

01 December 2014
Volume 3 , Issue 3



Inside this issue:

Loris Liaisons	2
Other Firefaces	2
Meet the Team	4
Forest Protector	5
Village events	6
Bunga's Corner	9

Dates for you diary:

- *December 6th: LFP at the Green Fair Guild Hall in Oxford*
- *December 13th: LFP stall at Lush, Oxford—last chance for Christmas goodies*
- *15-16 December LFP at the Primate Society of Great Britain Meeting Birmingham*
- *15 January Slow Loris Pride Days Cipaganti, West Java*
- *Mid January the opening of our new Nature School Mi-Alhidaya in Cipaganti Java*
- *4th February Bristol Zoo—talk open to the public on Loris nutrition and conservation by Francis Cabana*



The Night Watch

Newsletter of the Little Fireface Project

A year of slow

loris conservation

2014 in review

Young loris Dali



It is true to say that 2014 has been the best year for the Little Fireface Project yet!

We are now the longest ever running project of the ecology of any loris in the wild, and have tracked over 40 wild slow lorises since 2011. Because of this, we are able now to say both males and females leave the home of their parents; males and females can stick together up to 3 years! As our study continues, we will now for just how long loris marriages last! We were able to witness first hand the love affair of our two youngsters Pak B and Lucu, who are now expecting the pitter patter of baby loris feet. Most important, with the protection our ecological study offers the agroforest, with our expert team of trackers cum wildlife guardians, we have not lost a single loris to illegal wildlife trade since the project started. Indeed it is quite the reverse and the LFP field station has become the haven for any loris that has lost its way into the hands of villagers, and we can quickly release them back to the wild again!

The other major initiative we

have launched this year is being led by PhD student **Francis Cabana**, who is quantifying the diet of our wild lorises down to the tiniest enzymes and proteins. This will allow us to develop diets for rescued lorises, those in zoos, and most important, those sad lorises who lost their teeth to traders and now face a life in captivity.

Outgoing field station coordinator **Denise Spaan** developed an intensive mode for surveying illegal markets, and we have now been able to analyse several years of sad but telling market data and are happy to report that the number of lorises openly traded has decreased to nearly zero. Sadly they have been replaced by civets of every type, and LFP now has a major initiative for education projects to do with the unsuitability of civets as pets and their importance to the ecosystem. Indeed, in all our education programmes, we strive to teach the



Francis with a young devotee of loris

public about all the lesser

known
nocturnal

animals—all
with their fiery eyes (firefaces!).

Regarding education, we were lucky to welcome new field station coordinator and media coor-

Building the new school



dinator **Sharon and Michael Williams**, who have taken our Nature Club to the next level. With a fantastic curriculum, we are seeing not only behavioural change towards positivism towards nature, but change in the very way our children think for themselves and make decisions about the future of wildlife.

To top this off, thanks to the support of numerous charities, zoos and LFP supporters, we are nearly finished with building a new school for our village, called Mi-Alhidaya. Our manager **Dendi Rustandi** has been at the forefront of the school's design and development. Upon completion, the school will not only house our Nature Club, a tree nursery for the area, but it will also be a school for low income families, so that every child in the area has the opportunity to learn.

-Anna Nekaris, Director

LORIS LIAISONS

Our shy loris Shirley is on our best loris mamas!

Shirley, the shy lady as she's known, has been keeping us on edge the past couple of weeks. After being spotted with a small baby at the beginning of this month she's been the most talked about loris at the station. However the following observation revealed no such repeat sighting – where had the baby gone? Not only was there no baby but Shirley, living up to her nickname, was acting very elusively. It was the same story the next

week, no baby... but instead she was hanging around with her older son Kacang. And the plot only thickens, with fingers crossed for baby sightings we arrived early for the shift one night and our efforts were rewarded. We did indeed see the baby, along with THREE other sets of eyeshine! Was Shirley throwing a baby shower? The baby climbed clearly into view showing off its collarless and fluff-covered body and Shirley's signal was strong enough to eliminate one of the other visible firefaces, but who were the two mystery guests? And it looks like its only the beginning of the baby boom here in West Java with more reports of little lorises coming in so stay tuned for the next instalment of this exciting little loris mystery...
Jess Wise

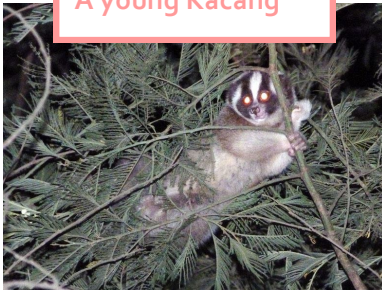


Shirley being radio collared



Shirley has been observed since 2012 and since then has had 6 babies!

