

**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.)

2022.2.10

<b>Affiliation/Position</b>	Wildlife Research Center/M1; PWS/L1
<b>Name</b>	Kana Arai 新井花奈

<b>1. Country/location of visit</b>
Miyama, Nantan, Kyoto, Japan; 美山町、南丹市、京都
<b>2. Research project</b>
Snow Season Field Course; 基礎フィールドワーク実習積雪期
<b>3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)</b>
2022.2.2 ~ 2022.2.4 (3 days)
<b>4. Main host researcher and affiliation</b>
Professor Gen'ichi Idani (Director of Wildlife Research Center, Kyoto University) Mr. Homaru Fujiwara (Founder and Owner of Tautasha, 田歌舎)
<b>5. Progress and results of your research/activity</b> (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.
This practical course aimed to teach fellow students, survival skills during snow season.
<b><u>Schedule Outline:</u></b>
2/2 Travel to Miyama; Tautasha Survival experience: setting up tents, cooking food in the snow
2/3 Deer hunting experience① Lunch Deer hunting experience② Dinner
2/4 Breakfast, packing up Building a snowman competition Travel back to WRC
<b>Wednesday 2/2</b>
The day started with all of us meeting at the Wildlife Research Center (WRC) and packed our equipment to load in the car. The drive to Miyama took approximately 2 hours, where we also stopped at two resting sites to take a break and have lunch. The nato-mochi was a delicious treat.
Once we arrived at Tautasha, we took all our equipment (i.e. clothing, food, tent etc.) with us and walked into the forest/mountain. A few weeks before going to Miyama, there was heavy snow which resulted in approximately 80 cm of snow set on the ground by the time we arrived in Miyama. All we saw in front of us inside the forest were just snow and trees. When we walked into the snow our feet kept sinking into the ground, sometimes until our knee level. We had a hard time walking in the snow as our feet kept on sinking but it was also very exciting because for most people it was our first time walking in such an environment (Fig. 1a). Some of us tried walking in snowshoes but it did not work well as expected because there was too much snow, and the upper layer of the snow was quite soft. We walked approximately for 15~20 mins and arrived at our target spot to set up our tents. We broke into pairs or groups to set up our tents (Fig. 1b). By the time we finished setting up our tents, we prepared for dinner before it got dark. As we did not have access to mineral water, we used river water or boiled snow to access water which we used to cook our food. We prepared beef stew for dinner, which we pre-cut the vegetables the day before. Some of us also build fire, whilst the others were cooking however because the branches were wet due to the snow, the fire did not last for very long. Once it started to go dark, the temperatures dropped to 0°C and we had to use our headlights to guide our way in the dark, as there was no electricity. As we kept sinking into the snow, most of us got our feet wet and cold thus by night, our feet were freezing. We tried to warm ourselves up with hot cocoa and went inside our tents to sleep in our sleeping bags.

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**Fig. 1.** (a) The walk towards our target spot to set up our tents. (b) Tents set-up.

### Thursday 2/3

The night inside the tent was quite cold and by the time we woke up, our shoes that was left outside was frozen! Once we woke up, we started packing our tents (Fig. 2). We then made breakfast in the snow again using boiled snow or river water and gathered our equipment and walked our way back to Tautasha.

Once we arrived at Tautasha, we got ready for our deer hunting experience. Here, they undergo deer hunting due to the increased overgrazing caused by the overpopulation of deer in the area. Due to this, there has been an increasing decline in greenery and forestry in the area over the years. To prioritize the restoration of the environment, it is important to control the population of deer to stop overpopulation and overgrazing. The hunted deer is used for food, so it is not gone to waste. The staffs have hunting licenses and they use their dogs (mainly three dogs are used during hunting) as an assistant to hunt deer. Hunting was undergone like this: 1) the dogs are set free to run into the mountain to find the deer while the staffs stay and wait outside the mountain, 2) the dogs are attached with GPS collars so the staffs can locate the whereabouts of the dogs and calculate when and in what route the deer and dogs come out of the mountain, 3) the staffs wait in different areas where they assume that the deer will pop out, 4) the deer pops out and the staff hunts them down.

On the first round, one deer was hunted. After this, we had deer meat for lunch. It was my first time having deer meat and I enjoyed it. As the first hunt was quite easy, the staff suggested a second round after lunch. On the second round, two deer were hunted. After this, we had an experience of dissecting/dismantling the hunted down deer. This was personally a lifetime experience because I have experienced dissecting small animals such as frogs but not large animals like deer. The staff kindly explained to us the different types of meat that is edible in the deer. The whole experience, from hunting to dissecting to eating what we hunted was in my opinion a great valuable experience. Sometimes, it might be better to choose an overpopulated deer rather than choosing meat from livestock farming.

For dinner we had an amazing dinner, sukiyaki, kindly prepared by the staff at Tautasha (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 2.** Packing up our tent area.



**Fig. 3.** Dinner

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**Friday 2/4**

On the last day, we packed our stuff and prepared to travel back to WRC. We had a delicious breakfast again, prepared by the staff of Tautasha. Before we left Tautasha, we had a snowman competition. We divided into two groups and made a snowman (Fig. 4), with a time limit of 20 minutes. The votes were left decided for the online netizens. After that, we loaded our stuff in the car and travelled back to WRC, and also had wild boar ramen on the way for lunch.



Fig. 4. Snowman competition!

\*Please have your mentor check your report before submitting it to [[report@pws.wrc.kyoto-u.ac.jp](mailto:report@pws.wrc.kyoto-u.ac.jp)].

**6. Others**

I would like to thank Idani-sensei, Mitani-sensei, Kinoshita-sensei, and Tokuyama-sensei for guiding as throughout the field course. I would also like to thank the staffs at Tautasha for providing us with valuable experiences and delicious food.