

From Tim Tetzlaff, Director of Conservation and Communications

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Be the First to See the Last Thing a Lemur Ever Wants to See

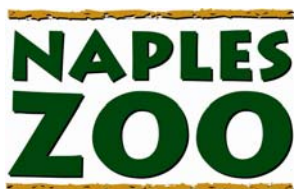
The Fosa: Madagascar's Legendary Carnivore Exhibit Opens July 4!

On July 4th, Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens is premiering its newest exhibit: *The Fosa: Madagascar's Legendary Carnivore*. The fosa is the island's largest mammalian predator and is so quick in the trees that about half of its diet is lemurs. Guests will be able to see two of these endangered species through glass viewing windows. The fascinating world of the fosa will be revealed through fun guess the answer flip panels and interpretive graphics. A research scientist with the prestigious Duke University Lemur Center who has worked in Madagascar for years will be the special guest for a Naples Zoo Members-Only preview and presentation.

The new exhibit features themed naturalistic rockwork replicating the striking tsingy limestone formations seen in Madagascar. The tsingy rock surrounds the glass viewing areas for guests to get clear views. As agile as squirrels in a tree, the fosas can jump to natural oak trees and vertical poles, run along an elevated catwalk, and climb through custom structures in the exhibit. The Zoo's Director of Conservation reviewed the exhibit plans with Dr. Luke Dollar, National Geographic Emerging Explorer and world's leading fosa researcher. Dr. Luke Dollar was instrumental in supplying the latest data for the interpretive graphic panels as well as photos from the field.

The fosa looks like a dark brown, short-legged cougar, albeit much smaller and stretched out. Fosas weigh around 15 to 30 pounds or more and measure around 5 ½ feet long. Fosas live in forests ringing the coast of the island. Like Madagascar's more popularly known lemurs, fosas are endemic to Madagascar meaning they can be found nowhere else. This also describes about 90% of the island's mammals and plants along with over 95% of its reptiles and over 99% of its amphibians. The diverse life on Madagascar resulted from over 160 million years of isolation from both mainland Africa and people who only arrived about 2,000 years ago.

Given that they eat so many lemurs, it's surprising to learn that these carnivores play a critical role in helping maintain lemur biodiversity. In areas that have lost their fosa population, the variety of lemurs actually decreases.



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Why? In a healthy forest, some lemur species like the brown lemurs are more abundant. So when a fosa goes hunting, it is most likely to have a brown lemur for dinner. When the fosa is gone, the brown lemurs outcompete the rarer lemurs. Without the fosa, the forest is soon filled with brown lemurs – and very few others.

A Family Helping Fosas

The Fosa: Madagascar's Legendary Carnivore exhibit was made possible through a generous donation by the Halverstadt Family. Naples Zoo wishes to honor Connie H. Miller, Linda H. MacDuffie, and Albert N. Halverstadt Jr. for their contribution to the creation of this exhibit. Their support will further efforts to help this endangered species. Linda H. MacDuffie also serves as a member of the Naples Zoo Board of Directors.

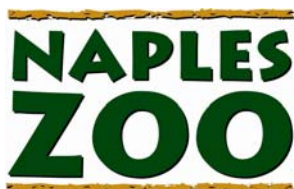
The breeding of this endangered species is overseen by a Population Management Plan coordinated by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Resembling a giant computer dating service, various AZA programs track the ancestry of animals and make recommendations for breeding to maintain genetic diversity. The female most likely to be selected to breed with one of the zoo's two male fosas is not expected to be born until this year.

Naples Zoo Members Meet an Expert on Madagascar

Charlie Welch, a research scientist with the prestigious Duke University Lemur Center, will be the special guest for a Naples Zoo Members-Only preview and presentation prior to the public opening. Welch and wife Andrea Katz spent nearly 17 years together in Madagascar and were named Chevaliers de l'Ordre National by the Malagasy government, a form of knighthood, for their overall contribution to conservation on the island. Now back home in the states, Welch and Katz had spearheaded the field programs of the Madagascar Fauna Group including the successful reintroduction of zoo-born lemurs into the Betampona Nature Reserve in eastern Madagascar. To enjoy the Members-Only preview, you can become a Naples Zoo member online at www.napleszoo.org or just stop by the Zoo.

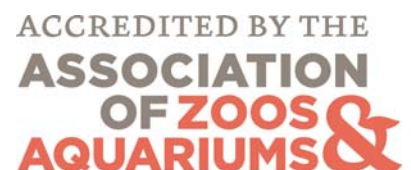
Fosas and Evolving Science

Much of what is now known about the secretive fosa is the result of research over the past decade, much of it done by Dr. Dollar, and there is still more to learn and discuss – even the name itself. Fosa is alternatively pronounced "foose," "foosh," or "foo-sah." Their common name is also undergoing the unusual process of being changed from "fossa" to "fosa" to reduce confusion with another Malagasy carnivore, the fanaloka whose scientific name is *Fossa fossana*. What's more, the scientific classification of fosas along with all the other Malagasy carnivores has been a frequent topic of debate. Fosas have variously been included in the viverrid family with civets, the herpestid family with mongooses, and the felid family with cats. The current genetic work now places them in their own unique family Eupleridae.