A young Kacang



OTHER FIREFACES

CATCAM



Camera trap pictures of leopard cats: left: stalking, middle: relaxing, right: playing

A CAT'S LIFE

Exposing the incredibly complex and secretive lives of wildlife throughout the world, can be a rather arduous task. The archipelago of Java holds many secrets that have gone largely undiscovered until recent times. Some local villagers tell numerous stories about a wide-range of wildlife in the area that is often sighted wandering casually throughout small, remote

townships and the vast and at times inhospitable mountainous landscape. Even small mysterious people with large heads are reported from our area!

The leopard cat (*Prionalis bengalensis*) is quite common throughout Asia however some of its habits remain largely unknown and undocumented. It is somewhat impossible to observe such

animals on a regular basis in the field unless a known den is physically monitored which requires many hours of time in a 'stake out' style survey. But unfortunately all of this effort still doesn't account for the behaviour unseen when the animal is away from its home. So, equipped with motion sensor cameras these illusive animals can go about their daily or nightly lives none-

the-wiser to the fact that all the time 'big brother' is watching. For our investigations into the leopard cats, a variety of habitat types at varying elevations where cats have been sighted would be our starting point.

A PURRFECT DESIGN

Around the size of a large domestic cat, the leopard cat is striking in appearance and unmistakable when sighted. Four thin black stripes starting from above the cat's eyes and quickly separating into five or so stripes as they run over the head and past the black on the rear of the animal's ears; which are adorned with large white spots. On the back of the cat's neck, brown stripes from the side of the face, as well as from the side of the neck and chest, combine to form a large black junction which then flows in the form of broken lines and spots that run down the animals back. The flanks of the animal, in addition to the legs and tail, are decorated with a series of dark brown and black, to light brown and black spots on top a light grey and white fur. The underside of the animal is brilliant white. The paws and claws are larger than the domestic variety which resembles that of a smaller version of the African lion's paw with the underneath pads black. With a bright pink nose and large hazelnut eyes enclosed by eyelids that appear to have been made up with black eye-liner, the size, pattern and general build of the Leopard Cat is a superior design for stealth hunting.

PLAY TIME

As the leopard cat's activities are not merely limited to the safety of darkness, recording behaviour through daylight hours with the camera units can also be expected. Once mounted in position on the trunk of a tree just above ground height, each of the camera units would stay in the field at their selected locations for as long as they recorded regular visits. It wasn't long before we were recording some really amazing footage of Leopard Cats and the very behaviour that was the main focus for the study.

Not unlike their domestic cousins, wild leopard cats crave playful interaction with their siblings and parents, but more importantly their surrounding environment. From a fallen branch to a crawling insect, the young kittens playfully stalk, pounce, roll and run around like a domestic kitten newly stimulated by a toy mouse on a string. A mother cat tries to hunt for a meal despite the fact that all her young kitten wants to do is play; striking the mother with a clawed paw in an attempt to gain her attention. The adult leopard cat, like all cat species are very dedicated and focused when it comes to life, taking enormous pride in their unyielding capability as one of the planet's most efficient hunters. Having said that though, behaviour such as relaxing on those days when movement is not a priority has also been filmed by our hidden cameras. An adult male leopard cat triggers the camera unit as he sits just to the side of frame and begins to groom. After around two



Leopard cat : grooming

minutes of grooming footage, he proceeds to lie down in a standard 'Sphinx-like' position in front of the unit. Time after time the camera unit is triggered to reveal the cat roused from its rest; possibly by a noise or some movement that has caught its attention. In another less glamorous event, the same male cat (identified by its individual patterning) positions its rear-end directly in front of the camera and proceeds to defecate. The perfectly placed sample is important evidence for the dietary information of such animals and was later recovered and analysed when regular servicing of the unit was carried out. The sample contained only the fur of small rodents with no bones or bone fragments unearthed.

