

# RED COLOBUS CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN INITIATIVE

Version 2.0 - July 2017





# RED ALERT FOR RED COLOBUS!

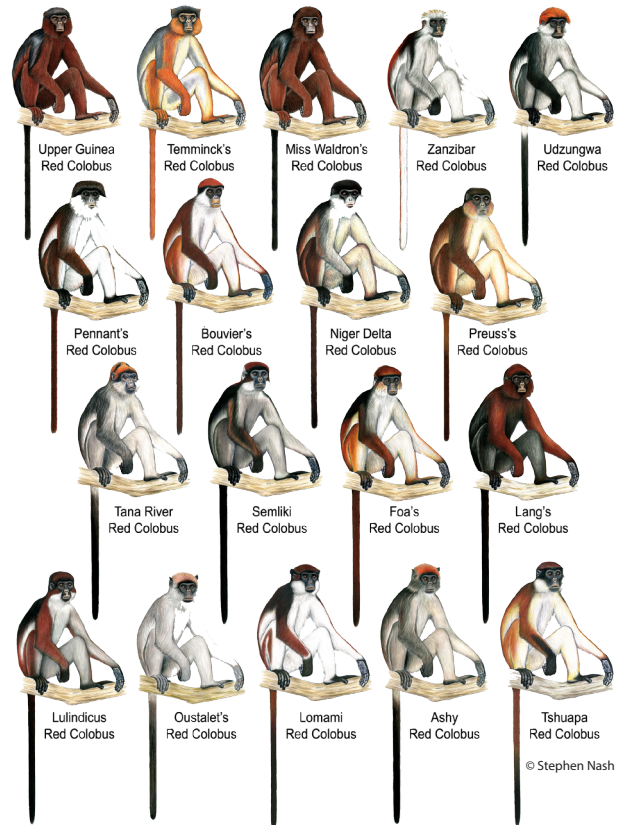
**Red Colobus monkeys are on Red Alert!** They are facing an extinction crisis requiring urgent, targeted, and coordinated conservation action.

Red colobus monkeys are the most threatened group of primates in Africa. Scientists are unclear about exactly how many species of red colobus there are, but we know there are 18 distinct forms, **all of which are threatened with extinction. More than half of these are Endangered or Critically Endangered, and one has likely been hunted to extinction already.** Despite the dire threats many red colobus face across their range, they are little known to the general public and only a few populations have been studied in detail. **Without urgent conservation measures across its range, Africa will lose many of its red colobus monkeys.**

In response to this critical need, **the IUCN Primate Specialist Group is spearheading the first comprehensive Red Colobus Conservation Action Plan**, uniting local and international conservation groups, governments, academic institutions, zoos, and interested partners to prevent a continent-wide extinction of all 18 red colobus taxa.

