

Mongoose Lemur

Scientific Name: *Eulemur mongoz*

Class: Mammalia

Order: Primates

Family: Lemuridae



When they are first born both the male and female lemurs have white beards. However, as the males mature their cheeks and beards become red at about six weeks. Males are gray with pale faces, red cheeks and beard. Females have brown backs, dark faces, white cheeks and beards. They are 12 to 14 in. long with the tail 18 to 20 inches long. They weigh 4 to 4.5 lbs.

Range

NW Madagascar, Comoro Islands

Habitat

Moist forests, canopy forest mixed with scrub and brush

Gestation

120-136 days

Litter

1

Behavior

Diurnal for the part of the year in which they feed on fruit and new leaves. In the dry season, when fruit and new leaves are not available, they become nocturnal and feed on nectar. When nocturnal they sometimes feed 80% of the time on a single species of tree. On Madagascar these lemurs live in small family groups consisting of a mated pair (which may remain together for many years) and their immature offspring. Occasionally older offspring remain with their parents for a time after puberty. On Comoros Island they live in larger unstructured groups with several males and females. Aggressive behavior is uncommon within the bonded group. Scent marking is very important sustained by rubbing branches with the crotch, forehead and hands. Unusual among primates, mongoose lemurs voluntarily share food with one another.

Reproduction

Mating is seasonal and the young are typically born between the months of August and October. Mothers will allow only other mothers to groom their infants. Fathers play no part in infant care. The offspring typically stay with their parents for about the age of three.

Wild Diet

Nectar, flowers, fruits and leaves