LOOK BUT DON'T TOUCH

Considerable animal behaviour can be uncovered with the use of motion sensor camera units. They are a vital tool in collecting survey and observation information that can be at times, corrupted by the physical presence of researchers. Also they do not impede on the animals normal life activity or the physical and mental stresses of the animal which can be negatively affected by such disturbances. There is still much to be uncovered about the intricate lives of the wildlife we share this earth with. To maybe better understand and appreciate their presence, making their lives a little easier, as we so wish ours to be. To watch some of the video footage captured of leopard cats and other wildlife here in West Java, please visit the Little Fireface Project Youtube Channel:

by Michael Williams – Wildlife Photographer/Media Officer





Above: Tracker Adin Nunur showing his climbing skills

We, at the Little Fireface Project feel a great pride in our local West Javan team. We have two assistant teachers and a team of trackers that we feel are the absolute best, so we would like you to 'meet' one of our trackers, Adin Nunur.

Adin has been with the Little Fireface Project for nearly 2 ½ years now and it is so hard to believe that he was scared of the forest at night before he joined us. Like most people in our village, he did not venture anywhere near the forest after dark. After all, there are stories of ghosts and big animals in the forest and this is a strong belief. He was also very frightened of the slow loris. Legend in this part of West Java says that if the blood of a slow loris hits the ground, that all crops and plantations will die and a great monetary loss will bestow the village. Adin had never seen a loris and it wasn't on his priority list, until he learned of a position as a tracker with Little Fireface Project was available, he came highly recommended as he knew the forest well, in the day time anyway! Adin was so nervous to venture out at night but he soon learned from our manager Pak Dendi that the forest was a beautiful place and the slow loris was equally amazing. Thankfully he overcame his fear quickly to become one brilliant tracker, part of our anti-poaching team and our wildlife officer. As a

Meet the Team: Adin

tracker he spends six nights a week in the forest and assists our researchers with behavioural observations, locating slow loris with radio receivers and navi-

gating through the forest with ease. Adin is also permanent member of our slow loris collaring team as our expert tree climber and handler. Adin's love of wildlife is evident, with care and respect given to every animal in the forest and one of his favourite parts of the job is seeing wildlife wild.

Adin does have a secret skill and a secret 'other' life. We call him the 'Nangka Ninja'. Often after a night shift comes to an end, he disappears into the forest and returns with a giant nangka (Jack Fruit). You have never seen someone climb a tree like Adin; up and down in what seems like 30 seconds flat, with a grin on his face and nangka in arm. He does share his fruitful bounty though, so it is a skill we are happy he has.

All of our trackers have very unique and you cannot help but laugh with Adin. His smile and his ability to make everyone laugh is

LFP trackers Aconk, Adin, Dendi, & Yiyi



constant, let's face it, he is a character. To give you an idea, I suggest you visit our LORIS ANGELS YouTube clip here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DSCi8vQSNI> - 'BIG BOSS ADIN' plays a major role.

Earlier this year Adin and his wife had their third child, a girl they named Biliqis. For us at the Little Fireface Project it seemed that little Biliqis would never come. Every day we would say "any baby Adin?". "No baby", he would reply. Then one day he cancelled a shift (almost unheard of) and finally we had the news we had waited for! A new little fireface! He's a great dad and a wonderful family man.

S. Williams



Adin and wife in their family home in Cipaganti after the birth of their son.

Forest protector in action

Sri, Dendi and I hopped onto a motorbike with a boxful of books and backpacks filled with coloured pencils, stickers and activity packs. We were heading off and fully armed for my first *Forest Protector* session at a nearby school, and I was very excited to see a lesson on lorises in action.



In all seriousness, the *Forest Protector* program is something my childhood self would have drooled over, an introduction to lorises and the forest complete with art projects, games and stories. Children are asked to draw a picture and write an accompanying story about lorises at the start of the lesson: this helps to get an unbiased view of their opinion. (You'd be surprised how many lorises end up looking suspiciously like SpongeBob or Hello Kitty by the time all the drawings have been collected.)

Children are then read the story of Tereh and Bunga, a loris and her son. I'd tell you the story here, but—small plug—the book is available in English if you'd like to see for yourself! The grand finale of

the lesson is a matching card game with characters from the story that really gets the kids moving.

When we arrive at the school it looks nothing like the red brick buildings I used to frequent as a student. Vibrant yellow and maroon paint line the walls of an outdoor hallway on whose far end a concrete football pitch was waiting, the mountains and fields in the distance providing a perfect background for a game. Children in red and white uniforms played and chatted outside the entire time we were there, the girls and boys splitting off to practice military-style drills for their scout clubs while other pairs sat down for a chess game or two. When we started the lesson all these activities were put on hold as kids proceeded to crowd windows & doors of the classroom, eager to see what their schoolmates inside were up to.