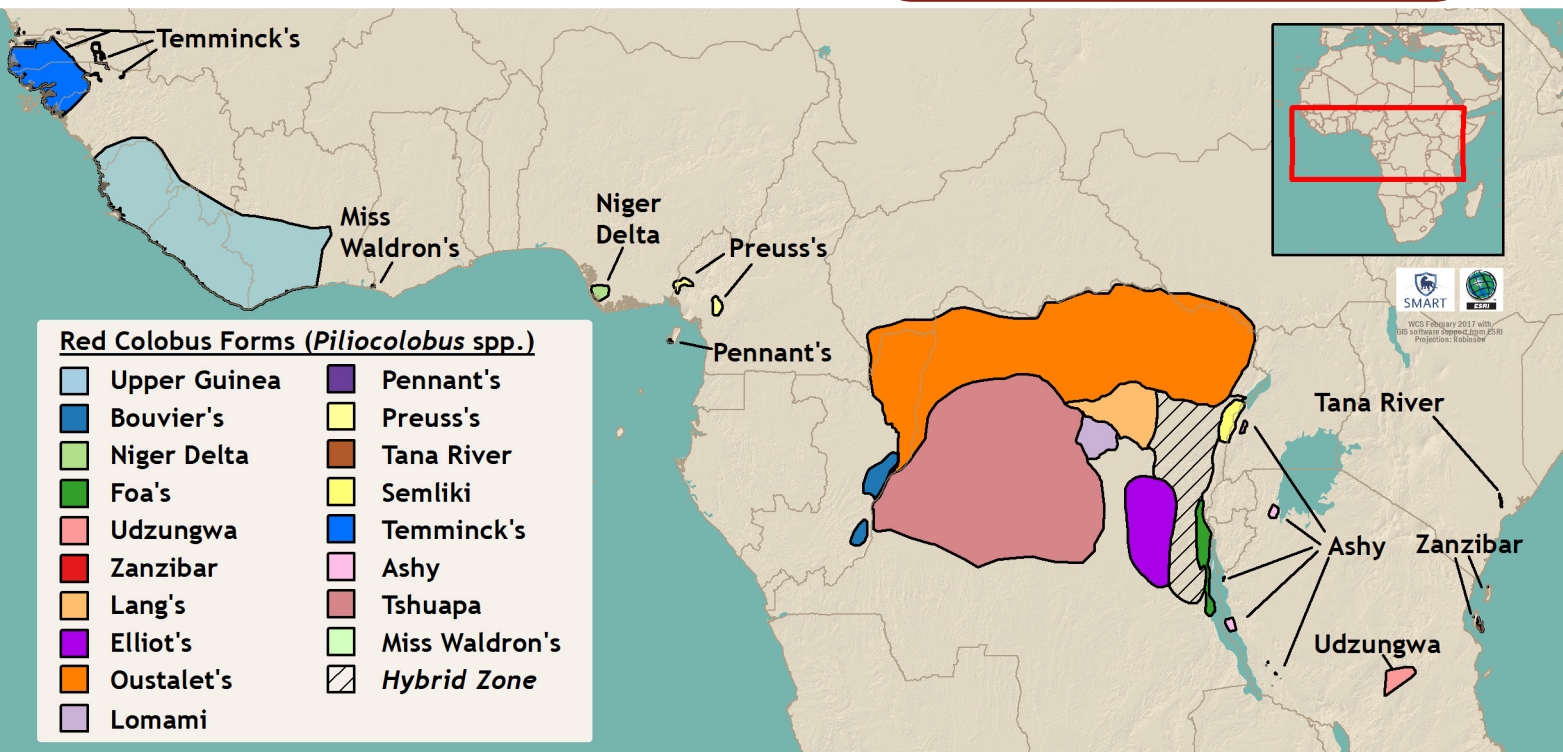
These beautiful, leaf-eating monkeys are unique to the forests of sub-Saharan Africa, where they range from Senegal on the Atlantic coast to the island of Zanzibar in the Indian Ocean, differing from one another in aspects of their coat color and design, facial patterns, behavior, and vocalizations.

Red colobus monkey range overlaps with at least 75% of all primate species on mainland Africa, including all of the African ape species. **Focusing conservation efforts on red colobus and elevating them to a flagship will protect countless other species inhabiting the same areas.**



*The red colobus monkeys (Piliocolobus) are the most endangered group of primates in Africa. Habitat destruction over much their range and intense hunting pressure on most species has brought several to the verge of extinction, with one, Miss Waldron's red colobus, perhaps already gone. This Action Plan brings together the leading specialists, and the great knowledge they have acquired over decades of research, to deliver a strategy to ensure the survival of these very important animals.*

**Russ Mittermeier, PhD**  
**Chairman, IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group**



# THE CHALLENGE: 18 TAXA ON THE BRINK

Red colobus monkeys are the most threatened group of primates in Africa. Intense hunting pressure and habitat disturbance are rapidly reducing their populations across the continent, and they are unable to survive in captivity. Comprehensive and informed conservation actions, like the ReCCAP, are urgently needed to avoid their impending extinction.

**Inza Koné, PhD - Chair, African Primatological Society**

Hunting for trade and local subsistence, and habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation due to logging, mining, charcoal production, infrastructure development, and conversion of forest to farms and agriculture plantations threaten red colobus monkeys.

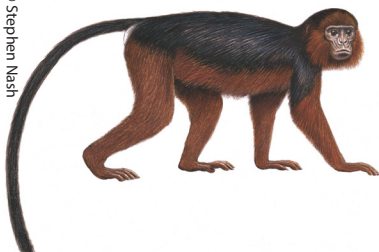
Red colobus monkeys are more susceptible to hunting than other monkeys and are usually one of the first species to disappear in such highly disturbed habitats. Like a canary in a coal mine, red colobus monkeys can be thought of as the first indicators of the decline of a healthy ecosystem.

