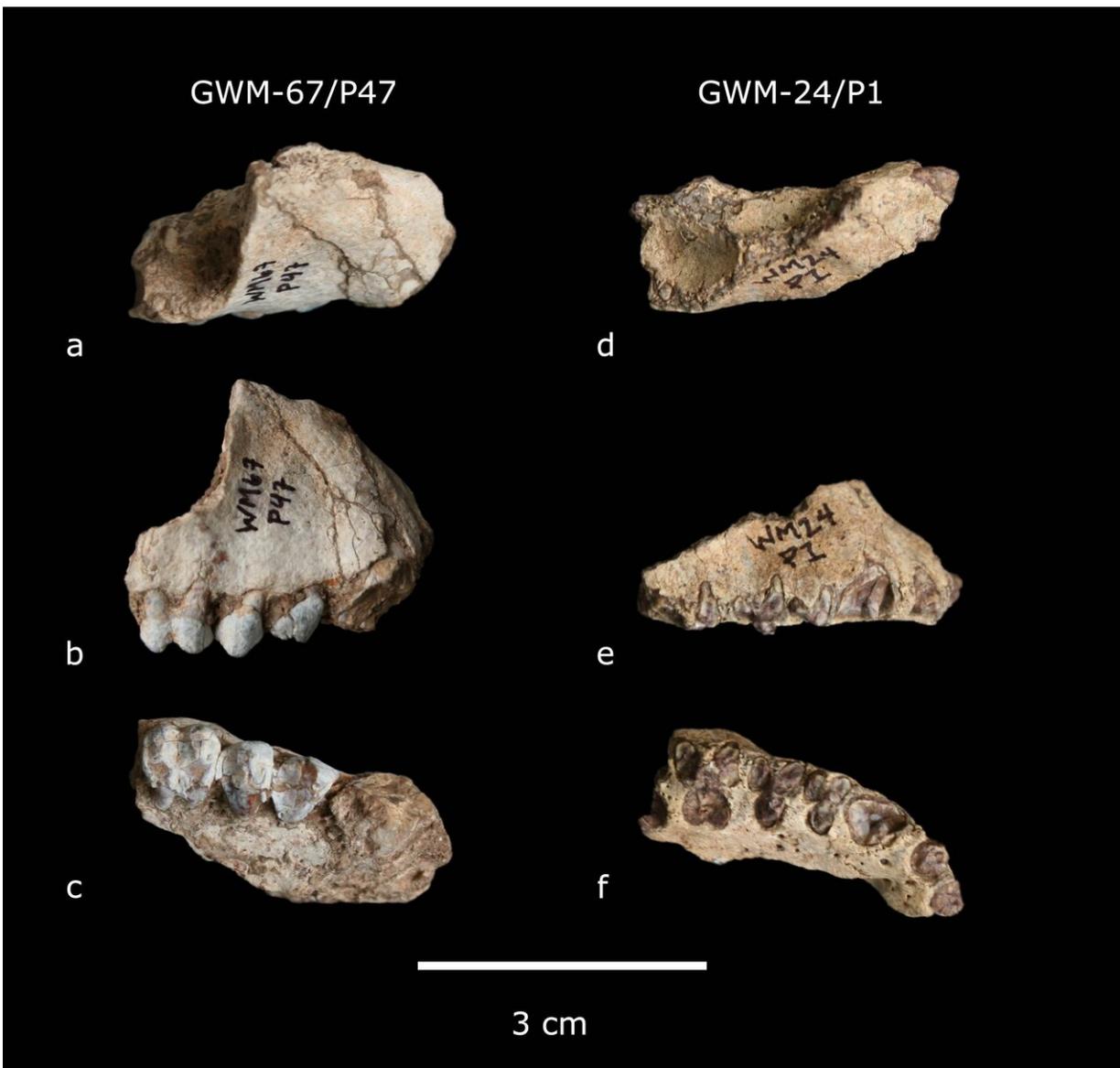


Two new extinct primate species are found in the Ethiopia site of Gona

June 3 2020



Maxillae of *Kuseracolobus aramisi* from Gona. Credit: CENIEH

Sileshi Semaw from the Centro Nacional de Investigación sobre la Evolución Humana (CENIEH), is coauthor of a paper published in the *Journal of Human Evolution* about a large series of fossil cercopithecoid primates named *Pliopapio alemui* and *Kuseracolobus aramisi*, two different new primate species dated between 4.8 and 4.3 million years ago known only from Gona and the Middle Awash study area in Ethiopia.

The [fossil discoveries](#) include upper jaws, mandibles and postcrania found from deposits that also yielded *Ardipithecus ramidus*, a [hominin species](#) first identified in the Middle Awash study area located to the south of Gona. Based on abundance of various animal species, including monkeys, the ancient environment in which *Ardipithecus ramidus* lived was argued to be in a closed habitat with forests.

In addition to providing important information on the biological evolution of monkeys, these fossil discoveries provide critical information about the ancient environment in which *Ardipithecus ramidus* lived. Remarkably, differences in relative abundance of these fossil monkeys showed that at Gona *Ardipithecus ramidus* lived in open wooded habitats, which is different from the closed forested habitat documented in the Middle Awash.

"Therefore, our study shows environmental differences in the areas inhabited by *Ardipithecus ramidus*, one of the earliest hominins that lived at Gona and in the Middle Awash 4.5 million years ago," says Sileshi Semaw.



Mandibles of *Kuseracolobus aramisi* from Gona. Credit: CENIEH

A site of *Ardipithecus*

Gona is one of the two palaeoanthropological sites in Africa where the hominin species known as *Ardipithecus ramidus*) has been discovered. *Ardipithecus ramidus* is among the earliest bipedal hominin species (walking on two feet) that lived in East Africa. Only two other hominin species known as *Ardipithecus kaddaba* (dated to 6.0 million years ago) and *Sahelanthropus tchadensis* (from Tchad in Central Africa dated to 7.0 million years ago) are older than *Ardipithecus ramidus*. Also *Ardipithecus kadabba*, dated to more than 6.0 million years ago, has also been discovered at Gona.

More information: Stephen R. Frost et al. Fossil Cercopithecidae from the Early Pliocene Sagantole Formation at Gona, Ethiopia, *Journal of Human Evolution* (2020). [DOI: 10.1016/j.jhevol.2020.102789](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhevol.2020.102789)

Provided by CENIEH

Citation: Two new extinct primate species are found in the Ethiopia site of Gona (2020, June 3) retrieved 15 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-06-extinct-primate-species-ethiopia-site.html>

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