I would have been at the windows myself. The lesson proved to be full of energy as Dendi and Sri got the children stretching and yawning like the lorises in the storybook and catching bugs in the air. When the story was over a rapid question and answer session complete with sticker prizes got all of the students talking. One particularly involved girl wound up with three prizes, each correct answer applauded by her classmates more than the



last. The matching game brought in what seemed like another classroom's worth of kids from outside to join in. Children jumped up and down with excitement as they made a match with shouts that could burst your eardrums!

I had accompanied Sri and Dendi to the school to conduct evaluations of the program that will help measure to what degree the lessons are engaging students and ultimately leading toward a conservation impact. But for now, data aside and simply in terms of connecting with the lorises and giving kids a good day, I think the answer is obvious: mission accomplished.

The conclusion of the lesson brought us to the teacher's lounge for a buffet so complete and delicious I was hesitant to tell the other volunteers about it when we got back home. Donut balls, tofu, hot tea, fried banana and a number of other snacks my mouth was too full of to ask the name. We joked with the headmaster about whether I could be the new English teacher at the school, flying in from America every week to come in for a teacher's meeting (and more donuts). With all of the fun I had, I think I'm ready to sign the contract!

Katherine Kling



VILLAGE EVENTS

MY FIRST IDUL FITRI – A CELEBRATION LIKE NO OTHER.



Sharon and village ladies celebrating Idul Fitri

Let me set the scene for you. Little Fireface Project is in West Java on the side of the active volcano Papandayan. We are based in a small Muslim village: a village of welcoming and beautiful families who greet you with a 'hello' at every chance. It is usually a fairly laid back and peaceful village, with the occasional wedding or birthday gathering.

I had heard all about the end of Ramadan celebrations but NOTHING could have prepared us for the party to come!

Idul Fitri is the holiday that sees the end of the 29-30 day dawn to dusk Muslim fasting period and the cele-

bration of families and friends coming together from all over Java, then the party begins with a bang ... literally!

At 6.15pm on 28th July this year, we looked out of our Little Fireface Project field station window over the rice field covered valleys and saw fireworks for as far as the eye could see. It felt like I could see the whole of Java from the verandah, the sky was lit up like New York City! Red, green, blue gold, the sky was ablaze! This was better than any New Years Eve in a big city I had even seen. Families were outside on their roofs, children were screaming with delight in the street and there was drumming and music filling the air. This was just the beginning.

We instantly left the house and decided to join in the festivities that were all over our usually relaxed village. There was food available in front of most houses and people welcomed us with open arms. Traditional Sunda feasts, such as bala bala (a cabbage, carrot, onion and flour deep-fried taste sensation) and combro (a spicy, cassava based specialty) were on offer. As

friends and family gathered, the music and drumming got louder and the fireworks kept coming!

Fathers were showing their sons how to use the traditional drum called a 'bedug' and their daughters were dancing around, showing off their new Idul Fitri celebration dresses.

Small open fires were scattered in gardens and friends gathered around them, laughing and sharing stories.

One thing that struck me was that all ages came together and enjoyed themselves equally. From small children, to teenagers, to grandparents, everyone joined in the singing, dancing, drumming, eating and laughing ... there was lots of laughing and it went on well on into the small hours of the next morning.

After celebrating Idul Fitri until day break with our Indonesian friends, it became apparent to us that they felt exactly like family to us and they made us feel equally a part of theirs.

Sharon Williams



Research 2014 in Review



The LFP team has been working hard to get our work out to a scientific audience. Our work

has been featured on the web sites of Mongabay, National Geographic, Reddit, New Scientist and many more!

Some highlights of the last year was a major overview of loris ecology in the journal *Evolutionary Anthropology*, the first ever reported medical case of a Kayan slow loris bite in the *Journal of Venomous Animals and Toxins including Tropical Diseases*, and the first publication of our Javan slow loris behaviour and ecology in *Contributions to Zoology*. You can follow Professor Nekaris on Research Gate to read the latest publications!

