

## Impossibly cute tiny lemur species discovered in Madagascar that looks like a teddy bear

■ Madagascar is home to all the world's 113 lemur species.

By Staff Reporter

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Cheirogaleus grovesi is exclusive to Madagascar (Dr. Edward Louis Jr.)

A cuddly new species of lemur has been discovered on the island of Madagascar – the biodiversity hotspot where 90% of its wildlife is found nowhere else on Earth.

The tiny primate measures around 17cm-long with a 28cm-thick, furry tail. Like many of its lemur relatives, it has large, dark, round eyes; small dextrous hands with opposable thumbs for climbing and fruit-picking; alongside small-rounded ears.

Cheirogaleus grovesi is nocturnal and likes to spend much of its time high up in the rainforest canopy where it can shelter from predators, find food and reproduce, according to researchers.

It is thought the animals - which can only be found in two separate regions in the southeast of the island - live in groups, but may also spend time on their own. To identify the new species, researchers captured some specimens using dart guns and took DNA samples before releasing them back into the wild.

Cheirogaleus grovesi, otherwise known as the Groves' Dwarf Lemur, was named in honour of Colin Groves, one of the most highly regarded primate taxonomists, responsible for identifying more than 50 animal species during his lifetime. Sadly, Groves passed away last year.

Madagascar is the native home of every lemur species in the world – of which there are 113, although a number have been identified but not formally classified yet.



Groves' Dwarf Lemur named after primate expert Colin Groves (Dr. Edward Louis Jr.)

Unfortunately, many lemur species are at risk due to the twin threats of deforestation and poaching. In fact, it is expected that *C. grovesi* will soon be listed as endangered.

The new species - which was discovered by an international team of researchers from Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, the Global Wildlife Conservation, the State University of New York Polytechnic Institute and the Madagascar Biodiversity Partnership - is described in a paper published in the journal *Primate Conservation*.

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