

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.)

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Affiliation/Position	Primate Research Institute/D2
Name	Rafaela Sayuri Cicalise Takeshita

1. Country/location of visit
Tanzania/Arusha, Ngorongoro, Gombe
2. Research project
Participation at the III Workshop on Tropical Biodiversity and Conservation
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2014.09.20 – 2014. 10. 01 (11 days)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI)
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>From Inuyama it was a long trip. After approximately 3 hours by bus and 16 hours by plane, for the first time in my life I set foot on the African continent. The destination was the United Republic of Tanzania, in east Africa. Some troubles in the airport with my luggage (it arrived in Dar Es Salaam with the handle broken) and a delay in our flight to Arusha city (where the workshop was held) and upset me a little bit, but I was still very excited about this new environment and culture.</p> <p>The workshop lasted two days. In the first day all the students presented posters about their studies. I showed a few of the results from my Master’s research (Figure 1). It was good to hear many people interested in my work. During the oral sessions, we heard many interesting talks from researchers and professors from the Wildlife Research Center (WRC) of Kyoto University, Brazilian National Institute for Research of the Amazon (INPA), Center for Ecological Science (Indian Institute of Science), Institute of Tropical Biology and Conservation (University Sabah Malaysia), Primate Research Institute (PRI, Kyoto University), Graduate School of Science (Kyoto University), and Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI), which in my opinion was the highlight of this workshop. Particularly, I found interesting to hear studies about strategies to reduce illegal hunting while helping the local community. I was sad that the results do not seem very promising though. One thing I missed in this workshop was a general discussion that could probably help to solve those problems, since the time for questions is limited. But in general, it was well organized, and gave me a good overview about the ongoing studies on conservation in the hot spots mentioned above.</p>

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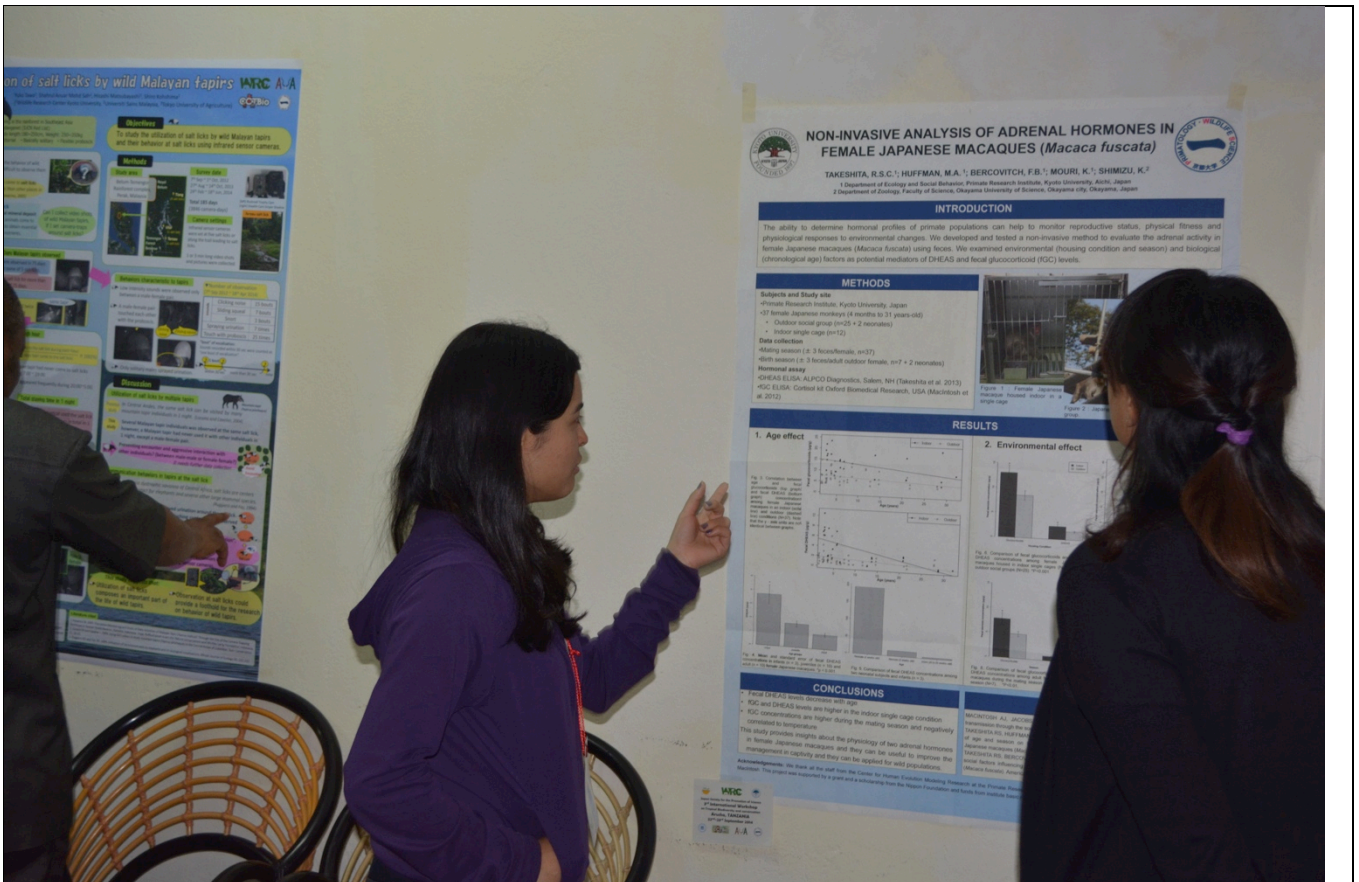