Below find a selection of our 2014 scientific papers:

Nekaris KAI. (2014) Extreme primates: ecology and evolution of Asian lorises. *Evolutionary Anthropol* In press

Nekaris KAI, Arisona J, Achmed D, Nijman V (2014) Densities, distribution and detectability of a small nocturnal

primate in a montane rainforest. *End Spec Res*. 24: 95-103

Madani G, Nekaris KAI (2014) Anaphylactic shock following the bite of a wild Kayan slow loris. *BMC JVTITD*. 20:43 doi:10.1186/1678-9199-20-43

Rode-Margono EJ, Nijman V, Voskamp A, Lehtinen J, Nekaris KAI (2014) Distribution and ecology of small carnivores and other nocturnal mammals on Java, Indonesia. *Small Carnivore Cons* 50:1-11

Rode-Margono EJ, Nekaris KAI (2014) Impact of climate and moonlight on a venomous mammal, the Javan slow loris. *Cont Zool*. 83(4):217-225

RS Moore, Wihermanto, Nekaris KAI (2014) Compassionate conservation, rehabilitation, & translocation of Indonesian slow lorises. *End Spec Res*. Doi 10.3354/esr00620

*Das N, Nekaris KAI, Bhattacharjee PC (2014) Medicinal plant exudativory by Bengal slow loris. *End Spec Res* 23:149-157

Voskamp A, Rode EJ, Coudrat CNZ, Wirdateti, Nawanto A, Wilson R, Nekaris KAI (2014) Habitat preferences and distribution of the Javan slow loris. *End Spec Res*. 23:277-286

Nijman V, Nekaris KAI (2014) Traditions, taboos and trade in slow lorises in Sundanese communities in southern Java, Indonesia. *End Spec Res* 25(1):79-88

Nature Club – Insect month

Our recent insect-themed Nature Club (Klub Alam) was amongst the most popular yet, and it was excellent to see the children showing the same enthusiasm for invertebrates as they do for mammals and other vertebrates – if not more! It was a great opportunity to get the kids out into the field and see the different insects for themselves, something that isn't always possible when it comes to other months such as birds or mammals – with insects it's pretty much guaranteed that you'll see something as there's just too many of them to miss.

We saw so many different insect species – from true bugs to butterflies, crickets to caterpillars, the children were able to identify them all and name them in both Indonesian and English! They were also professional at telling the difference between spiders and insects, always being able to assert that spiders are not insects due to the difference in both leg number and body segment count.

Another great achievement from this month's Nature Club was that the children were able to construct a food chain at the end of the four weeks of activi-



ties – something they were not able to do before their lessons. This was important as it taught them the importance of insects to all aspects of the ecosystem, including plants, humans, other animals, and of course, the kukang!

SLOW LORISES LOVE TO EAT INSECTS!

Nature Club with the Little Firefaces



Forest
Tales...

It's been a huge few months for Nature Club and we are seeing some amazing results.

From April 2014 Nature Club was revamped, real learning through fun, adventure and hands-on activities. Each month was themed and results measured by providing pre- and post- questionnaires for each theme.

So far, the children have enjoyed themes, which included: forest, insects, mammals, frogs, reptiles and birds. Activities were structured in a way that each learning style was covered, although it has become very obvious (through engagement observations taken every 10 minutes) that kinesthetic lessons brought the most favourable outcomes.

Learning through games, crafts

and outdoor forest adventures saw children learning and not even knowing they were. This is fun, not learning right?

Each month we include at least one visit to the forest to look at wildlife and plants and ensure that children have a chance to enjoy the outdoors as much as possible. With their own hand-made binoculars (cling wrap rolls and wool) we explore! Even when we do not expect to see wildlife, we hide soft and plastic mammals, frogs and birds in the trees and in the understorey for children to discover, with questionnaires and wildlife 'tick-lists' to fill in.

Some other activities have included making caterpillars, building a tree poster and placing animals in their correct place, wildlife twister, wildlife treasure hunt, and play-dough sculptures.

I made some play-dough one morning and asked children to make something. They looked at me and asked "what is it?". Once the children realised this was a fun new craft, they got so excited! I saw sculptures being made that were an absolute work of art. The 3D medium worked for the Nature Club kids and I recommend you give it a try.

2 cups plain flour
1 cup salt
1 tbsp oil
1 cup cold water
Food colouring of choice

Combine plain flour and salt, add water, food colouring and oil. Mix until ingredients are combined. Knead well. Add more plain flour if needed.



Play
Dough
Time

Nature Club will continue with the valuable assistance of our Manager/Teacher Dendi, Sri our teaching assistant and our wonderful Little Fireface Volunteers.

Our current theme is birds in the wild, which is already proving to be a success, with attendance of 32 children. We cannot wait till the completion of our 'Nature Clubhouse'; we will decorate the building and make it our 'Nature Base'. These children are amazing and their ability to learn is just outstanding.

