

Project Update: November 2018

My team has just finished visiting our fifth forest fragment of our 2018 field season. We have followed golden-crowned sifaka (*Propithecus tattersalli*) groups in two rainforest fragments (Binara and Antsahabe), two moderate forests (Bekaraoka and Ambohitsitondroina), and one dry forest (Antsaharaingy). Last year, we followed groups of lemurs in all of the mentioned fragments except for Ambohitsitondroina. After being in contact with another researcher in the area, we were told that Ambohitsitondroina was nearly void of all lemurs. Luckily, we were able to find at least 10 groups within the fragment; however, they appear to have decreased body condition compared to lemurs in Daraina's other moderate forests. We also found five lemur traps (one is pictured on the right) and were



able to report the locations to the KMTs in the local village and to NGO Fanamby's conservation coordinator, Celin. At the site of the traps, we found remains of multiple lemur and avian species. Unfortunately, these lines of snares are baited with jackfruit and kill any animal that comes in contact with them. Shortly, Celin will be working with the community to remove the traps and to ensure that the lemurs are not being sold to vendors in Ambilobe (the nearest city to Ambohitsitondroina).

On a positive note, we have been able to follow seven lemur groups so far and have successfully identified all 44 lemurs within the groups. We have collected over 300 faecal samples in order to assess physiological stress based on factors including age category, sex, season, forest type, and forest quality. Finally, we have been working with coordinators from Fanamby and guides with the Daraina guide association to potentially start a research center in one of the forest fragments. There is currently no infrastructure in any of Daraina's surrounding forest fragments that is equipped for long-term researchers. We hope that this possibility will increase researcher presence in the region, which will provide more stable incomes for community guides associations and lead to increased forest protection.