

HOME RANGE EXPLOITATION AND COHABITATION OF NATIVE RINGTAILED LEMURS (*Lemur catta*) WITH INTRODUCED BROWN LEMURS AT THE BERENTY RESERVE, MADAGASCAR

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This study is a part of project trying to answer how the high populations of ringtailed (*Lemur catta*) and introduced hybrid brown lemur (*Eulemur fulvus rufus x collaris*) use their home range, and how they cohabit in a small and isolated forest fragment despite the fact that they are competing directly for limiting resources during the birth season at the Berenty Reserve, Southern Madagascar. We followed one troop of each lemur species, sharing the same home range, during the lactation (late birth) season (2007) in the gallery forest and recorded data concerning feeding and encounters, then marked locality on a map. We predicted that the two species foraged in different patches and that encounters between them were peaceful. Results show they have the same keystone food, and the ringtailed lemur feed on more plant species than the brown. While home ranges are entirely overlapped, the ringtailed lemurs have patches which are dispersed inside a large home range in both closed and open canopy forest; as for the brown, they feed on clumped patches in a smaller surface and stay only in the closed canopy forest even during a far excursion. Encounters between the two species were most of the time peaceful, but the brown lemurs show themselves aggressive when they feel intimidate during the feeding time. Although having a different foraging strategy and well adapted to survive in xeric scrubby or edge habitats, would the native ringtailed lemurs maintain longer their number face to the brown lemur's invasion?

Keywords: ringtailed lemur, brown lemur, home range, isolated forest fragment