

24 July 2014

Volume 3, Issue 2



Little Fireface  
Project

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### Dates for you diary:

- 22nd July: *Haunted Experiences*, Hastings, hosts a *Tombola for LFP*
- 11-16 August LFP team present several new research papers and hosts *Action Plan workshop at the 25th IPS Congress Vietnam*
- 8-14 September: *It's the third annual Slow Loris Outreach Week! How can you celebrate?*



# The Night Watch

Newsletter of the Little Fireface Project

The LFP team is busier than ever with our works in Java and abroad. In May, the LFP team, in collaboration with **Monkeys Acting in Schools for Conservation** premiered our play on the Loris in Lore and Literature at **Brookes Outburst Festival**, featuring beautifully carved puppets by LFP woodworker Amank. Nearly 100 Oxford residents enjoyed the performance!

June brought with it the second annual **Slow Loris Pride Days** in Cipaganti village, featuring three weeks of junior and senior football competition (Kukang Cup), children's games, dancing, and performance by a local rock group. Approximately 1100 people turned out for the final, despite it being a weekday and just days before Ramadan! Prizes this year were supported by **Cleveland Zoo Society** and **Fudge Kitchen**, and included not only fancy trophies, but each team received a uniform with a local fireface: short-nosed fruitbat, Javan ferret badger, common palm civet,

scops owl, colugo and of course slow loris.

It's time for many hellos and good-byes. We welcome **Yiyi Nazmi** as a new full-time tracker to the LFP team. We say sad good-bye to our Field Station Coordinator **Denise Spaan**. At the same time, **Sharon and Michael Williams** have agreed to extend their volunteer roles and stay on as a formidable coordinator team. Research Fellow **Noor Hanny** also joins us to study social aspects of our project in the village.

We also welcome new PhD student **Francis Cabana**, who will study the lorises in Java for the next 18 months. His focus will be not only what the lorises eat but on just how much of everything they consume. For example, he will observe lorises like Dali (lower left) and see just

## Kukang Cup, baby boom, and new loris diet study!

di-  
et for

a loris  
species and to  
use this information to improve  
the lives of lorises in rescue cen-



how many drops of gum he licks when he is gouging. He hopes to gain the first ever **evidence-based wild**

tres and zoos. Such animals are currently fed diets largely of fruits, which are a very rare part the diet in the wild. Fruit diets contribute to obesity, diabetes, and dental decay, as well as death and low breeding.

Francis has his work cut out for him as, as part of our other main study, looking at development and **dispersal of infants**, we have many new animals to watch! All of our focal females have given birth, and most now have one baby and one youngster in their growing families—hope for the future!

A. Nekaris

### LORIS LIAISONS

## Kiara and Cabe: the dangers of living on the edge



Above is the slightly diabolical face of Cabe! He was handsome enough to win the love of beautiful Kiara. Below shows one of the impressive bamboo stands used for loris sleeping—this is becoming a site of the past. (photos—M. Williams; J. Phillips)



“more and more lorises...were being brought to the LFP project house.”



Above: Labu cultivation is best when it is hung to grow; in our area, bamboo is the most cheap and effective method for this important cash crop but devastating to the lorises; right: Beautiful Kiara was caught by villagers when they were chopping bamboo for Labu

It is somehow romantic to believe that slow lorises can thrive in human settlements. After all, that may be what the future holds for most Asian animals. With increasing human population and decreasing forest cover, the ability to cling to small patches of trees and utilize human areas may be the only hope for some species.

That hope only exists if the humans accept living side by side from the wildlife whose homes they have essentially stolen. Humans are quite a selfish species and despite putting their homes and farms in areas where forest once lay, they often feel a right to own this land exclusively, forgetting that a delicate balance of nature exists and we need the animals as much as they need the forests they call their homes.

Lately in the village things seemed to be getting a bit crazy. More and more lorises were being reported by local people and were even being brought to the LFP project house. It turns out that a new profitable crop has sprung up in the area—a small pumpkin locally known as *labu*. It turns out in order to grow *labu*, a huge amount of bamboo is needed, as the vines of the pumpkins require a climbing frame. We noticed that more and more of the vital bamboo sleep sites of the lorises were being cut down, with only about 20% remaining. Such actions are affecting the lives of all

our lorises and Cabe and Kiara are no exception.

