



https://www.reddit.com/r/Awwducational/comments/8n142h/the_aye_aye_a_lemur_known_for_its_unusual_method/

Ayouh



**Tale for children written by *Catherine Rhiat*
illustrated by *Colette Mayeur***
Discovery the fauna and flora of Madagascar

August 2020

Association pour la Sauvegarde des Lémuriens de Madagascar

<https://www.aslm-lemuriens.org>



**Ayauh is a small lemur
who lives
in the rainforest of Madagascar.**

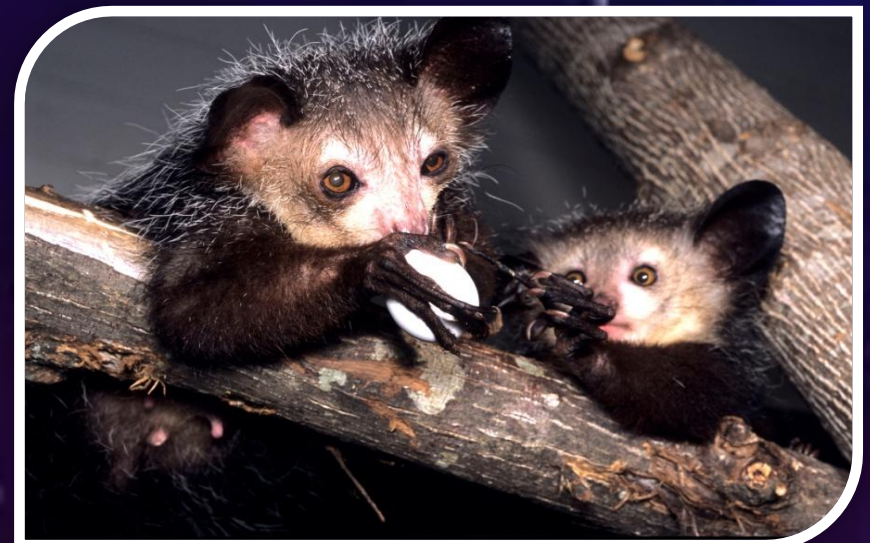


<http://www.swagmag.fr/les-animaux-les-plus-bizarres-sur-terre/>

**During the day, he sleeps near his mother Aye-aye
in a nest made in the fork of a large tree.**



**At nightfall,
his mother wakes him up and
together they go in search of food.**



<https://lemur.duke.edu/discover/meet-the-lemurs/aye-aye/>

**In the morning,
as Ayouh and her mother return to their nest,
Saholy and Miaro visit them.**

**Saholy is a little girl, Miaro is her brother.
They live near the forest and
bring each day a coconut to their friend Ayouh.**



Photo Catherine RHIAT – Maromizaha 2019

**Ayouh make a little hole in the coconut and
plunges his long finger into it.
He withdraws it laden with coconut water,
lick it and start again.
A true delight !**



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<https://news.mongabay.com/2013/03/researchers-sequence-aye-aye-genome-lemur-is-more-genetically-diverse-than-humans/>



<http://www.arkive.org/aye-aye/daubentonia-madagascariensis/image-G6517.html>

When her mother calls her,
after saying goodbye to her friends,
Ayouh goes back to the cozy nest.
He snuggled up against his mother who
tells him stories of lemurs and
he falls asleep.

Today is an important night for Ayouh, his mother will teach him
how to spot insect larvae that are under the bark of trees.

He makes knock knock knock on the bark with
his big finger. If it sounds hollow, that's a good sign.



<https://lemur.duke.edu/discover/meet-the-lemurs/aye-aye/>

With his front teeth,
it makes a small hole.
He dips his finger in it,
he catches the larva and eats it.
It's succulent !

**In the morning,
after finding numerous larvae,
they return to their nest.**



<https://www.treknature.com/gallery/Africa/Madagascar/North/Toamasina/photo134555.htm>

**It was then that a man ran towards them, shouting:
"I will kill you lemurs of misfortune ! "**

**Without waiting, Ayouh jumps on the back of his mother who runs away
at full speed towards the nest. Fortunately, it moves easily from branch to branch.**

**Arrived at the nest,
Ayouh grabs the phone made by his friends :
two tin cans connected by a wire.**



**He shouts into the box.
He screams so loudly that on the other end,
Saholy and Miaro understand that he is in danger.**



They rush to the tree of Ayouh and his mom.

