

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.)

2019. 09, 24	
Affiliation/Positio	Wildlife Research Center/M1
Name	Ena Onishi

1. Country/location of visit
Democratic Republic of Congo/ Mbali
2. Research project
Preliminary research on wild bonobos
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2019. 08. 20 – 2019. 09. 13
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Mbou Mon Tour (MMT)
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>I went to DRC with Profs. Gen’ichi Idani, Shinya Yamamoto, Yuta Shintaku, and Mr. James Brooks. The aim of trip was to conduct a preliminary research of wild bonobos. During this visit, we also went to Lola ya Bonobo (Bonobo sanctuary in DRC) to examine future research possibility.</p> <p>Both Lola ya Bonobo and Mbali were relatively close from Kinshasa, the capital city. This is especially advantageous for Mbali as a wild bonobo research field. In Lola ya Bonobo, we stayed two nights to observe bonobos and exchange information with other researchers and staffs, such as Ms Claudine Andre, Profs. Frans de Waal and Zanna Clay, who were staying there. We also tried to think what kind of research can be done in this captive environment.</p> <p>Mbali is a unique field because of its savanna-forest mosaic environment. In Mbali, we went into the forest with local trackers. Luckily, we could observe bonobos every time we went into the forest but the visibility and duration when bonobos were actually visible largely depended on situations. It is plausible to think that they were less likely to be staying on tree (which is more visible) because it was the end of dry season and not many fruits were found. I also have resolved some of the questions I had about the phenology data which was collected by the local trackers. Now I am working on them to make a comparison of bonobos’ feeding ecology between Mbali and Wamba to investigate the existence of “food culture”. Particularly, I am looking at whether there are plant species that exist in both field and yet only consumed in either of the field.</p> <p>Overall, this trip was meaningful for my future research plan and I could learn a lot from it. While we found many difficulties that we need to tackle, I also found this place very interesting and fascinating place as a research subject.</p>

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bonobos in savanna area



aerial picture of Mbali

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a bonobo feeding on parasol tree



field station of Mbali

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photo with local trackers



photo with staff and friends in MMT

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bonobo nursery of Lola ya Bonobo

6. Others

This trip was supported by PWS program and all the other people who helped this to be possible. I would like to thank Prof. Matsuzawa, Prof. Idani, Dr. Yamamoto, Dr. Shintaku and Mrs. Sakai for all the supports I received.