

Research Activity Report
Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”
 (Please be sure to submit this report after the trip that supported by PWS.)

2015.05.09

Affiliation/Position	PRI/D1
Name	Duncan Andrew Wilson

1. Country/location of visit
Koshima, Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan
2. Research project
Hand Preferences during feeding in Japanese Macaques
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2015. 04.25 – 2015.05.02 (8 days)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Associate Professor. Goro Hanya, Primate Research Institute, Kyoto University
5. Progress and results of your research/activity (You can attach extra pages if needed)
Please insert one or more pictures (to be publicly released). Below each picture, please provide a brief description.
<p>As an undergraduate psychology student and postgraduate animal behavior student in the United Kingdom, I learnt about the classic study of cultural transmission of sweet potato washing in Japanese macaques on Koshima. I was therefore excited to have the opportunity to visit these monkeys as part of this field science course at Kyoto University.</p> <p>During the first part of the course, we conducted preliminary observations of the monkeys’ behaviour before, during and after they were provisioned (fed on scattered grains of wheat). I then developed my own research question focusing on one aspect of their behavior - hand preference during feeding. Based on previous research with Japanese macaques, I hypothesised that (1.) there would be individual level hand preferences when reaching for food, and (2.) younger monkeys would show no hand preference, whilst older monkeys would show left or right hand preferences. I carried out focal sampling of six adult (eight years old or over) and five young monkeys (seven years old or under) over a period of two days (approx. two hours in total) and manually recorded the total number of left and right hand reaches for grains of wheat during feeding bouts. Individual hand preferences were found; five monkeys (two adults and three young) showed left hand preferences, and six monkeys (four adults and two young) showed no hand preference. This result supports the findings of previous research that there are individual level and left-hand preferences during feeding in Japanese macaques. However, the results do not support the hypothesis that younger monkeys show no hand preference, and older monkeys show left or right hand preferences. A small sample size and limited number of observations made it difficult to draw any firm conclusions regarding hand preferences during feeding in wild Japanese macaques.</p> <p>Although I have conducted behavioural observations of animals in zoos, this was the first time for me to conduct behavioural observations on wild animals. I have used this opportunity to learn about the basics of conducting field research including; developing a feasible research question, carrying out data collection in a quick and efficient manner, analysing the data, presenting the results to my peers, and writing a short academic report. It was also a good opportunity to get to know the other students and professors on the course through cooperating together with aspects of daily life such as travel, safety, food preparation, cleaning and sleeping arrangements.</p> <p>Overall, this experience has given me a clearer vision of how to conduct field work on non-human primates and will be of great help when I carry out observations of wild chimpanzees to compliment my laboratory work at the PRI (Primate Research Institute).</p>
6. Others
Photos...

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Kyoto University Koshima Field Station
(Accommodation on the mainland)



Koshima (Island in Miyazaki Prefecture)



Chartered boats to Koshima



Making preliminary observations on Koshima



Koshima shoreline (main area for feeding)



Koshima shoreline

More photos below....

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Outskirts of the forest



Feeding time (searching for grains of wheat)



Data collection



Getting close to the monkeys



Professor. Hanya (PRI host researcher)



Group photo (students and professors).