Figure 1. Explaining my poster to Ms. Sakakibara

After the workshop, we drove to Lake Manyara National Park, which is a 330km² park, composed by areas of jungle-like forest and grassy floodplain adjacent to the lakeshore. According to the guide, more than 400 species have been recorded in the area. It was my first safari experience, and I was amazed by all the wild animals we could see. Hornbills (*Ceratogymna brevis*), guineafowls (*Numida meleagris*), impala (*Aepyceros melampus*), elephants (*Loxodonta africana*), hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), blue monkeys (*Cercopithecus mitis*), vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*), baboons (*Papio anubis*) are a few among them (Figure 2). In that evening, we stayed at the Rhino Lodge at Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA). Very beautiful place in the mountains, surrounded by wild animals, and blessed by a starlit sky.

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Figure 2. From top left to bottom right. Hornbill (*Ceratogymna brevis*), guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*), impala (*Aepyceros melampus*), elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), blue monkey (*Cercopithecus mitis*)

In the next morning, we drove to Ngorongoro Crater to see the wild animals. On the way down the mountain, I could see a giraffe, very close to our car. Too bad that we couldn't stop to take pictures, because this was the only giraffe seen clearly during this trip. I was very lucky! Unlike Lake Manyara, NCA is more savanna-like environment. There are over 20,000 animals living there, mostly ungulates. We could see zebras (*Equus burchelli*), gnus (*Connochaetes taurinus*), buffalos (*Syncerus caffer*), wild boars (*Sus scrofa*), hippopotamus, gazelles (*Gazella granti*), hyenas (*Crocuta crocuta*), elephants and lions (*Panthera leo*) (Figure 3). We also saw many vervet monkeys and olive baboons, flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*), and grey crowned crane (*Balearica regulorum*) (Figure 4).

One interesting thing that happened was to see a golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) chasing a hare. First, the predator was staring at the grass for a considerable time, until it dashes toward the prey (Figure 5). In the end, the hare escaped. By late afternoon, we headed back to Arusha to spend the night, and get ready to the next tour.

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Figure 3. From top left to bottom right. Zebra (*Equus burchelli*), gnu (*Connochaetes taurinus*), buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*), and lion (*Panthera leo*).



Figure 4. From top left to bottom right. Flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*), grey crowned crane (*Balearica regulorum*), vervet monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*) and olive baboons (*Papio anubis*).

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Figure 5. Golden jackal (*Canis aureus*) chasing a hare

In the next morning, the group split in Gombe and Zanzibar tours. I joined the first one. Traveling by air, road, and lake, we reached Gombe National Park in the late afternoon. By the shore of Lake Tanganyika, Gombe is the smallest of Tanzania's national parks (52 km²), 16 km north of Kigoma. Before arriving, we could already spot many olive baboons on the shore, probably feeding on shellfish. I was very excited for being in the place where Jane Goodall started a pioneer work on chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*) research in the early 60s, when she founded a behavioral research program. Currently, Dr. Anthony Collins occupies Jane's house and conducts research on both chimpanzees and baboons. He kindly showed us the house and talked about his work (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Dr. Anthony Collins showing two baboon skulls.

In the morning, the weather was very good, and we promptly followed the guides to track chimpanzees. It was a long and hard climb, but finally we found them. Lots of chimpanzees, including infants, mothers and adult males, surrounding us, feeding on fruits, termites, and resting on trees (Figure 7).

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Figure 7. Mother chimpanzee and 3 young individuals. She is grooming one individual and receiving grooming from another.

In total I believe we saw more than 30 individuals in that day. It was my first time seeing wild chimpanzees, and the second time seeing a wild ape (after orangutans), and I already could notice so many differences in both ways. Chimpanzees from zoos do not seem so active, which is the total opposite from wild ones. Those are curious, constantly moving, feeding or grooming. I could even see a case of individuals showing the “begging behavior”, as explained by the guide (Figure 8).