About two months ago, we had a knock on the door. A villager brought us one of the most beautiful lorises we had ever seen, from a part of the village where we were not currently tracking as it is so near to human settlement—this part of the village is called Kiara and we named the beautiful loris after it. She was completely healthy and we could release her straightaway.

We also started following a peculiar young male called Cabe, who we think is the son of Sibau. He was spending a lot of time in Sibau’s area then sprinted away over 1 km to ‘Kiara’ - and of course met up with the young lady of the same name! Cabe (meaning ‘chili’) has been fighting his way to find a home range—he is covered in cuts and bite marks and looks like a really rough character! But he seemed to be settling in with the beautiful Kiara—a real life beauty and the beast story. The trouble is *labu* is becoming the main crop in

‘Kiara.’ On our next rounds searching for Kiara, we found only her collar in a villager’s house. The mystery was that half was chewed off (perhaps Cabe did not like his lady love wearing jewelry) but the other half was clipped with scissors. We located the children who brought the collar to the house and they claim that they found it only on the ground and that they were the ones who clipped it playing with it. We are now frantically searching for Kiara and hope, that with her microchip, we can find her again.

These are the dangers of dispersal for these young lorises. Being that much nearer to humans brings so much more danger. We found only one bright spark of hope for the *labu* frameworks. Our crazy loris Lucu uses the *labu* to traverse her home range—they are the best loris bridges yet. So in this topsy turvy world, the bamboo that cannot be used for sleep can be for the time being used as a loris super highway.  
-A. Nekaris



## OTHER FIREFACES

## Cunning civets and orphaned leopard cats

When you are out in the forest every night, it is also important to collect data on all of the other forest dwellers, as few data exist for most small nocturnal mammals, especially on Java.

To facilitate this data collection, LFP have posted several camera traps in the surrounding forest and fields. In our efforts too to monitor our lorises bridges, we have set cameras up near our bridges and other waterlines that cross the open fields. We were surprised to see the large and wieldy Asian palm civet making regular use of these waterlines, even with a mama and a suckling baby playing on the line with incredible agility! (see our **YouTube channel** for the video footage). Even the civets have worked out ways to adapt to the human disturbed environment!

Slow lorises are not the only animals being disturbed by the incredible disturbance caused by the new *labu* plantations (see left story). One morning, we opened the door to see a small



Left—Common Palm Civet on wobbling on the waterline; Right—two of the leopard cat kittens left in a bundle at our door

litter of kittens placed there. It took only seconds to realise these were not just ordinary kittens, but leopard cats — one of the world's smallest wild cats. Clearly these babies were in a nest that was disturbed during clearing.

The babies were so young that they could not even eat yet, so they were rushed to **Cikananga Wildlife Rescue Centre** for urgent care. Once they are all grown up, they will be released back to the wild.

Although finding these animals on our doorstep makes us feel sad, it also fills us with a sense of hope. The fact that it

is known in the village that we care for wildlife and that these animals were brought to us rather than sold to the animal markets shows us that the LFP message is getting out there and that people are seeing wildlife as something that needs to be saved and protected.

We are continuing our vital education work. New LFP research fellow, generously funded by **International Primate Protection League**, Noor Hanny, will continue assessing our monthly film nights, and will be in charge of other major socialisation events. As word gets out even in the large nearby towns, Hanny will spread materials along with our Tereh & Bunga mascots, urging people to keep all wildlife in the forest. *A Nekaris*

## LFP NEWS

## Trying to make lives better

In Cikananga Wildlife Rescue Centre (CWRC) everybody seeks ways to improve the lives of the animals living in captivity. When LFP volunteers Tara and Anna Z. arrived at CWRC they decided to contribute to this cause. Tara had the idea of collecting some gum from trees in Cipaganti and to take it to Cikananga where the



lorises had not eating gum for some months. We decided to make some paper rolls with gum inside and hang them in different places on the cages so the lorises had to move around to eat it. Do you think they liked it? Well, they loved it! They ate almost every single roll.

They also had the idea of making some holes in plastic bottles and put the food there so the lorises had to make an effort to obtain their food. It was very successful and the lorises were very excited about the bottles: instead of the 5-10 min that they normally spend eating, they had at least 30 min of entertainment with the bottles! The girls were very hap-

py that they could help these amaz-



ing animals and contribute to help enrich their lives. *Anna Zango*



(Above) Taufik filming a documentary about slow loris, which can be seen on our YouTube channel . (photo W Tarniwan)

“Though the people of the village live simply, they are graceful and happy and co-exist with nature.”



