagascar who is working toward a Ph D at SUNY Stony Brook. With partial funding from PCI he returned to Manombo Special Reserve in the southeastern part of his country to assess the effects of a cyclone which knocked down 60% of the trees in this reserve. The lemurs that inhabit this forest, including *Eulemur fulvus albocollaris* which is found only in this and one other reserve, are having a difficult time finding enough food. They have been seen crossing large grassy areas to get to small patches of forest. This is very uncommon behavior for arboreal lemurs. Detailed results of his study will soon be published in the journal Conservation Biology. It is sobering to realize how vulnerable endangered species are to natural disasters when they are confined to the little islands of habitat that we humans have left for them.



Jonah giving a talk to the Springs School in East Hampton, New York.

The class has adopted a school near Manombo Special Reserve and sent pens, pencils, and other educational materials for their school.

Asia

Lisa Pachulli was awarded a grant in 1994 to study the simakobu which is the local name of the pig tailed langur which is found only on the Mentawai Islands off the west coast of Sumatra in Indonesia. She established the Betamouga Field Station on the remote southwestern part of North Pagai Island which was accessible only by boat, canoe and a 45-minute walk. She has managed to habituat and study these monkeys. She is collecting data on their ecology and social system.



Lisa sitting on trees that were part of her study site until illegal logging took place in early 1997.

This is one of the few primates that has been reported to commonly live in both monogamous groups and multimale multifemale groups. In April of 1997 while in the US consulting with her thesis committee, she got word that illegal logging was taking place near her study site. She immediately returned to Indonesia to find the loggers had built a road to her study site and had logged half of it. Unwilling to give up on the forest and the monkeys she is studying, she persuaded the loggers to stop cutting and negotiated with the owners, the forestry department, and the central government. She was successful in establishing a 1700 acre protected research area with demarcated boundaries. She is continuing her research and doing conservation work with the local villages so that they can make a living without cutting down the forest. One idea being pursued is the cultivation of a plant from which patchouli oil perfume is made.

Donations

PCI is funded by tax deductible donations. In March PCI received a large cash donation from Pogonias Press which is the publisher of The Pictorial Guide to the Living Primates. Abigail Barber, the treasurer of Pogonias Press reports that sales of the book have been steady, and this book turned a profit in late 1997 and the company was able to make donations to 4 different organizations which help protect endangered primates in their natural habitats. If you aren't familiar with this beautiful book, it is the only book to treat each of the 234 species of primates separately with over 500 color photographs. It can be ordered directly from the publisher by calling 1 800 296 6310. If you mention PCI and you will get a 20% discount.

Books for Conservation

Tom Plant, one of PCI's supporters, initiated a book distribution project in 1997 and 1998. Primate field researchers and conservationists were contacted and asked to nominate people in habitat countries who would find The Pictorial Guide to the Living Primates useful for their work but who were unable to afford it. Copies of the book were then sent to the people nominated. To date over 70 books have been given to people working to protect primates in 10 countries. If you would like to help this or any other project please call the director.

Tax Advantages for Donors

Until June 30, 1998 Congress allows a charitable deduction for the full value of a gift of appreciated stock to private 501 (c) (3) foundations like PCI. Although it is hoped that this provision will be renewed for another year, this is by no means certain. If you would like to make a contribution of stock, please call the director before the end of June. We need your support so we can continue to fund the many projects which are helping to protect and study the least know and most endangered prosimians, monkeys and apes. Sincerely, Noel Rowe Director

Noel B Rowe
Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Noel Rowe".