Figure 8. “Begging behavior” from a subordinate to a high-ranked individual.

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Differently from orangutans, which are solitary, chimpanzees live in a group, spend most of the time on the ground than on trees, and they are more active. The group we found stayed in one area for about 1 hour and then started moving again. But instead of following them, we decided to use the time left to visit the waterfall (Figure 9). Very beautiful, refreshing, and cool. On the way back to the field center we could see blue monkeys and red-tailed monkeys. Baboons were everywhere (Figure 10).

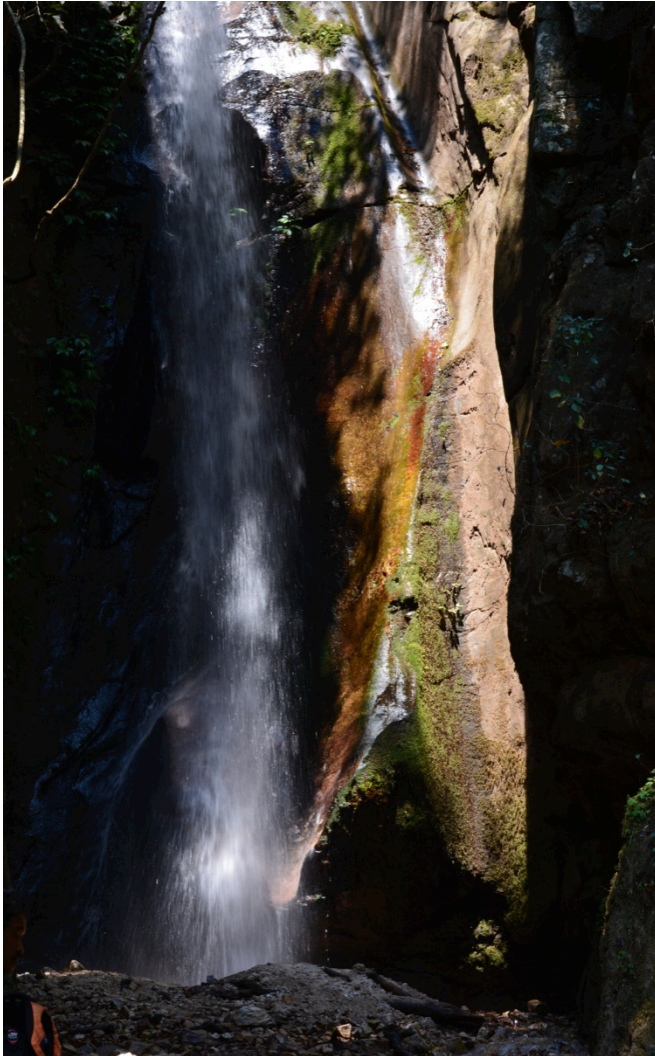


Figure 9. Waterfall at Gombe



Figure 10. Red-tailed monkeys (top), blue monkey (middle), olive baboon (bottom).

In the afternoon, I went to the lake to swim and to watch the sunset, very peaceful and beautiful. In the evening, I ran back to the shore, and when I look up, I got stunned by all the stars that shone on that night. The image of the new moon reflecting on the lake is also something I cannot forget. And I had a really good sleep.

In the next morning, we went back to the mountains to try to find chimpanzees again. This time we only saw about 10 of them, including the alpha male, who was laying down in an apparently very relaxing position while staring at us (Figure 11). After that, we occasionally encountered small groups passing by, but not like on the previous day. It was still, an amazing experience to get so close to those animals.

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Figure 11. Alpha-male resting on the ground.

In the afternoon, we took the boat to Kigoma, where we spent the night before we went back to Dar Es Salaam. There, we spent the last night of the trip at the top of the New Africa Hotel, eating Thai food while enjoying the night view.

In general, this trip exceeded my expectations. I enjoyed every minute of my time in this country. I usually find it hard to climb mountains, but I was enjoying the climb in Gombe. It made me want to go to field again, and I am glad that my wish will come true soon enough – next week! I could also have an image of the conditions of the local population, their culture and customs. One thing I noticed and that made me sad is that in most of the nice places we have been (hotels, national parks), the tourists were almost 100% foreigners, which means that Tanzania is full of natural richness, but their own people cannot enjoy it because they do not have financial conditions. This excursion opened my eyes and my mind about this problem, and I hope that in the future I can contribute to change this picture.

6. Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the PWS program and to WRC for funding this excursion, to the members of TAWIRI for kindly hosting us, and to Prof. Matsuzawa, Prof. Kohshima, and Prof. Yumoto for inviting me to this workshop. I would also like to thank the continuous support of my supervisors, Prof. Michael Huffman and Prof. Fred Bercovitch, and all the Professors and students that attended the excursion for the company and the good time. It was an unforgettable experience, and I consider myself very lucky for being a part of it.