However, through both site-based projects that ensure protection through enforcement, education, ecological monitoring, and collaborative partnerships, and regional initiatives that build capacity and leverage site-based projects to achieve efficiencies of scale and range wide adaptive management, **no red colobus monkey needs go extinct.**



## COLOBUS IN CRISIS

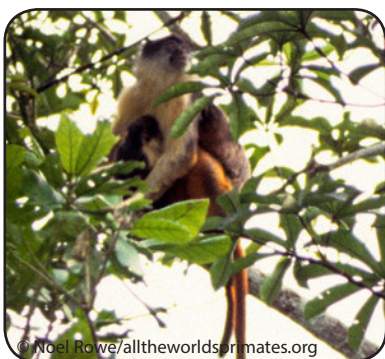
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### **Miss Waldron's Red Colobus**

***Piliocolobus waldroni*; Critically Endangered**

Once found throughout southeastern Cote d'Ivoire and southwestern Ghana, extensive hunting and habitat loss have resulted in steep declines in its population. They have not been observed in the wild since 1978, despite extensive surveys. Experts believe that it may be extinct, but rumors of their existence persist from the deep interior of a single, remote, almost impenetrable swamp forest.



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### **Niger Delta Red Colobus**

***Piliocolobus epieni*; Critically Endangered**

The most recently discovered red colobus species is already one of the most endangered. First described in the 1990's, the Niger Delta Red Colobus is found only in Nigeria, restricted to the swamp forests of the Niger Delta in an area of approximately 78 km<sup>2</sup>. Its habitat has been severely degraded by logging, and hunting has increased due to the influx of oil workers to the region. With only about 200 individuals remaining, it is thought that it may go extinct within the next 5 years without effective conservation actions.



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### **Tana River Red Colobus**

***Piliocolobus rufomitratu*s; Critically Endangered**

Found only in small forest fragments along a 60-km stretch of river, in a total area of less than 13 km<sup>2</sup>. Only around 1,000 individuals remain, but it is in continual decline due to rapid loss and fragmentation of its habitat. The endangered Tana River Mangabey is also endemic and restricted to the same forest as the Tana River Red Colobus.



# CATALYZING RANGE-WIDE CONSERVATION

Red colobus monkeys are one of the most threatened groups of primates in the world, with populations undergoing steep declines across Africa. A concerted and coordinated range-wide conservation effort is urgently required to conserve and recover all 18 red colobus forms.

The Red Colobus Conservation Action Plan (ReCAP) Initiative formed with the aim that individual efforts would be most effective if they were integrated into a holistic, continent-wide strategy that was both systematic and prioritized, and therefore able to achieve efficiencies of scale. The ReCAP Initiative will be driven by a strategic conservation action plan being developed now.

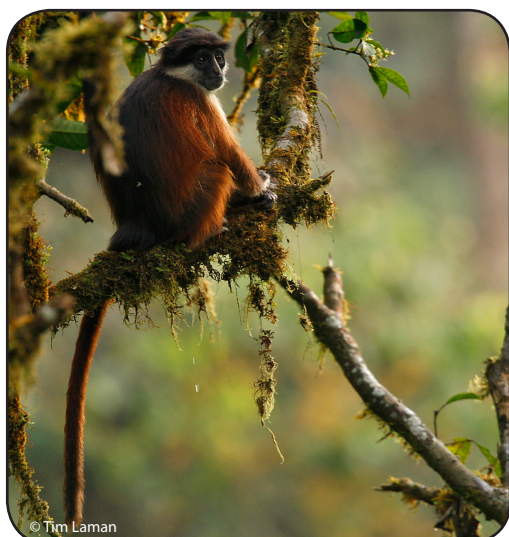
The ReCAP Initiative is a collaborative effort under the IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group, encompassing experts on all 18 red colobus forms and their range countries working together to leverage their collective expertise and influence to stop the decline and extinction of red colobus monkeys.

