



# Ring-tailed Lemur

*Lemur catta*

**Range:** Only found on the southern tip of the island of Madagascar.

**Habitat:** Ring-tailed Lemurs are more tolerant of different types of habitats and climates than other species of lemurs. They can be found in spiny forests, lowland gallery forests, dry scrub, dry deciduous forest, and rock canyons.

**Diet:** They are an opportunistic omnivore feeding mainly on fruits and leaves (especially of the tamarind tree), but also eat bark, spider webs, insect cocoons, arthropods, small birds, and small lizards.

**Lifespan:** 15-20 years, can be longer in captivity

**Description:** Ring-tailed lemurs get their name from their very long black and white ringed tail. Their underside is white while their back is gray. The top of their head is gray while their face is white with black around their eyes and nose. They have bright yellow eyes.

**Breeding:** Mating happens in mid-April and after 130-144 days of gestating, one or two babies are born. The babies will stay clung on to the females' chest for the first 2 weeks, and after that, will move to the female's back and will explore their environment. Males will compete with each other for the attention of females by performing "stink fights." They rub their tails on the scent glands on their wrists and waft the smell in the air. Sometimes, these displays turn aggressive.

**Behavior/Adaptations:** As with most lemurs, females are dominant over the males. They have multi-male/multi-female groups called troops that can range between 10-100 individuals. When there are border disputes with other troops, it is the dominant female's responsibility to defend her group's home range. They are one of the most vocal primates.

**Predators:** Dogs, cats, and hawks. Humans will also hunt them for food and trap them for use as a pet.

**Conservation:** Ring-tailed lemurs are considered "Endangered" and at serious risk of extinction due mostly to habitat loss.

## Interesting Facts:

- Lemurs are primates but not monkeys. They are "prosimians", which means "before apes."
- Lemurs are incredibly important to the biodiversity of the island of Madagascar. Because they consume a variety of plants, the seeds in their droppings help to spread plant life through the forest.

Information taken from the following sources:

<http://www.arkive.org/ring-tailed-lemur/lemur-catta/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ring-tailed\\_lemur](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ring-tailed_lemur)

[http://tolweb.org/treehouses/?treehouse\\_id=4730](http://tolweb.org/treehouses/?treehouse_id=4730)