I look at Nature Club with much pride and hope to keep building on this great learning platform.

Sharon Williams – Environmental Education Manager



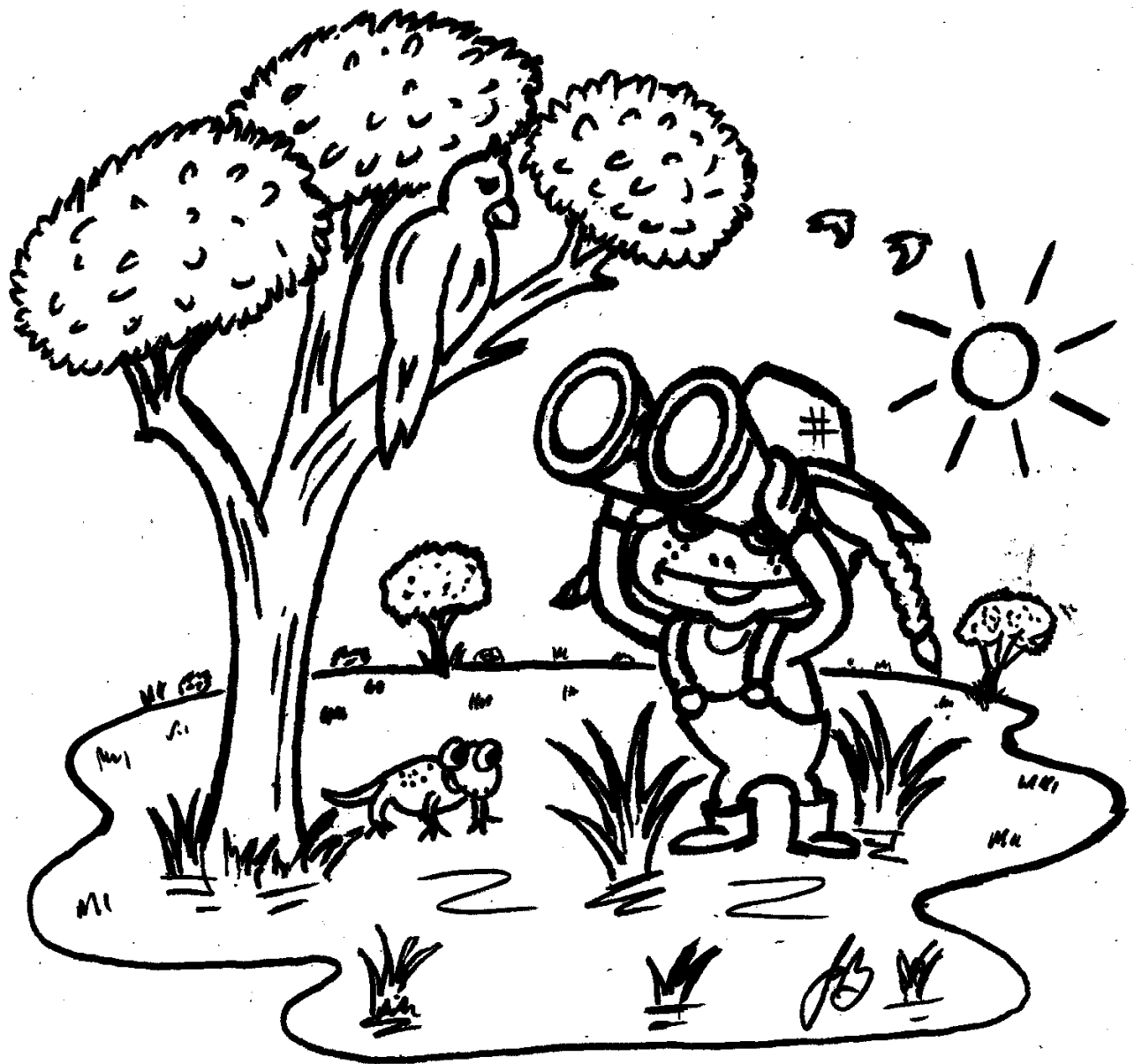
Little
Firefaces
forest
adventures !

