

Red Ruffed Lemurs



Scientific Name:

Varecia rubra

Range:

Northeastern Madagascar, specifically Masoala Penninsula

Habitat:

Rainforest

Average Size:

Body Length: 21 inches
Body-Tail Length: 44 inches
Weight: 7 pounds

Lifespan:

About 30 years

Diet:

Wild: mostly fruit

Zoo: Monkey biscuits, various produce

Reproduction:

Gestation: 102 days

Litter size: usually 2, occasionally 1 or 3

Appearance:

This large lemur species is easily recognized by its black face and white neck patch. The back is a deep russet, with a black tail and belly

Predators:

Unknown – likely predators: humans, dogs, raptors and fossas

Population Status:

Endangered



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About the Animal

All lemurs are 'prosimians' – 'almost monkeys'. They are relatives of the earliest examples of primates left in the world. Only on the island of Madagascar, in the absence of both modern primates and predators, were lemur species able to become diurnal/crepuscular and large - like the ruffed lemurs.

Red Ruffed Lemurs, like their Black and White cousins, are

almost completely arboreal, rarely descending to the ground.

Lemurs, unlike other primates, depend upon smell for communication. They use scent glands on wrist and backsides to mark territories and 'leave messages' for conspecifics.

Like all lemurs, the Red Ruffed Lemur is an endangered species whose habitat is disappearing at an alarming rate.

Mating and Reproduction

Mating in Red Ruffed Lemurs occurs in December to February. The gestation for these lemurs is unusually short, about 102 days.

Litters are most often comprised of 2 infants, which the female carries in her mouth, depositing them in a safe and convenient spot while she eats. By the time the young are 5 weeks old, they are able to climb almost as well as an adult.

Amazing Information:

Red Ruffed Lemurs are extremely vocal; 12 different calls have been recorded. Even though they are completely separate species, Red Ruffed Lemurs and Black and White Lemurs can 'talk' to one another.



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