When they arrive, they find that the man has already started cutting down the tree. They intervene to prevent him from giving another axe.

**The man is furious. He screams :
"Everyone knows that these monsters bring nothing but misfortune wherever they go.
Let me kill them!"**



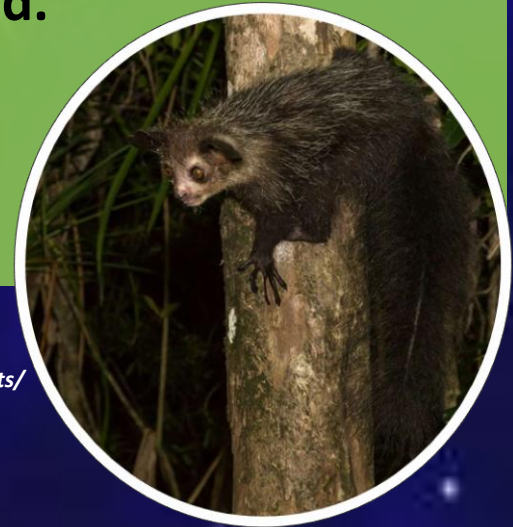
**Miaro replies : "No, ayes-eyes are not bad luck. It's a rumour...
Do you know the origin of this rumour?"**

"No" replies the man.

Miaro tells him : "A very long time ago, men ventured into the forest to cut wood. They came across an aye-aye, this lemur with big eyes, big ears, long skeletal fingers, large teeth and a bushy tail.

One of them was so scared when he saw him that he dropped dead. His heart was just tired.

His friends thought the aye-aye had cast a spell and this false information has spread throughout the country.



<https://www.primatespark.com/ayeye-fun-facts/>

Miaro continues :

"In addition, the aye-aye is essential in the forest.

It removes larvae hidden under tree bark and keeps trees healthy.

And we men need the trees".



https://www.mindenpictures.com/search/preview/ayeye-daubentonia-madagascariensis-digging-for-insects-in-tree-with-long/0_00557186.html



© Catherine RHIAT

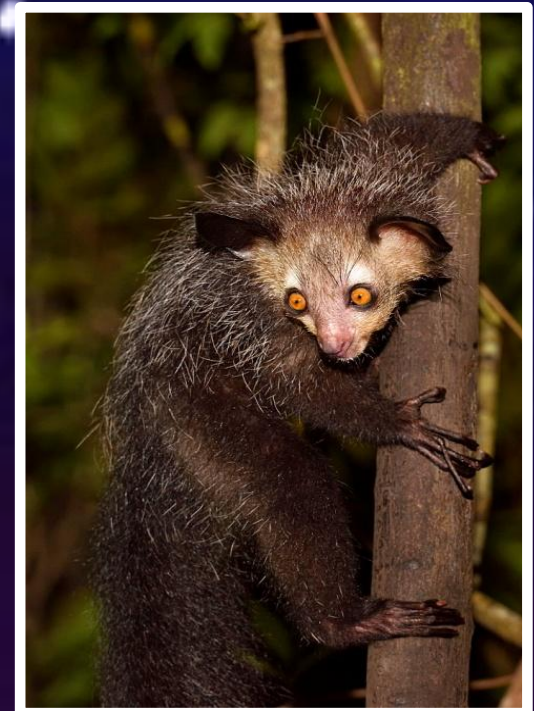
Saholy intervenes : "People come from all over the world to see the ayes-eyes."

This gives work to many people in the village".