Here is the cheap and easy recipe for play-dough:

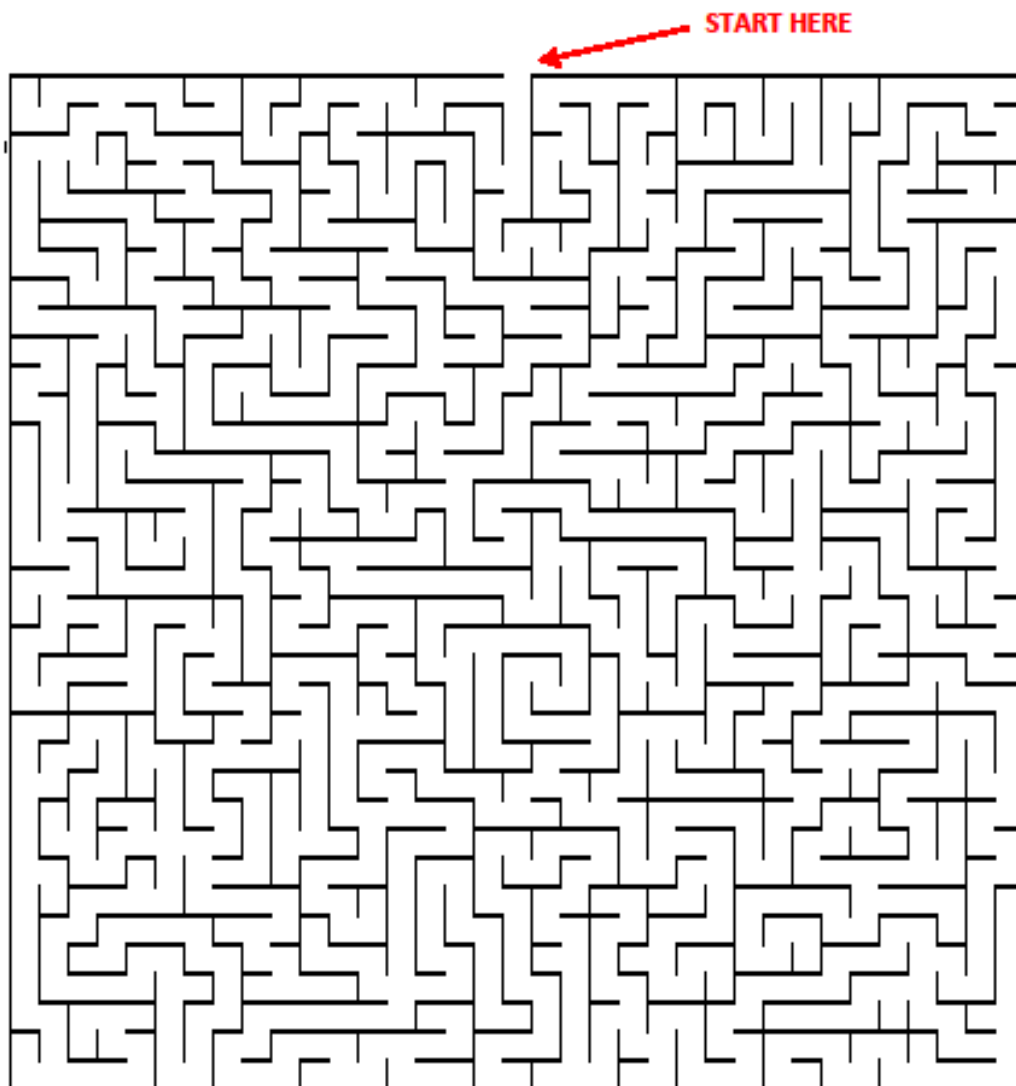


Loris Activities

Colour your own wildlife watch drawing! IF YOU WANT YOUR NAME FEATURED ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE PLEASE EMAIL IT TO LITTLEFIRFACE@GMAIL.COM



CAN YOU FIND THE WAY TO THE SLOW LORISES EATING?

