



## CVB News

### Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy wins 2023 Seacology Prize

Congratulations to Dr. Jonah Ratsimbazafy, President of the [International Primatological Society](#), one of the founding members of [Groupe d'Etude et de Recherche sur les Primates de Madagascar \(GERP\)](#), and past CVB researcher, for being awarded the 2023 Seacology Prize! Each year, [Seacology](#) awards one "islander for exceptional achievement in preserving island environments and culture." Dr. Ratsimbazafy's [unwavering dedication](#) to Madagascar and its endangered lemurs has played a crucial role in Malagasy-led conservation efforts over the past decades. Check out his biographical film from Seacology linked below [↓](#)



### "Red-Bellied Lemur On the Verge" wins Emmy

Long-time CVB researcher & director of the [Laboratory for the Evolutionary Endocrinology of Primates \(LEEP\)](#) at the University of Arizona [Dr. Stacey Tecot](#) was featured in an award-winning short documentary by Dr. Özlem Özgür: *The Red-Bellied Lemur on the Verge*. The documentary highlights the work of Dr. Tecot, her students, and CVB technicians that collaborate on the Ranomafana Red-Bellied Lemur Project, which aims to collect long-term demographic and behavioral data on Ranomafana's red-bellied lemur population and use innovative ways of identifying individuals. The film has received three Emmy nominations from the Rocky Mountain Division of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and won for best directing of a long-form video. The film was also an official selection for the LA Independent Women Film Awards and the Impact DOCS awards. Congratulations to all who made this documentary possible! You can watch the film here [↓](#)



## Insights from Ivohiboro

Continuing [last month's Spotlight on Ivohiboro Protected Area](#), take a look at some of the ongoing herpetology and ornithology research:



Matteo Masotti is studying the relationship between chytrid fungi and the frogs of Madagascar: "One chytrid species, *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (*Bd*), is the world's deadliest pathogen in history in terms of biodiversity loss. This pathogen, which is capable of quickly wiping out entire species of amphibians, has been found in Madagascar but has not been linked to any mass mortality events. It's possible that a recently discovered chytrid species thought to be endemic to

Madagascar offers Malagasy frogs immunity from *Bd* ([Ghosh, 2020](#)). The secluded and pristine rainforest of Ivohiboro presents a unique opportunity to explore this dynamic in an area with very low human impact. Just under 400 frogs from the canopy, leaf litter, and streams of the Ivohiboro Protected Area were swabbed for the purposes of species identification and chytrid fungi detection. Understanding the relationship between *Bd*, the novel Malagasy chytrid, and Malagasy frogs is crucial for protecting the ecosystems of Madagascar and can offer insight on how to deal with chytrid outbreaks in other parts of the world as well."

Alexa Lightbourn is a Stony Brook University student and CVB researcher: "On the recent Ivohiboro expedition, I created an inventory of the bird species present [in the protected area], and made comparisons to a previous survey in 2016. After Cyclone Batsirai took down many trees in 2022, I wanted to see the effect it had on the bird species living in the isolated forest patch of Ivohiboro. I conducted point count surveys each morning in Ivohiboro and Analamary and collected data using audio and visual observations. I expected my surveys to show a loss of species due to the cyclone, however, I found the opposite. 19 new species were observed for the site, including Pitta-like Ground-Roller (*Atelornis pittoides*), Ward's Flycatcher (*Pseudobias wardi*), and Madagascar Nightjar (*Caprimulgus madagascariensis*). This increase in species in Ivohiboro is most likely due to the creation of the Ivohiboro Protected Area, which has stopped many extractive practices such as logging and slash and burn agriculture. Although the rainforest patch is small, a lack of disturbances allows for bird species to inhabit this humid forest patch and sustain life...An increase of 19 species shows me that the bird species have a suitable habitat in Ivohiboro, and also gives me hope that the biodiversity is prospering, and will continue to do so."



Photos courtesy of Matteo Masotti and Alexa Lightbourn

## Coming in 2024

*Lemur Legacy*, a short documentary from [the SOSA](#), Blake Moynes, and Scott Bradley, brings viewers inside the work of the dedicated people helping to protect endangered lemurs and landscapes in Madagascar. Filmed in Ranomafana and in collaboration with the Lemur Conservation Network, the documentary features CVB's Founder and Executive Director Dr. Patricia Wright. Watch the trailer below [↓](#)



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