



## CVB News

### Study Abroad 🌍



On May 30th, we welcomed 18 [Stony Brook Summer Session](#) study abroad students back to CVB, alongside Teaching Assistants study abroad Arcusa and Marisa Turk and study abroad coordinator Dr. Mónica Ramírez! Over the month, the students attended numerous guest lectures from current researchers, sampled for macroinvertebrates in village streams, organized a roadside clean-up, and conducted a biodiversity census in Ranomafana National Park, all while developing their research projects. Following their 10-day cross-country trip, each student had a week of data collection and presented their findings to faculty and students at the University of Fianarantsoa. Their project topics ranged from medicinal plant usage to lemur behavior and environmental songwriting!

Overlapping briefly with the Stony Brook students was another study abroad group of 13 students from the University of Florida—their first visit back to Ranomafana and CVB since 2019! Their four-day visit was filled with Health Team excursions, park visits and night hikes, basket weaving with the women from Sahavandronana, and performances from local musicians and dancers. It's been great to have the student floor of NamanaBe Hall bustling with activity again.



### Re:wild Workshop 🌱



Continuing last month's environmental education activities with the support of [Re:wild](#), the CVB Education Team hosted the last workshop in a series designed for its Conservation Club members and the Tourist Guide Association of Ranomafana. This month's training centered on developing sustainable livelihood alternatives using local products, like fruit drying, mushroom farming, and making cassava chips.

The workshop concluded with a massive clean-up event on the road between the Andriamamovoka Waterfall and the Ranomafana National Park entrance. As a popular spot for spotting mouse lemurs and chameleons on night hikes, the Tourist Guide Association led the initiative and collected four large bags of trash. CVB volunteer Lane Bucher also designed a road sign that CVB will erect to remind passing taxi-brousses not to litter.

#### Re:wild Workshop Outcomes

<b>120</b> Conservation Club members visited the park	<b>300</b> native trees planted	<b>6</b> training sessions on sustainability and capacity building
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## The Adventures of Pili in Madagascar

Authored by National Geographic photographer [Kike Calvo](#), [The Adventures of Pili](#) is a multilingual book series that teaches kids about global environmental issues while inspiring them to make positive changes. With a foreword by CVB's Executive Director and Founder Dr. Patricia Wright, *The Adventures of Pili: Wildlife of Madagascar* coloring book is the latest addition to the series.



In collaboration with CVB, *The Adventures of Pili* is working to bring education to remote communities in Madagascar. **With your support, you will help us reach our goal of printing 1,000 copies of the French-Malagasy version to donate to schools in Madagascar!** [Read more below.](#)

[Donate to the Adventures of Pili in Madagascar](#)

## An Interview with Dr. Chris Raxworthy



*Dr. Christopher Raxworthy is the curator of the Department of Herpetology at the American Museum of Natural History and professor at the AMNH's Richard Gilder Graduate School. He has studied reptiles and amphibians in Madagascar since 1985 and found and described many species new to science, many in Ranomafana. Along with Dr. Patricia Wright, he was featured in Peter Tyson's book "The Eighth Continent: Life, Death, and Discovery in the Lost World of Madagascar"*

**What's brought your research team down to the eastern rainforests of Madagascar?**

"I'm here at Centre ValBio with a student group from the University of Mahajanga to give them a sense of the eastern rainforest reptile and amphibian community. We've been working on the high plateau, so I wanted to drop down to the eastern escarpment and Ranomafana was perfectly placed to bring the students down to a slightly lower-elevation forest. Even though it's the start of the wintertime, I'm hoping that we're going to see a lot of the species still active!"

**Your herpetology work has taken you all around the world. Is there anything that has struck you as being very unique to Madagascar when it comes to the reptiles and amphibians here?**

"...I would say overall, what makes Madagascar really special is that the diversity of species in reptile and amphibian groups here is really high. That raises a really interesting question—why are there so many species in Madagascar? I've basically spent my whole career nibbling away at that question, trying to understand the drivers of speciation in Madagascar..."

