

Cheirogaleus shethi: New Species of Dwarf Lemur Found in Madagascar

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A new dwarf lemur species has been discovered in the dry and transitional forests of northern Madagascar, according to a paper published in the [latest issue of the journal *Primate Conservation*](#).



The Sheth's dwarf lemur (*Cheirogaleus shethi*) at Ankarana Special Reserve, Madagascar. Image credit: Richard Randriamampionona.

Dwarf lemurs (genus *Cheirogaleus*) are small, nocturnal primates endemic to the island of Madagascar.

The new species was described by Dr. Cynthia Frasier of [Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium](#) and her colleagues from the United States, Madagascar and Australia.

The species' scientific name is *Cheirogaleus shethi*. The proposed English name is the Sheth's dwarf lemur.

"This new species is named after Brian Sheth, the Chair of the Board of the [NGO Global Wildlife Conservation](#)," the researchers explained in the paper.

"Brian is deeply committed to biodiversity conservation worldwide, and is a leading philanthropist for species and ecosystem conservation."

"He has supported many projects in Madagascar, including research and the establishment and management of nature reserves."

So far, the new species is known from northern Madagascar, from Ankarana east to Bekaraoka in dry and transitional forests.

"*Cheirogaleus shethi* can be found along the forest corridor from Ankarana Special Reserve east to the Analamerana Special Reserve down to the Bekaraoka forest in the Loky-Manambato Protected Area," Dr. Frasier and co-authors said.

"This species is separated from other *Cheirogaleus* populations by a significant geographical distance with the exception of the recently described [Montagne d'Ambre dwarf lemur](#) (*C. andysabini*)."



Also known as the Ankarana dwarf lemur, the new primate is one of the smallest in its genus.

It weighs up to 125 g (0.28 lb) and has a head plus body length of 16-17.5 cm (6.3-6.9 inches) and a tail length around 16 cm (6.3 inches).

“The dorsum, limbs and head of *Cheirogaleus shethi* are gray, with no dorsal stripe. Underside white, from interramal area to base of tail,” the researchers said.

“Facial mask poorly expressed; the area around the orbits is narrowly brownish and dorsally bleeding into the gray of the forehead and crown; median strip between them is paler than rest of face.”

“The ears are sparsely furred. Hands and feet are light colored.”

“The identification of this new species highlights the importance of northern Madagascar as a reservoir of biodiversity,” they said.

Cynthia L. Frasier *et al.* 2016. A New Species of Dwarf Lemur (Cheirogaleidae: *Cheirogaleus medius* Group) from the Ankarana and Andrafiarana-Andavakoera Massifs, Madagascar. *Primate Conservation* 30: 59-72