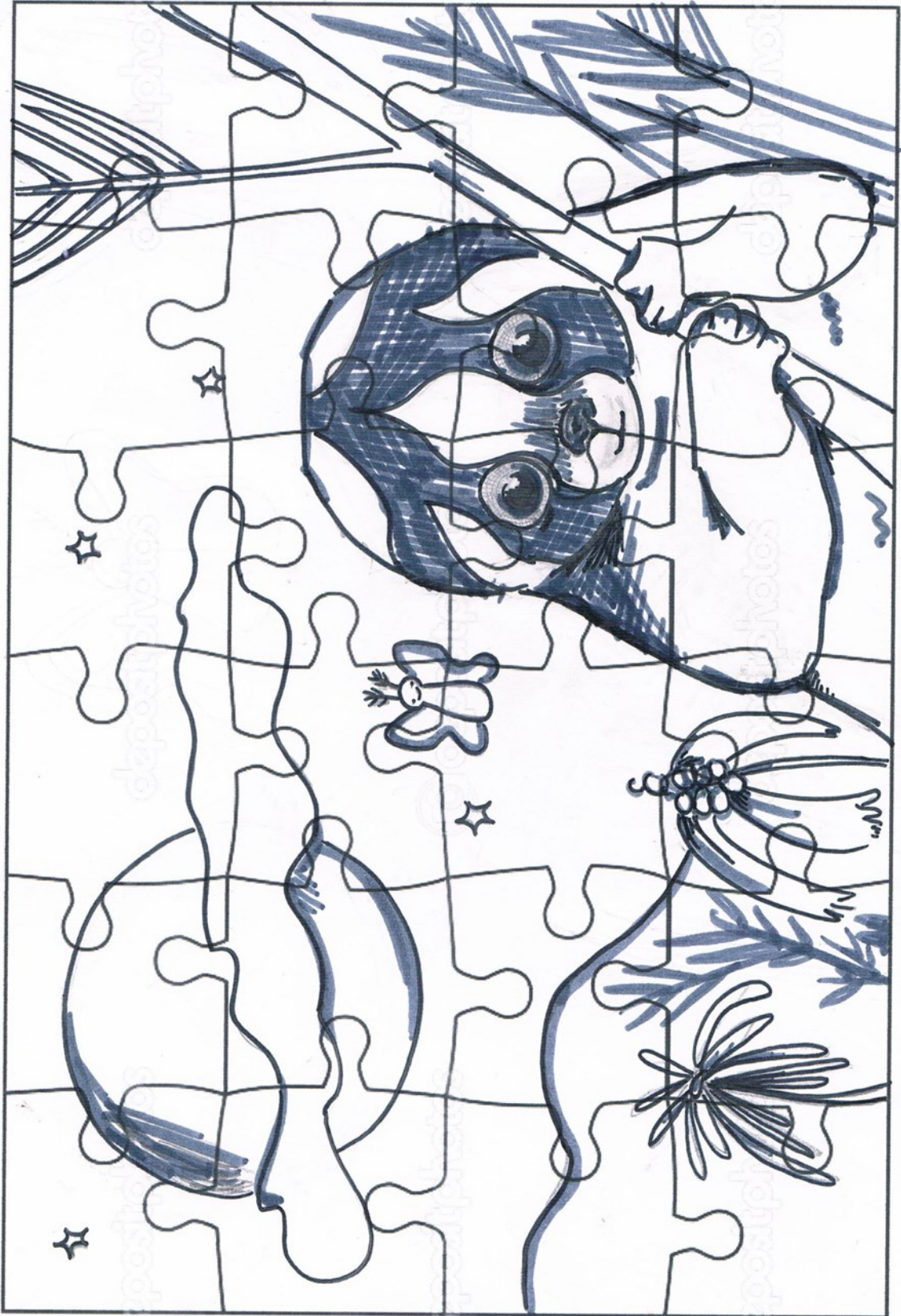


DID YOU KNOW???
 A slow loris eating a grasshopper
 would be like you eating a whale



Slow Lorises eat gum from trees,
 insects and nectar from flowers.
 They also sometimes eat birds and
 bats!

Colour the drawing and make a jigsaw



Saving the slow loris via ecology, education, and empowerment

Little Fireface Project
Nocturnal Primate Research Group
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Oxford Brookes University
Oxford OX3 0BP, UNITED KINGDOM
E-mail: littlefireface@gmail.com



We're on the web! www.nocturama.org

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

Follow us on Twitter! @queenfireface; @littlefireface

Saving the slow loris through ecology, education and empowerment

There are so many ways that individuals can make a difference for slow lorises. We would like to thank Haunted Experiences from Hastings and Adventure-logue diaries for donating a portion of their proceeds to Little Fireface Project.

We would also like to thank the numerous individuals who helped LFP this year in the following ways: fund raising (via bake sales, yoga classes, car boots, sponsored runs); donating drawings for our education and marketing; making crafts for us to sell at our events; sharing our Facebook and Twitter posts or simply wearing a LFP tshirt & spreading the word about loris conservation.



TEXT TO DONATE
TEXT 'SLOWIZ' AND
YOUR DONATION
(E.G. SLOWIZ £5)
70070

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

