Oryx

New issue: March 2024

By Emma Sinnett, 25th March 2024

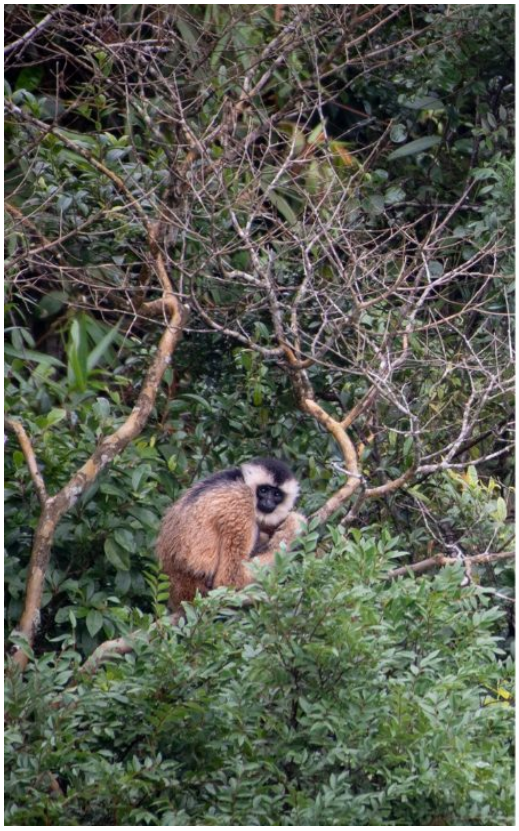
Our March 2024 issue includes a special section on primate conservation, featuring lemurs, langurs, lorises and more. From using drones to survey gibbon populations in Vietnam, to establishing canopy bridges across the island of Langkawi, Malaysia, the articles highlight several primate species and important conservation techniques, both traditional and novel. In the lead article, Rafanoharana et al. project forest cover in Madagascar's protected areas, providing hope that forest blocks will remain large enough to allow lemurs to persist to 2050, potentially allowing time to implement effective conservation measures. In the Editorial, Oklander et al. discuss the plight of primates worldwide, and how locally-led, collaborative conservation is key to securing the future of our closest living relatives.

For a broader look at primate conservation research, we have compiled a virtual issue containing the six articles from our latest issue and an additional nine papers published in Oryx over the last few years.

The March issue also includes a Briefly section shining a spotlight on primates, plus a host of Conservation News items and book reviews! Find out more about the issue's content, including our Editor's picks, below:

Primate conservation

- Projecting forest cover in Madagascar's protected areas to 2050 and its implications for lemur conservation – *Rafanoharana et al.* (blog here)
- Assessment of ring-tailed lemur *Lemur catta* populations in south-western Madagascar – *Randrianjaka et al.*
- Recent studies on Indian primates show declining population trends, even in protected areas – *Hameed et al.*
- Population dynamics and conservation status of the white-headed langur in the Chongzuo forest fragments, Guangxi, China – *Tang et al.*
- UAV-assisted counts of group size facilitate accurate population surveys of the Critically Endangered cao vit gibbon *Nomascus nasutus* – *Yeo et al.*
- Recommendations for the establishment of a trans-island canopy bridge network to support primate movement across Langkawi Island, Malaysia – *Galea et al.*



Wearn et al. found that drone-mounted thermal cameras can help when you are trying to find and count super rare gibbons! They used UAV cameras with thermal imaging to assist a population survey of the cao vit gibbon *Nomascus nasutus* in Viet Nam, finding that the thermal video footage revealed additional individuals not counted by ground-based surveyors. Photos: Oliver Wearn.

Behind the cover

Madagascar has often made headlines for its high deforestation rates and conservation challenges, and the forest-dwelling Vulnerable brown lemur *Eulemur fulvus* of Madagascar (pictured) is one of more than 100 lemur species assessed on the IUCN Red List. However, extrapolation of current deforestation rates to 2050 indicates that the protected area system will continue to provide a stronghold for the conservation of forest ecosystems and lemurs for at least the next 30 years. This should allow sufficient time for the implementation of effective conservation measures (see Rafanoharana et al.). Along with five additional Articles and the accompanying Editorial, this issue of Oryx examines some of the major contemporary challenges for the conservation of primates. (Photograph ©David Pattyn/NaturePL).

A brown lemur *Eulemur fulvus*. Photo: David Pattyn/NaturePL.

Editorial

Advancing conservation of threatened primates – *Oklander, Ang & Ikemeh*

According to the IUCN Red List, approximately 64% of all currently recognized species of non-human primates are threatened. Deforestation, habitat fragmentation, human–wildlife conflicts and trade are amongst the key threats driving their decline, and financial and logistical challenges can hinder conservation efforts. Long-term monitoring and technologies such as camera traps and drones are continuing to improve our knowledge and conservation practices, but with so many species threatened, how can the future of primates be secured? Crucially, primate conservation needs to foster inclusivity and be embedded in local leadership, and local stakeholders need to be provided with the opportunities and resources to support long-term research and conservation work.

