



Wildlife of the World Newsletter

May 2026



Silverback Mountain Gorilla in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest

Hi ,

Spring is well on the way now and I've been making the most of it by getting out into the Welsh countryside. Of course we can't compete with Uganda for large mammals, but in the last week I've seen red squirrels, an otter, badgers and a fox, all of which are just as fascinating in their own ways. I'm planning to spend more time exploring some of our beautiful local nature reserves over the next few weeks, so hopefully I might have more photos of Welsh animals soon.

However, my main focus has been sorting through the photos and videos from my amazing trip to Uganda in February. I've finally completed the fourth and final report, featuring a magical morning filming mountain gorillas in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. [You can see the report including the gorilla video here.](#)

With the gorillas in mind, I've chosen to make primates the theme of this month's newsletter. Uganda is often referred to as the 'Primate Capital of the World', with the gorillas, chimps, a dozen species of monkey, one potto and half-a-dozen types of galago (bush babies). However, Madagascar provides strong competition with an incredible one hundred different lemurs, all of which are endangered species endemic to the island. So, for this month's featured site I've decided to pick a reserve from the very south of Madagascar...



Red Squirrel on the Isle of Anglesey

Wildlife-watching Sites

Berenty Reserve, Madagascar

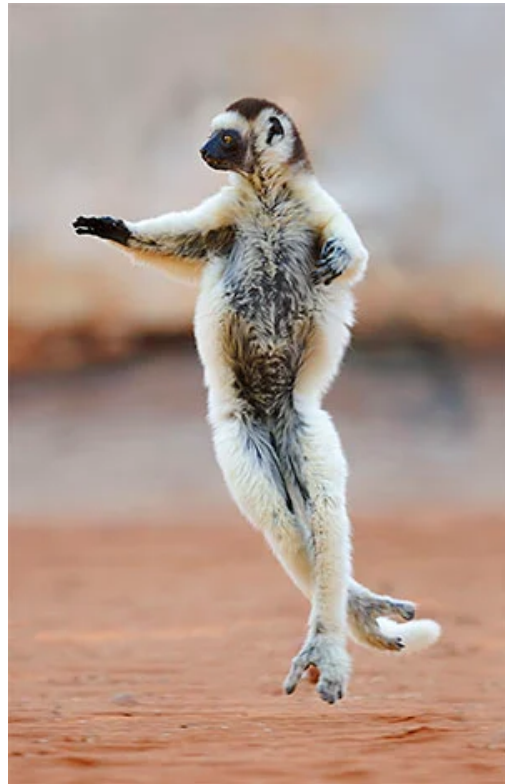


Ring-tailed Lemur in the Berenty Reserve

Berenty is a private nature reserve that was created in the early 20th century to protect the rare wildlife of the special spiny forest, only found in southern Madagascar. The reserve is home all sorts of different animals, from rare endemic birds like couas, vangas and owls, to chameleons, tortoises and strange insects such as the enormous giant cockroach and beautiful jewel beetles ([you can see some of them in my trip report here](#)).

However, it's the lemurs visitors generally come to see. The most famous are the cute ring-tailed lemurs (above), which are known throughout the world from TV shows, books and as cuddly toys. They live in large social groups led by a dominant female and are only found in southern Madagascar. Most of what's known about them has been discovered by researchers working at the Berenty reserve.

My personal favourites though are the sifakas... large lemurs that live mainly in the treetops and take on the role occupied by monkeys in other parts of the world. They have very long hind legs that are perfect for jumping from tree to tree but make it impossible for them to run on all four legs when they're on the ground... so instead they use a comical 'skipping dance' to get about, like the one opposite. [You can see videos of them 'skipping' here](#), and there is lots more information about Madagascar's lemurs in [my Madagascar book](#).



Verreaux's Sifaka 'skipping'!

Events and Books

The new Japan book is proving popular, but I still have a couple of free review copies if you're interested. You can also see it in the Cover to Cover bookshop if you're in Swansea or [here on the Waterstones website](#).

There won't be a newsletter next month as I'm going to be travelling around Wales and staying on some of the beautiful offshore islands, but I'll be back in time to lead a pond-dipping and moth-trapping walk around Crwys Community Woodland on the Gower Peninsula on 27th June. Email me if you'd like to attend.

Until then, all the best,

Hugh



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