

Research Activity Report
Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”

2014. 06, 17

Affiliation/Position	Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute/Njiro Wildlife Research Centre
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1. Country/location of visit
Japan, Yakushima Island National Park-Kagoshima Prefecture
2. Research project
Study on Japanese Deer (<i>Cervus Nippon yakushimae</i>) understanding their feeding behavior
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2014. 05. 19 – 2014. 05. 24 (6 days)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
ISSO Field Station, Yakushima Island, Wildlife Research Centre, Kyoto University
5. Progress and results of your research/activity
<p>The Field Training Course took Place at Yakushima Island National Park, Japan from 19th May, 2014 to 24th May, 2014. The course was divided into four different groups namely Monkey Course, Deer Course, Plant Course and Insect Course. I was in Deer Course and we had the following objectives; to observe the feeding behavior and ecology of Deer in Yakushima Island, to estimate deer diets and other small mammals found in different altitudes within the island hence using metagenome analysis. In fulfilling the above objectives three methods were employed namely, direct observation, collecting the whole fecal sample and fresh feces which stored in RNA later for metagenome analysis using Next Generation Sequencer (NGS). This was not only done for Deer at Yakushima but also for other small mammals which found at Yakushima Island. Not only the samples were taken by the group but also the GPS coordinates were also taken so as to assist the mapping of our sampled areas as well as the distribution of Deer in Yakushima Island. The direct observation and feeding behavior and ecology method was used only in Deer and not other small mammals due to the fact other small mammals were hard to see. In each evening after the field work during the day the Deer Course member sorted the fecal samples for dry sample analysis. Using the microscope, many plant parts, especially seeds, insects and other food particles were identified from the dried fecal samples. In our third day at Yakushima we (Deer Course) managed to attend the Bats survey technique which was demonstrated to us by Dr. David Hill. It was a new technique to me and it has assisted to improve my professional career as well as building my research experience.</p> <p>This field course will improve my career on collection of samples which requires metagenome analysis using Next Generation Sequencer (NGS). Meanwhile I am developing a proposal titled “Assessment of genetic variation, forage quality and suitable habitat of Black Rhinoceros (<i>Diceros bicornis</i>) in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA), Tanzania”, for my graduate studies. If this proposal will be accepted I am expecting to use the similar knowledge and skills acquired during this Field Course at Yakushima Island National Park.</p>

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Photo 1: Yakushima Island National Park



Photo 2: Deer in Yakushima Island National Park

6. Acknowledgement

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Wildlife Research Centre (WRC) of Kyoto University for organizing this Field Training Course. The Professors and Doctors at WRC as well as at Science building at Kyoto University, I would like to thank you for your great cooperation which you have shown to us during field work as well for laboratory work, you have imparted something towards my career.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks to all the Genome Training Course participants, 2014 for making my life easy during my studies as well as walking through Kyoto city. Thank you all and well come to Tanzania.