

Project Update: April 2020

In November 2019, we spent 4 weeks in New York City analysing plant samples at Hunter College. We analysed over 100 plant samples from the lemurs' diet for nutritional variables such as water-soluble carbohydrates, protein, fibre, secondary metabolites, lignin, minerals, starch, and crude fat. These data will allow us to determine if certain lemur habitats are more ideal, nutritionally, and allow us to select potential tree species for propagation and reforestation.



In mid-March 2020 we finished our field season occurring during the rainy period in northern Madagascar. During the 2-month field season we visited Bekaraoka, Binara, and Solaniampilana and have continued following six of the habituated groups of golden-crowned sifaka. Plants, faecal samples, and behavioural data during this time of year will allow us to examine the influence of seasonality on sifaka behavior and physiology.

We have also been working with the Daraina Guide Association, Fanamby, and a local architect to determine building plans for the outreach centre. The building will function as a space for primary and secondary students to gain knowledge about flora and fauna of the region, raise environmental awareness concerning deforestation, encourage curiosity towards persecuted species in the region, work with the Daraina Fanamby office to help reforest land, and explore alternatives to charcoal use in the local community. The building will contain one large room which will function as both a classroom and a space for local guides to hold meeting. The building also contains a bedroom/storage area as well as an office space for the community education coordinator. We are excited that the groundbreaking is scheduled to occur by late May 2020 and should be fully constructed within 3 months.

