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Cheirogaleus shethi named after Brian Sheth, Global Wildlife Conservation board director.

By Léa Surugue

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A new species of dwarf lemur has been discovered at the heart of Madagascar's dry forests. It is so small that its adult weight is just over 100 grammes.

Dwarf lemurs are nocturnal and arboreal primates endemic to the Island of Madagascar. In recent years, there have been renewed efforts to learn more about these little animals. Scientists have conducted extensive field research combined with genetic analyses, discovering a wider species diversity than previously thought existed.



A new species of dwarf lemur has been found in Madagascar's forest (Richard Randriamampionona)

In-depth field work has in particular been conducted at the Ankarana Special Reserve in the north of the Island, allowing scientists to identify a distinct species of dwarf lemur.

It had first been found in 2014, but it is only now that DNA studies have been conducted, confirming it as a genetically different species of dwarf lemur.

The researchers have called it *Cheirogaleus shethi* –after Brian Sheth, a director on the board of the NGO Global Wildlife Conservation.

The tiny lemur is now described in a study [published in the journal Primate Conservation.](#)

Very tiny lemur

The scientists have also found that *C. Shethi* has a particularly small size. It does not measure more than 17.5 cm (6.69 inches) and its weight varies between 101 grammes and 125 grammes.

C. Shethi also has a slightly different geographic range than other dwarf lemurs. It has only been found so far in northern Madagascar, in a forest corridor between two reserves – the Ankarana Special Reserve and the Analamerana Special Reserve.

This corridor is within Madagascar's system of protected areas, in theory offering a high degree of protection for biodiversity. However, the study's authors say that strengthening the effective management of these protected areas is crucial to maintain connectivity between different populations of the dwarf lemur.