

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. 10, 05
Affiliation/Position	Primate Research Institute/D1
Name	Vanessa Nadine Gris

1.	Country/location of visit
	Sasagamine, Niigata Prefecture, Japan
2.	Research project
	Sasagamine Field Science Course
3.	Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
	2019. 10. 02 – 2019. 10. 05
4.	Main host researcher and affiliation
	Tetsuro Matsuzawa (Distinguished Professor, Institute for Advanced Study, Kyoto University), Sigeru Sugiyama (Associate Professor, Shizuoka University), Seiko Fukushima (Assistant Professor, Wildlife Research Center, 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>I joined the Autumn edition of Sasagamine Field Science Course. The aim of this course was to learn survival skills, visit Hiuchi Mountain to observe wildlife and practice climbing and learn about the wildlife (flora and fauna) of the region.</p> <p>We stayed at the Kyoto University Sasagamine Hütte in Myoko-kogen (plateau at 1,300m elevation). The hütte is located in Niigata Prefecture at 1300m elevation. After arriving in the hütte, a very beautiful and comfortable house, we prepared our rooms and divided working teams for cooking and cleaning and prepared (packing and food) for climbing next morning. We also had a lesson on map reading and localization very useful during climbing and for fieldwork.</p> <p>Very early next morning we headed to Mount Hiuchi, part of Japan’s Kubiki Mountains in Niigata Prefecture, reaching the height of 2461m. We took around 12 hours to climb up and down. The scenery at Mt. Hiuchi is breathtaking. The autumn colors were very vivid and it impressed me a lot. The trail is not technically difficult and is very well taken care of by the staff of the park. The descent was a bit harder than going up, probably because we are more tired and because we don’t have the objective of achieving the peak.</p> <p>On the third day, we went to Kurasawa creek to learn about plants like warabi (bracken fern), yama-urushi (mountain lacquer tree) and the edible hanabiratake (cauliflower mushroom). At the end of the day we were very lucky to meet a large group of Japanese macaques.</p> <p>On the last day we visited Jikokudani Yaen-koen. It was my first visit to the park and I could see the Japanese macaques very close to the tourists. They seemed habituated and relaxed. A lot of them were very close to the people and still laying down and grooming.</p> <p>I really enjoyed this field course. It brought together many things I like: autumn season, mountaineering, lessons about surviving in the wild, a nice group of friends and one very nice insight I had from a sentence I heard “This is not your single attempt (<i>of climbing Mt. Hiuchi</i>). We need to be collaborative.”</p>

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Map lesson before climbing



Autumn vegetation in Mt Hiuchi (2019)



Group photo of the Sasagamine Field Science Course



Lesson at Karasawa creek.



Grooming at the Jikokudani Yaen-koen

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6. Others

I would like to thank PWS for the financial support and organization of the course and to Professors Matsuzawa, Sugiyama and Fukushima for guiding us during the whole course.