## **Red Colobus Conservation Action Plan (ReCAP):**

- ➔ **Enhance and expand site-based conservation for all 18 species of red colobus monkey**
  - Develop locally applicable solutions to hunting and forest loss, leveraging strategic partnerships
- ➔ **Elevate red colobus monkeys to flagship status across their range and beyond**
  - Improve local, national, and international understanding and awareness of red colobus monkeys
- ➔ **Develop cross-cutting, continent-wide initiatives to link and support site-based activities**
  - Development, implementation, and support of standardized monitoring & protection protocols
  - Create a range-wide red colobus genomic database to address issues of taxonomy, habitat fragmentation, bushmeat tracking, and demography
  - Develop the ReCAP Initiative to oversee administration, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of ReCAP funds and activities
- ➔ **Build capacity and create opportunities through training and mentoring programs**
  - Provide sustained capacity building support to African professionals committed to red colobus conservation

*“Red colobus monkeys are important to science because of the incredible variability found in their populations and forms, and they are also integral components of their forest habitats. Thus, conserving red colobus is important for scientific and aesthetic reasons, and they are excellent indicators of forest health because they are unusually susceptible to hunting and habitat degradation. Healthy populations of red colobus usually indicate a preserved, healthy, and intact forest.”*

**Thomas Struhsaker, PhD - International Primatological Society Lifetime Award Recipient**



## **Colobus in Crisis: Pennant's Red Colobus**

### ***Piliocolobus pennantii*; Critically Endangered**

Endemic to the small island of Bioko, Equatorial Guinea, it was believed to have once been found throughout all of Bioko's lowland forests. Heavy hunting pressure and increasing infrastructure development, however, has reduced its range to only the most remote, mountainous corner of the island, in an area of about 150 km<sup>2</sup>. Fewer than an estimated 1,200 individuals remain, a decline of more than 80% over the last 30 years due primarily to the proliferation of the commercial bushmeat trade. The critically endangered Bioko black colobus and endangered Bioko drill are also endemic, along with six other endangered primate taxa, and found in the same forest as the Pennant's red colobus. As such, this species is a notable flagship for the primate fauna of Bioko Island.

# ReCAP INITIATIVE TIMELINE

| 2016   | 2017  | 2018  | 2019 - 2023   |
|--|---|---|---|
| IUCN-SSC Primate Specialist Group reassessed Red List status of all African monkeys      | Red Colobus Conservation Action Plan (ReCAP) drafting                       | ReCAP final draft completed                               | Implementation of ReCAP activities  |
| Red colobus conservation action plan proposed  | ReCAP development workshop at African Primatological Society (APS) congress | ReCAP Initiative Symposium & Launch Event at IPS congress | ReCAP Initiative adaptive management and lesson learning workshops (2020, 2022, 2023) |
| Red colobus working group meeting at International Primatological Society (IPS) congress |   |   |   |

## Colobus in Crisis: Preuss's Red Colobus *Piliocolobus preussi*; Critically Endangered

Restricted mostly to two separate forests in western Cameroon, this species requires urgent support. Surrounded by some of the densest human populations in Africa, it is in sharp decline due to intense, commercialized bushmeat hunting and deforestation caused by expansion of small and large-scale agriculture and infrastructure projects.