(Above) Dendi scouts for suitable occupancy points and Adin prepares a camp supper (photos by Michael Williams).

## Meet the Team: Muhammad Taufik

The slow loris is a night animal that lives in a bamboo forest. It is threatened and needs to not become a puppet in the eyes of pet lovers. Since 2005, slow lorises in Indonesia were regularly found in animal markets and in front of big city malls. Not infrequently were lorises displayed on the edge of the sidewalk with a variety of other animals such as cats, dogs, and squirrels. Now the situation has changed. It has become difficult to find slow loris on the roadside. This is not only because there are few animals left in the wild but also because humans know the risk of selling this threatened primate.

My curiosity about this problem was fuelled; in 2013 I joined with Little Fire Face Project researchers in Garut, West Java. Many benefits are obtained from joining LFP, from getting

some friends from other countries to exchanging stories or information regarding matters relating to conservation, and foremost for me to be able to make a documentary film about the life of the slow loris.

LFP does many activities to preserve the loris in nature, from education to the school district, workshop on loris conservation, hold events aimed at involving local communities so that people are aware and proud of loris living in their area, to distributing pamphlets to the people in rural and other markets.

My main job was making a documentary film about the traditional life of the community. They live in the foothills of Papandayan in Garut, a highly active volcano region. This does not deter the people, who are

always smiling at those they meet. Another group of characters are the motorcycle taxi farmers whose bikes are equipped with tire chains making them so noisy as they leave their ordinary garden life from day-to-day. Several kinds of plants are in the area such as carrots, cabbage, potatoes, tomatoes, and chili.

Though they live very simple, they are graceful and happy, and can co-exist with nature. Appreciation and care for nature is a counsel of older people; there is an unwritten rule in the habit of older people, and it is applied by the rest of the community. Even if the community does not know the meaning of conservation, indirectly the local culture has applied it in their everyday lives.

*Muhammad Taufik*

## Research Review—Where are all the lorises?

Presence-absence surveys are used to ascertain where species are and are not located, especially a method known as occupancy modelling. Occupancy is especially useful for species that are highly threatened such as the Javan slow loris, as the method is easy and quick to survey cryptic animals. It also is easy to use in areas with difficult terrain.

When the data from presence-absence surveys are analyzed using occupancy modeling, it is possible to estimate why lorises are missing from an area. One issue is that of detectability. Detectability refers to the ability to see and detect the animal you are surveying. For example, in periods of heavy rain detectability is a lot lower as visibility is impaired and you often cannot rely on hearing. That is why we don't perform surveys during heavy rain.

In February the Java team started looking at the effects of size and shape of forest fragments on patch occupancy by slow lorises. The aim is to uncover how small a forest fragment can be for it to contain lorises. Edge effects cause a change in the floral composition of a forest patch as many invasive species are found there due to increased light levels. We thus want to know how

fragment shape affect whether lorises use a fragment or not. The overall aim to be able to use this information to help identify good sites for future reintroductions of lorises saved from the illegal pet trade.

How do we perform such a study? Each fragment contains 5 randomly places points (marked with GPS) that we visit 5 times between 6pm and 6am. At each point, using reflective tape, we mark three trees spaced 10 m apart. Putting reflective tapes allows us to visit the same site multiple times and be able to find it in the dark. We stand at each marked tree for 5 minutes and record all the animals we see and hear.

So far, fragments have differed a lot in size and shape. Some fragments are long and thin, whereas others are more circular; one fragment is shaped like a fish when viewed from the top of the mountain. We are trying to cover a wide area and fragments have been chosen from all over Garut district. In preparation, the LFP team visits the local Kepala Desa office (village chief) to request the permission to survey . Most fragments are surrounded by crops and rice paddies and letting the people of the area know we are coming reduces the risk of us getting chased off someone's land because they think we are thieves!

We not only wanted to survey in Garut so in April six team members travelled to the other side of mount Papandayan. The forest was very different than what we were used to. Instead of cabbage fields with a few trees, we were able to survey pine and temperate forests. And... so far so good!!! We have seen two lorises in the surveyed fragment as well as 12 flying squirrels!