**Do you have any particularly memorable stories from your time conducting research in Ranomafana?**

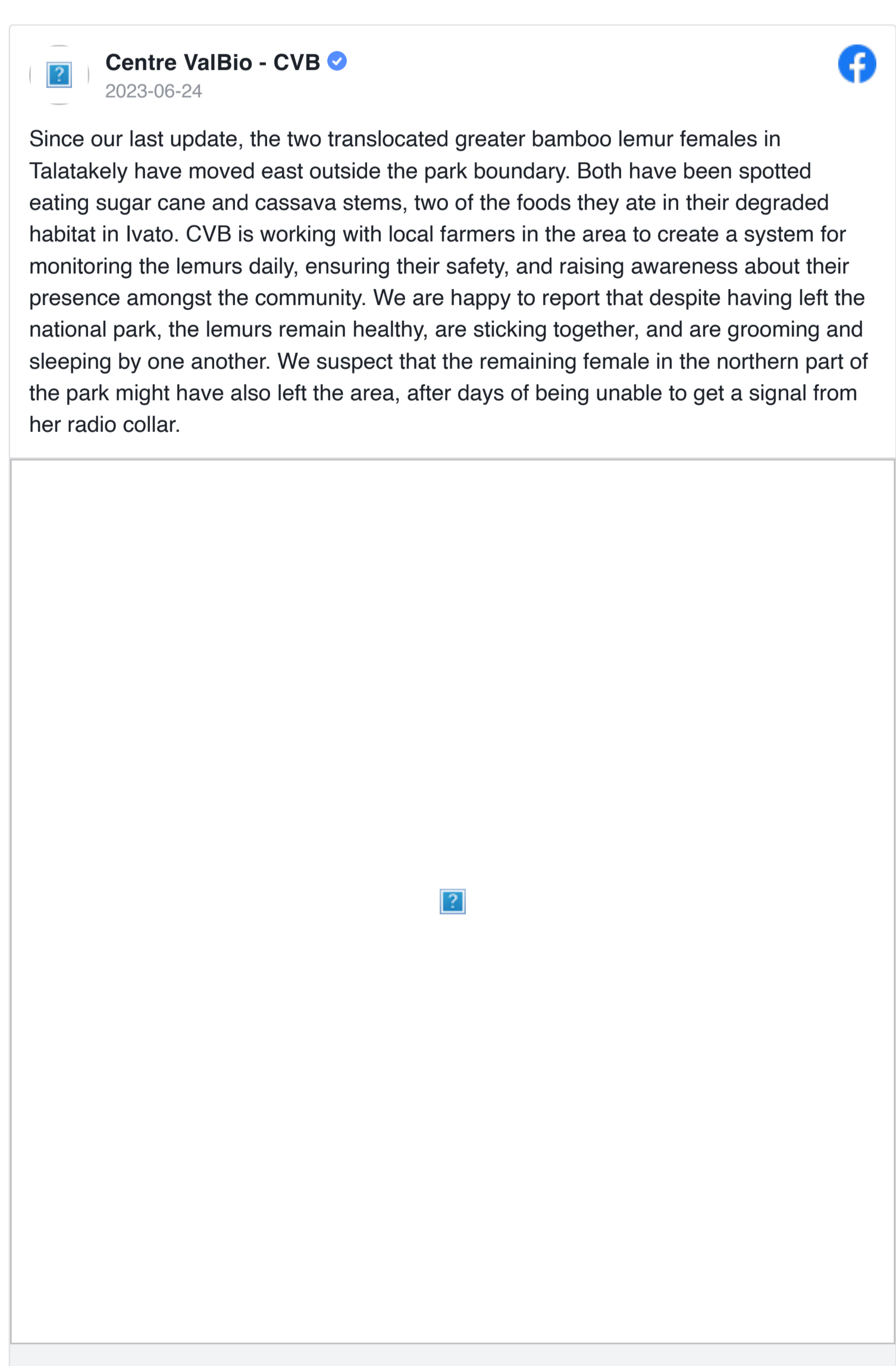
"I remember one time I had [specimen collection] permits and about halfway through my time here, we decided that we would walk down to Ranomafana... It was nighttime and I had a headlamp... We're walking along when suddenly I saw this relatively recent roadkill snake on the road. Like all good herpetologists, I always had a reptile bag on me, so I collected it... Afterwards, when I got it back, fixed it, and identified it, it was *Ithycyphus perineti*—the first record of this snake from this part of Madagascar. A couple of years later, John Cadle was doing work with snakes in Ranomafana and he said it was the last species of snakes that he found in this area when he compared his list to mine. So it kind of demonstrated that you can have these very fortuitous moments when you least expect them!"

**Do you have any advice for aspiring scientists?**

"...If you're at a university or school where you've got the opportunity to study abroad or come take a class [in Madagascar]—take it! It's such a special place and it can be life changing. You can come here and really get inspired, and ultimately, develop a whole career that could be based around Madagascar or other tropical research. But no matter what happens, if you come to Madagascar, your life will be changed in some way..."

[Read the full interview here](#)

## The Latest on the Translocation



Be sure to check out our social media for updates on our greater bamboo lemur translocation project, a collaboration with Madagascar National Parks and generously supported by the [Holtzman Wildlife Foundation](#).

[Read more about the translocation project here](#)

## News and Publications

- [A Medical Entomologist Battles Bubonic Plague in Madagascar](#)
- [Updated lemur species ranges in Madagascar's Corridor Forestier d'Ambositra Vondrozo \(COFAV\)](#)

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