



## Aye-Aye Fact Sheet

**Common Name:** Aye-aye

**Scientific Name:** Daubentonia madagascariensis

**Wild Status:** Endangered

**Habitat:** Forest

**Country:** Madagascar

**Shelter:** In the forest

**Life Span:** 20 years

**Size:** 3 feet (including tail), 4 pounds

### Details

The aye-aye is a species of [lemur](#) found only on the island of Madagascar. They live in the rainforests on the eastern coasts of the island. Highly arboreal, aye-ayes almost never come down from the [trees](#). While classified as an [omnivore](#), aye-ayes have some unique adaptations for hunting [insect](#) larvae hidden beneath bark. They use an elongated middle finger to tap on the wood and then listen for the echo of hidden grubs. Once a grub is located, the aye-aye uses its [incisors](#) to gnaw away the bark and then fishes out the morsel with the same middle finger. This allows them to occupy an [ecological niche](#) similar to that of a [woodpecker](#). Unlike most [primates](#), aye-ayes are typically solitary animals although the territories of several animals may overlap.

### Cool Facts

In 2004, bones were discovered of a giant [prehistoric](#) aye-aye. It existed about 3,000 years ago and is believed to have been about twice the size of the modern aye-aye. Thanks to its pronounced incisors and long, bushy tail, when it was first discovered the aye-aye was believed to be a [rodent](#) and was classified as a type of squirrel. According to Malagasy folk belief, the aye-aye is considered an omen of evil and is

often killed on sight. Aye-ayes are the only primates to hunt using [echolocation](#).

### **Taxonomic Breakdown**

**Kingdom:** Animalia  
**Phylum:** Chordata  
**Class:** Mammalia  
**Order:** Primates  
**Family:** Daubentoniidae  
**Genus:** *Daubentonia*  
**Species:** *D. madagascariensis*

### **Conservation & Helping**

The aye-aye is classified as [endangered](#) as its habitat is threatened by deforestation.

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