**The astonished man exclaims:
"They come to see these monsters?"**

**Saholy replies :
"They're not monsters.
It's not the appearance that counts,
beauty comes from the heart !
Ayes-eyes are very nice !"**





**Then we hear a loud crack.
Ayouh and his mother soar into the void.
And, as the tree crashes to the ground,
they land in the arms of Saholy and Miaro.**

**Saholy advances towards the man with Ayouh
and said to him :
"I present to you Ayouh.
Look how adorable he is".**



**The man agrees : an aye-aye
is not as terrible as he had been told.
This little lemur even has an endearing side
with its big eyes, big ears and long fingers.**



<https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/business-economics/economics/aye-ayes-split-from-lemurs-in-africa-before-both-made-their-ways-to-madagascar/21/08/>



© Catherine RHIAT



**Miaro questions the man : "Do you know that in the world, we were surely inspired by the aye-aye for the cinema?
E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial is the perfect example. He points to the universe with his long finger when saying : house ".**

**Man has an enlightenment :
" Ayouh reminds me of Gizmo,
the friendly gremlin with his big ears".**



**Miaro responds, "That's right.
There is even a cartoon
which is called "Madagascar"
and do you know
who is one of the stars?
Maurice, an aye-aye".**



I



<https://naturerules1.fandom.com/wiki/Aye-aye>

The man reflects and exclaims, laughing :
"I see the ayes-eyes are appreciated
worldwide.
We, too, must love them".



<https://www.facebook.com/323800257814589/photos/pcb.1443779742483296/1443779372483333/?type=3&theater>

Saholy continues : "Yes we have to love them.
Do you know that they only exist in Madagascar
and that by dint of killing them,
they risk disappearing from the planet soon ?"



The man is surprised : "I didn't know.
I thought ayes-eyes lived all over the planet".



<https://lemur.duke.edu>

Also, baby ayes-eyes are very rare.
A mother only has one baby every 2 or 3 years.
This does not allow the population to recover.
It is therefore urgent to take care of them !".



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**The man continues : "It's terrible. But in my village, people are angry.
They say that the ayes-eyes do a lot of damage to the coconuts."**



https://www.jungledragon.com/image/87335/aye-aye-_15_palmarium_madagascar.html

**Miaro replies :
"It's true that they like coconuts
but we can't blame them
because men have destroyed the forest
to cultivate or raise zebus.
Ayes-eyes need food to survive.
That's why they eat coconuts ".**

**The man agrees : "Yes, it's true.
I understand now. We must protect them !
And I destroyed their nest. What can I do ?"**



<https://www.naturepl.com/stock-photo-aye-aye-daubentonii-madagascariensis-at-night-madagascar-image01560436.html>



© Catherine RHIAT

**Saholy proposes : "With the tree you cut,
we are going to build them a small house.**

**But we have to hurry because the day is breaking and
their eyes are fragile in the light".**

**All three set to work
and in no time,
the house is ready.
She is elevated in a tree
and mama aye-aye
choose beautiful leaves
for make it more comfortable.
Then, after thanking them, Ayouh
and her mother
go to sleep.**



**Miaro said to the man : "We still have work to do.
You cut down a tree, you have to replant it.**

**Trees are the source of life.
Humans and animals need trees.
They allow us to feed ourselves, to heal ourselves,
to shelter us they cool us when it's hot and protect us from cyclones.**

**Replanting is important because
before a tree is big,
many years will pass.
We have to think about the next generations".**

**All three go at the village nursery and
choose several tree seedlings
from Madagascar, endemic trees.
Then together, they leave to plant them
on the edge of the forest.**



Photo GERP - Rapport 2019

While discussing with Saholy and Miaro, the man understood that ayes-eyes are not evil animals, hat they are very useful, very rare and that they must be protected.

Since then, just like Saholy and Miaro, he transmits his knowledge to children and adults.

And every year, he organizes with the villagers the feast of ayes-eyes.



***Protecting Madagascar's biodiversity for future generations
requires knowledge of the Malagasy flora and fauna.***



Catherine Rhiat

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<https://www.aslm-lemuriens.org/>



**After seeing photos of ayes-eyes being killed and exhibited,
I wrote this tale so that it would never happen again.**

**Bringing the knowledge helps to understand that
the ayes-eyes are not evil animals
but that they are one of the treasures of Madagascar.**



**They are endangered and
it is URGENT to protect them.**

I thank very much

Pr Jonah Ratsimbazafy

Primatologist and President of GERP

for his precious help and support



Groupe d'Etude et de Recherche sur les Primates de Madagascar