



The Ganzhorn's mouse lemurs (*Microcebus ganzhorni*)

Image credit: G. Donati

# Three New Species of Mouse Lemurs Discovered in Madagascar

Three new species of the genus *Microcebus* (Mouse lemurs) have been discovered by scientists. The newly identified species live in the South and East of Madagascar. Just 20 years ago, only two species of these small, nocturnal primates were known. Recent findings have taken the total number of known mouse lemur species to 24.

Mouse lemurs are native to the island-nation of Madagascar and they all look very similar with their brown fur and large eyes. Different species can be distinguished reliably by means of genetic methods only.

One of the species was named *Microcebus ganzhorni* after the ecologist Prof. Jorg Ganzhorn from Hamburg University, who has been engaged in research and protection of lemurs for decades. The second species was named *Microcebus manitatra* symbolizes the expansion of the range of a subgroup from western Madagascar. The third species *Microcebus boraha*, is named after its type location, the Island of Sainte Marie (in Malagasy Nosy Boraha).

According to the Red List of IUCN more than 100 known species of lemurs are at the brink of extinction. In fact, lemurs represent the world's most endangered group of mammals. Both deforestation and hunting are the main causes of the threat to lemurs. The study was published in the journal *Molecular Ecology*.



Image Credit: David Haring of The Duke Lemur Center

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