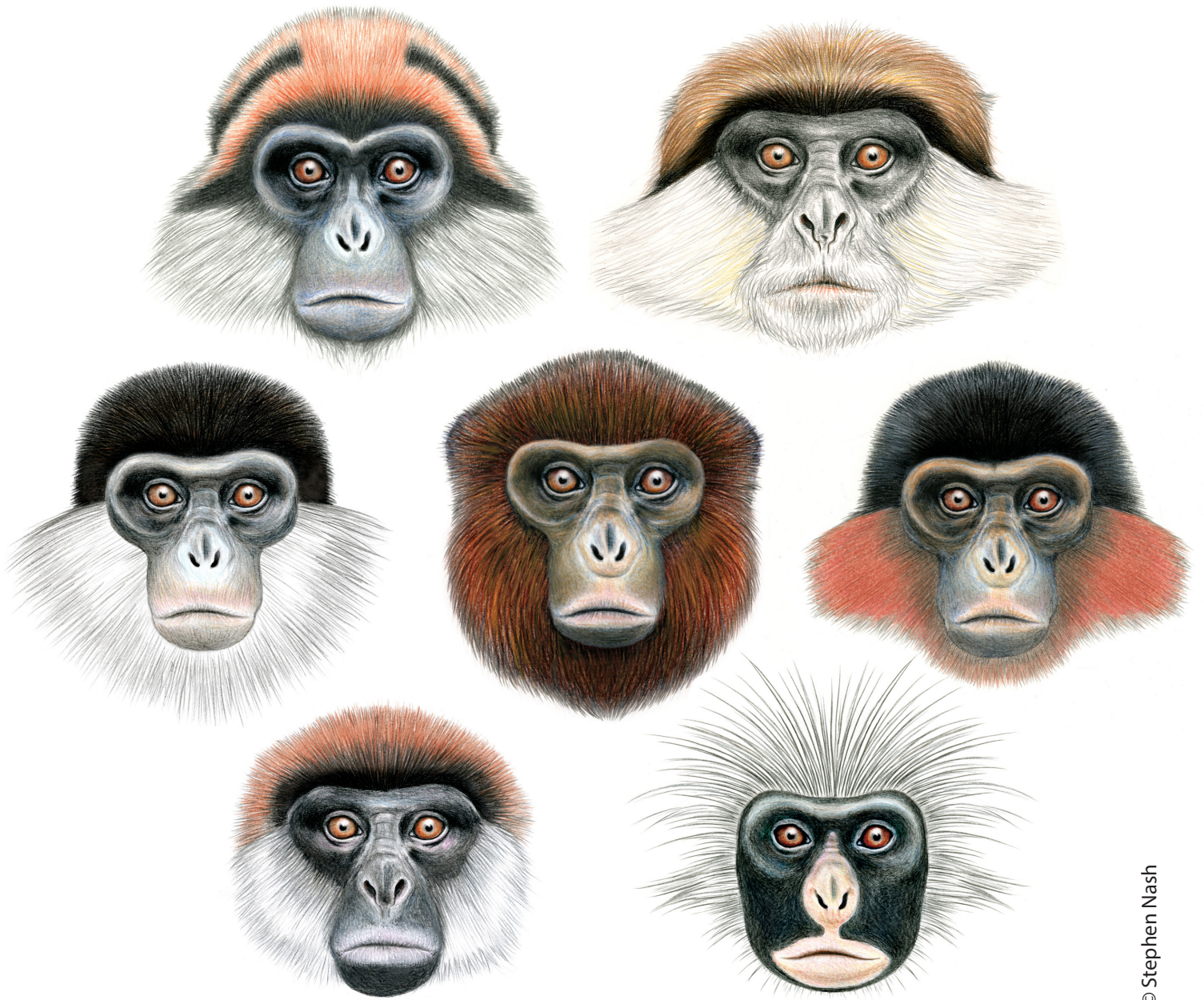


## BUDGET SUMMARY

| Category/Budget  | Budget (US\$)     |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Development of Red Colobus Conservation Action Plan (ReCAP) (2016-2018)</b>             |                   |
| ReCAP workshop at African Primatological Society Congress (2017)                           | 25,000            |
| ReCAP Symposium & Launch at International Primatological Society Congress (2018)           | 40,000            |
| Printing of ReCAP (v1.0)   | 10,000            |
| <b>ReCAP Development Subtotal</b>  | <b>75,000</b>     |
| <b>ReCAP Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>   |                   |
| ReCAP Progress Workshops (2020, 2022, 2023)  | 75,000            |
| <b>Project Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Subtotal</b>  | <b>75,000</b>     |
| <b>Implementataion of ReCAP activities (2019-2023)</b>                                     |                   |
| ReCAP Coordinator (2018-2023)  | 350,000           |
| Continent-scale conservation activities  |                   |
| Development, implementation, and support of standardized monitoring & protection protocols | 1,500,000         |
| African leadership capacity building program   | 1,000,000         |
| Awareness, education, and marketing campaigns  | 1,000,000         |
| <b>Regional Implementation Subtotal*</b>   | <b>3,850,000</b>  |
| Site/Species-specific conservation activities (\$250,000-500,000/taxon)                    | 9,000,000         |
| <b>Site-based Implementation Subtotal*</b>   | <b>9,000,000</b>  |
| <b>ReCAP Total Estimate Budget*</b>  | <b>13,000,000</b> |

\*Numbers are current estimates and are subject to change pending completion of the ReCAP and development of a suite of final recommendations for each species.





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**To learn more, contact:**

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