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Naples Zoo and Madagascar

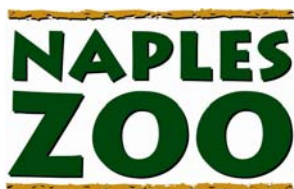
Madagascar has been a focus of the Zoo for years where numerous lemur species can be seen on the islands toured by the Primate Expedition Cruise. For over two decades, it has been especially close to the heart of Tim Tetzlaff, the Zoo's Director of Conservation. In addition to caring for a variety of lemurs over the years, he serves as an advisor for the Madagascar Fauna Group (MFG). The MFG is an international consortium of zoos and related institutions working together to conserve Madagascar's lemurs and other spectacular wildlife like the fosa. Naples Zoo is a managing member of the MFG and donates thousands of dollars each year along with the likes of Duke University Lemur Center, San Diego Zoo, Zoo Zürich, Missouri Botanical Garden, and others. Naples Zoo also supports a student educational project in the Malagasy village of Ambodirafia.

In addition to this direct financial support for on-the-ground programs, Naples Zoo funds and operates the public face of the MFG at www.savethelemur.org. In addition to public awareness, the site itself has raised over forty thousand dollars for programs in Madagascar since it began taking donations in the past few years – a significant figure in a country where 85% of the people live on less than \$2 a day (US equivalent. In other words, it's like trying to live in this country on just over \$700 a year.)

Further Education Efforts in Madagascar

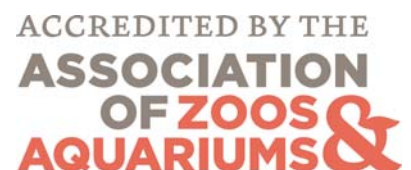
As many Malagasy farmers continue to kill fosas, the Naples Zoo Conservation Fund will be supporting Dr. Luke Dollar's work educating local populations on the agricultural and economic benefits of keeping healthy fosa populations around their villages. Expanding on the success of one of Dr. Dollar's earlier programs, Naples Zoo will fund the production of thousands of posters with a picture of a fosa proclaiming, "arovy ny fosa, arovy ny vokatra" which means "save the fosa, save the harvest" in Malagasy. Translated, the subtitles at the bottom of the poster read, "Farmers everywhere have trouble with rats and wild pigs damaging their harvest. In the forest, the fosa is the animal responsible for keeping populations of these pests low. The next time you see a fosa, don't kill it, because it is helping you." According to Dollar, "These posters were remarkably effective and remained on the walls of homes, public places, and local eateries for years and years. Now, ten years later, I would like for this campaign to continue on a much wider scale with posters to be distributed throughout the island."

An additional educational campaign funded by Naples Zoo includes wildlife-themed lambas – an indispensable item to Malagasy lifestyle. Dollar continues, "In the West, we have backpacks, towels, curtains, dresses, skirts, wraps, shawls, messenger bags, sarongs, baby carriers, headwear, and scarves. In Madagascar, a single item fits all these purposes and more - it is the lamba." This simple 3 foot by 4 foot piece cotton fabric will have a design that focuses on the fosa but includes more than a dozen endemic animals from Madagascar and features the Malagasy saying, "A single tree does not make a forest."



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Naples Zoo Guests Help, Too

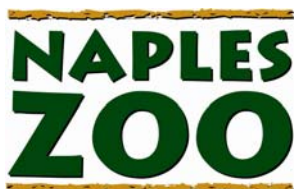
Visitors to Naples Zoo are helping wildlife in Madagascar every day as twenty-five cents of each paid admission is dedicated to the Naples Zoo Conservation Fund and its regional and international efforts. Guests can also get further involved by making a donation at Petrof's Primate Pavilion, an educational display about Madagascar and the MFG along the shores of Lake Victoria in the Zoo. And for those who want to help and have a cuddly reminder of these amazing creatures, they can purchase a cute stuffed plush lemur toy. How does that benefit conservation? Ten percent of the retail price of all stuffed plush monkeys, lemurs, and apes are donated to the MFG.

Naples Zoo is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization cooperating in conservation programs both in and outside the wild for endangered species. Daily presentations include Alligator Bay Feeding, Meet the Keeper Series, along with two premiere presentations: Planet Predator and Serpents: Fangs & Fiction. Both of these feature shows take place in the Safari Canyon Theater where guests see live animals along with exciting video footage. For those looking for more on the historic botanical garden, the Tropical Plant Trek offers guests a short tour led by University of Florida Master Gardeners. And one of the zoo's most popular activities is the Primate Expedition Cruise where guests embark on a guided cruise through islands inhabited by monkeys, lemurs, and apes.

The all day pay-one-price ticket includes admission to both the nationally accredited zoo and historic garden along with all shows, tours, exhibits, and the boat ride. (\$18.75 adults age 13+ / \$10.50 children 3 to 12, under 3 free. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult at least 18 years of age). **Annual memberships and discount tickets are also available online at www.napleszoo.org.** Visitors enjoy healthy meals at the SUBWAY® Cafe and shop for wild gifts at tame prices in The ZOO Gift Shop. Naples Zoo welcomes guests daily from 9:30 to 5:30 with the last ticket sold at 4:30 and is located at 1590 Goodlette-Frank Road across from the Coastland Center mall in the heart of Naples. To learn more, click www.napleszoo.org or call (239) 262-5409.

Print Quality Image of lemurs and fosas available for immediate download at
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