‘Across the major regions where primates live—Africa, Asia, Madagascar and the Neotropics—we see an urgent need to enhance local capacity-building programmes and networking to nurture and support the next generation of primate conservationists.’

Hameed et al. reviewed 2 decades of conservation research on Indian primates, including the Endangered Gee's golden langur *Trachypithecus geei* (pictured). The majority of studies showed declining population trends, with habitat loss and fragmentation among the main threats to the survival of Indian primates. Photo: KK/Adobe Stock.

Editor's picks

1. Projecting forest cover in Madagascar's protected areas to 2050 and its implications for lemur conservation – *Rafanoharana et al.* (blog here)
2. Environmental education in the classroom: pilot study in Cabo Verde suggests differing impacts on local knowledge and environmental attitudes – *Rice et al.*
3. Translocation as a tool for the conservation of the jaguar *Panthera onca*: a case study in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest – *Azevedo et al.*
4. Linking crop availability, forest elephant visitation and perceptions of human–elephant interactions in villages bordering Ivindo National Park, Gabon – *Mbamy et al.*

More than 100 species of lemurs occur in Madagascar, such as the spectacular diademed sifaka Propithecus diadema in the humid forest. Photo: Ute Meede.

Other content

- Developing a framework to improve global estimates of conservation area coverage – *Sykes et al.* (blog post here)
- Living with leopards: an assessment of conflict and people's attitudes towards the common leopard *Panthera pardus* in a protected area in the Indian Himalayan region – *Kichloo et al.* (blog post here)
- Binturong ecology and conservation in pristine, fragmented and degraded tropical forests – *Honda et al.* (blog post here)
- Living on the edge: forest edge effects on microclimate and terrestrial mammal activity in disturbed lowland forest in Sumatra, Indonesia – *Slater et al.*
- Breeding in an agricultural landscape: conservation actions increase nest survival in a ground-nesting bird – *Kiss et al.* (blog post here)
- Status of the snow leopard *Panthera uncia* in the Qilian Mountains, Gansu Province, China – *Zhang et al.*

Honda et al. investigated habitat associations of the binturong, an important seed disperser in Southeast Asia, finding them to be adaptable to moderate levels of human disturbance but noting that preserving adequate forest cover is crucial. Photos: Binturong images captured in surveys by the Ecological Cascades Lab, led by Dr Matthew Luskin, at the University of Queensland, Australia.

Conservation news

- IUCN Red List Training and Assessment Workshop for Africa's Bats, Namibia – *Mickleburgh et al.*
- The Dam Removal Europe movement reaches Romania – *Hac et al.*
- All sawfish now Critically Endangered but sustained conservation efforts can lead to recovery – *Harry et al.*
- Important Marine Mammal areas celebrated—yet some are now in danger – *Hoyt et al.*
- Introducing the Seaweed Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission – *Arafeh-Dalmau et al.*
- Workshop for the protection of Chinese giant salamanders – *Mao et al.*
- Unexpected timing of mature female sturgeon migration in the Danube River – *Ionescu & Congiu*
- Saving the Endangered daisy tree *Scalesia cordata* from the brink of extinction on the Galapagos Islands – *Jäger et al.*
- Rediscovery of *Barleria maclaudii* (Acanthaceae) in Guinea after 86 years – *Rieder et al.*
- A new-born Arabian leopard cub at the Wild Mammal Breeding Centre in Oman – *Aloufi et al.*
- 22nd Sharjah International Conservation Forum for Arabia's Biodiversity – *Seddon et al.*
- *Manglietia ventii* blooms for the first time in Kunming Botanical Garden – *Tang et al.*
- Use of plant tissue culture to conserve the Critically Endangered *Petrocosmea grandiflora* in China – *Meng et al.*
- Rediscovery of *Swertia dilatata pilosa* after 140 years – *Singh et al.*
- November 2023 international forum on species in Haikou, China – *Xie et al.*

Giant kelp forest of Macrocystis pyrifera in Baja California, Mexico, August 2023. In June 2023, the IUCN SSC created the Seaweed Specialist Group. See Arafeh-Dalmau et al. Photo: Eduardo Sorensen, Mission Blue/Mas Kelp.

Book reviews

- The Hidden Universe: Adventures in Biodiversity
- The Killer Whale Journals: Our Love and Fear of Orcas
- Why Sharks Matter: A Deep Dive with the World's Most Misunderstood Predator
- The Cactus Hunters: Desire and Extinction in the Illicit Succulent Trade

Header image: Drone used to count cao vit gibbons in Trung Khanh mountains, Viet Nam. Photo: Oliver Wearn / Fauna & Flora.

Emma Sinnett

Emma joined the Oryx team in 2022 after completing an MSc in wildlife conservation. She is particularly interested in African wildlife and the wildlife trade, and carried out her MSc research on the impact of wild meat hunting on duiker populations in Central Africa. Prior to her MSc, Emma worked in finance before volunteering at conservation organizations and training as a field guide in South Africa.