Doing surveys is hard work, having to wake up at crazy hours to go out at walk around these fragments, but it is extremely rewarding when we see lorises. With each new area in which we find lorises, the future looks a little bit better. Sadly, most fragments are completely isolated, forming little islands in a sea of rice paddies. This means that the lorises are most likely not able to leave the fragment which can lead to a range of problems including inbreeding. This is why investigations such as our infant dispersal study are so important. It is not only necessary to understand the space a loris needs to be able to survive, but also how much space its offspring will need to be able to disperse.

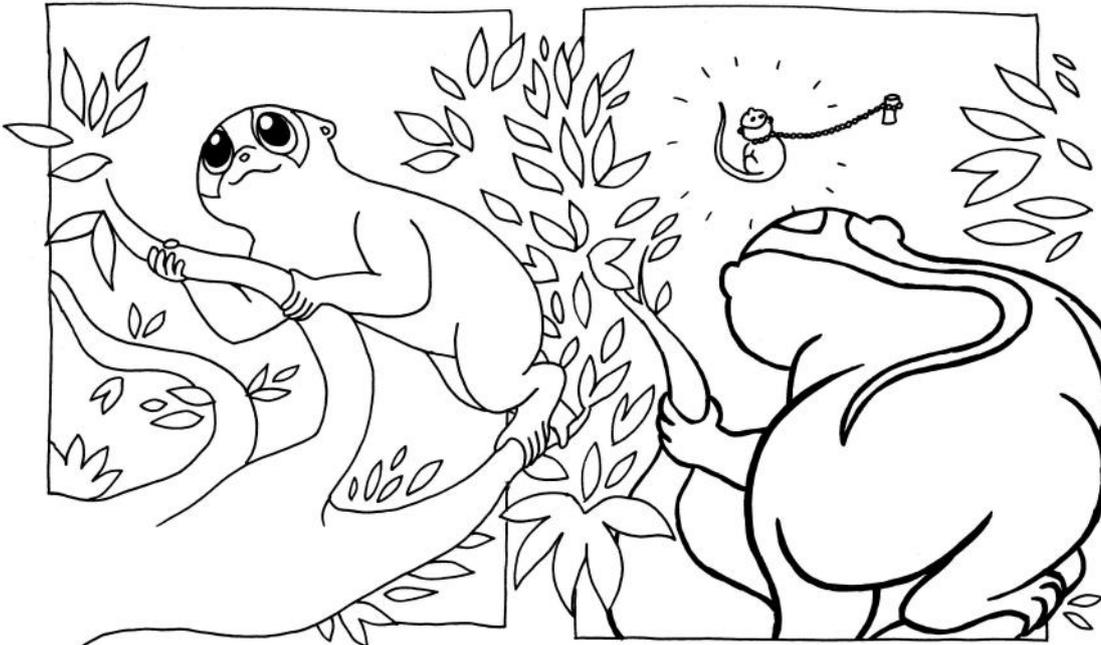
*Denise Spaan*

## Indonesia's masked monkeys: Part 1

Introducing our three part comic on the sad situation of masked monkeys in Indonesia. These poor monkeys are stolen from the wild and forced to wear a mask and do tricks. It may look cute but the sad monkey tells his story to the slow loris. Even sad stories though can have happy endings...



# The Sad Masked Monkey



On one bright morning, Tahini could not sleep and decided to go for a midday walk towards the village.

Suddenly he heard someone crying softly. It was a little monkey on a chain.



"Hey friendly monkey, why are you crying on a nice day like this?" Tahini asked.



"I have a very sad story to tell you..." the little monkey replied.

## Saving the slow loris via ecology, education, and empowerment

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<https://www.facebook.com/LittleFirefaceProject>

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Saving the slow loris through ecology, education and empowerment

## A new way to support LFP!

For SLOW (slow loris outreach week) 2014, LFP will be auctioning some beautiful items to support our conservation efforts, including a stunning oil painting of a Bengal slow loris, hand carved items (including incense burners, baby rattles, and bracelets), beautiful batik wall hangings (one style pictured below), and we will also present our new line of slow loris cuddly toy! So plan your Christmas shopping this September and help to save slow loris!



Your donations will help our fight to save the loris—visit us at:

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/slowloris/donate>

## We cannot save the slow loris without our generous sponsors

