

## Black Lemur

(*Eulemur macaco macaco*)

**Habitat and Distribution:** Found only on the northwestern tip of the islands of Madagascar, Nosy Komba and Nosy Be (off the southeast coast of Africa).

**Size:** Up to 18 inches tall and 5½ pounds

**Wild Diet:** Seeds, leaves, nectar, mushrooms, fruit and occasionally insects

**Predators:** Raptors, fossas and humans (hunted for their meat and fur)

**Life Span:** 20-25 years

**Reproduction:** Females and males are sexually mature at 2 years old. The breeding season is in April, and females are in estrus for only one day during breeding season. Usually one (although twins are not uncommon) baby is born after a 120-129 day gestation. Babies will ride hanging from their mother's stomach for a month, and then move to riding on her back.

**Behavior:** Black lemur troops are dominated by the female lemurs. They are very social, living in groups of up to 15 related individuals. Grooming is an important social bonding activity, lemurs use their specially-shaped lower incisors as a "tooth-comb" to remove parasites and excess fur from one another. Black lemurs use scent marking, vocalizations, body postures, and tactile communication. They are active and feeding during the day, and at night when nectar is available from the night-blooming *Parkia* tree.

**Conservation Connection:** Currently listed as CITES, Appendix I, meaning that they are threatened with extinction and CITES prohibits international trade of this species for commercial reasons. Black lemurs are threatened by loss of habitat due to logging and farming. They are also hunted for food and for the pet trade.

**Interesting Facts:** Black lemurs are the only lemur species in which the male and female are different colors. The males are all black, while the females are a dark brown to deep rust with an off-white stomach. Black lemurs have brown eyes. (There is a separate sub-species called the blue-eyed lemur, which has blue eyes).

