

Research Activity Report
Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”

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Affiliation/Position	Primate Research Institute/ D3/L5
Name	Josue Alejandro Pastrana

1. Country/location of visit
Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan
2. Research project
IPS Nairobi and Colobus Conservation Center, Kenya, Africa
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2018. 8. 17- 2018.8.30 (12 day)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
International Primatology Society
5. Progress and results of your research/activity
<p>Finally, my long awaited first attendance to the International Primatological Society conference and my first visit to Africa came, and I must say, it exceeded all my expectations. There were obvious reasons as to why I wanted to go to an IPS meeting for a long time: it’s a great opportunity to listen to the most current research being conducted, listen to a variety of topics within primatology, be able to discuss my work and interest with other students or well established researchers on similar topics, get constructive criticism and ideas from researchers outside of my institution, establish networks, etc., and overall, it was a really good and exciting opportunity where I accomplished all of these. As for going to Africa, I have never worked with African primate species and honestly I was slightly worried for safety concerns after hearing so many stories from various sources; however, my experience was that of amazement by such biodiversity easily accessible from town, or even in a morning stroll for coffee seeing 3 different species of primates right in front of me, as well as going in a safari 30min away from my lodging. But even more surprisingly, the kindness of the African people, the beautiful cultural garments, foods, and cultural aspects made it a country I would love to visit and work on in the future.</p> <p>My first day started much as the stories one hears from other tourists about how laid back or how different Africa can be for many visitors. My first day, I arrived in an afternoon to the Kenyan international airport with a reserved taxi to my lodging; however, a 30min taxi ride ended up being an hour and a half trip with 2 random locals getting into my taxi in order to help the driver find my place. I was not charged more or conned, but I was more surprised of their flexibility of strangers helping each other and going out of their way to help visitors. The next morning I was at the United Nations attending IPS where I was overwhelmed by the amount of people, the different kind of talks available but even more so by the beautiful park surrounding the event, the monkeys passing</p>

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through the corridors at the conference venue, and being able to meet with old colleagues from other primate centers. My goal was to talk with other researchers on animal welfare and my most recent work on common slow lorises. I have mainly worked with macaques and mainly in relation to how their lives can be improved by good living environments but as my current loris work also goes parallel with the illegal pet trade and conservation, I took the opportunity to see more talks also related to this topic, not just captive behavioral management in macaques. In the talks I attended to some of the most interesting talks were how lorises are perceived in various host countries of the species, what are their threats in and outside their home countries, as well as the ecological aspects for example as good pollinators. They are now considered to be good pollinators as they do not damage certain parts of the plants but do transfer pollen from one plant to another using camera traps and markers in plants in various parts of Southeast Asia.

My poster presentation was a great success. I decided to set up my poster an hour before my allotted time yet I ended up talking with many people from all over the world since that time and I kept discussing my poster 1 hour after the predetermined time slot. I talked with people from the USA, UK, Vietnam, Czech Republic, Indonesia, India and many more. Suggestions and comments on what I have done with my loris work and what I should probably do next to continue contributing on better care of lorises in captivity, and what information in captivity can be used to understand how this elusive, “hard to find and study small nocturnal animal”, might be living in the wild and hopefully brainstorm in what other ways we could help its survival in the wild.

Attending the IPS meeting also gave me an opportunity to participate in the behavioral management symposium where I met my previous supervisors from the ONPRC, CPRC, while interacting with my current collaborator Dr. Yamanashi of the Kyoto City Zoo, and it was a great time to discuss possibilities for the upcoming ICEE 2019 in Kyoto. I also had the opportunity to listen to the updates of Monkey Island Project, where I participated earlier this year to help rebuild the Primate Center of Puerto Rico and Cayo Santiago. It was very nice to see many people trying to help still now after a year has passed since the two bad typhoons destroyed most of my island home. It was a very proud moment for me to be acknowledged by many researchers by my help to the reconstruction of the institution, even though I could only help once since I am on the other side of the world for my graduate studies.

Another great opportunity was to attend a discussion with the Latin American Society of Primatology on primate issues in Latin America. Growing up in a territory of the USA and now doing my studies in Japan, I had not really been involved in the world of primatology in Latin America. I was able to participate in the discussion, meet Dr. Grier, sign up for the society and talk with potential collaborators hopefully in the near future. I found it fascinating that it took me year and to travel to the other side of the world to meet the primatologists of Central and South America, that are and will be my closest collaborators to my home. I hope that from what I have learned in

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my graduate study experience I will be able to spread back home and promote to others.

My time in Kenya ended with a visit to the Masai Market with colleagues, a get together with students and researchers from primate centers from Puerto Rico, Germany, Japan, Africa and many more I did not have the time to talk to. I also attended the banquet which included a cultural dance by local performers and an exquisite banquet of food. The next morning I headed early to a smaller airport in Kenya to attend my second half of this trip, a visit to the Colobus Conservation Center north of Mombasa on the east coast of Kenya. Because of my latest work with nocturnal primates, I went to visit this center that houses and rehabilitates other nocturnal small primates such as bush babies that are victims to many anthropogenic activities such as trapping, illegal pet trade, or road related accidents. Once Monday arrived and the conservation center was open, I was able to get a tour by a local student that volunteers at the center to see how their educational program works, how they rehabilitate older animals, and how young primates whose parents either were killed or they were found in the pet trade are housed in social groups until they are more mature and release them as a group in the wild to increase their survivability. I really enjoyed my time here as it was more relaxed and a beautiful small town compared to the bustling Nairobi city. On my last day I was also able to go snorkeling and watch the beautiful corals while in the town I was able to see baboons, colobus, vervets, and mangabys during the day and bush babies/pottos at night all within 5 minutes from my lodging.

I learned so much from this trip, not just about primatology but also about the diversity of primates Africa has to offer, its challenges, and how my perception of how Africa is like was completely wrong. To all who ever have the chance to go to Africa, I would strongly suggest to visit and I cannot wait to go again. I am thankful to my supervisor and PWS staff and mentors for providing me with the opportunity to go to the conference, as I was able to create networks, present my work, see Africa and attend IPS for the first time, discuss ICEE 2019 possibilities/brainstorm, and surprisingly connect also with my previous colleagues and hopefully be an active researcher in the Primatology Society of Latin America once I graduate. I completely fell in love with Africa, its fauna, flora, people, and now I think I understand why so many other people also feel the same way.

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At my poster presentation with other nocturnal primate researchers and at the Behavioral Management presentations.



At the United Nations venue for IPS.



At our dinner of mainly graduate students from over 5 primate centers all over the world at Village Market in Kenya.



At the Latin America Primatology talks and a monkey eating flowers in the gardens of the UN Kenya.

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Phenomenal food in Kenya and cultural dance at closing banquet.



Meeting old friends and making new ones.



After my last day, from Nairobi to east Kenya, flying over Mt. Kilimanjaro to Ukunda for my visit to Colobus Conservation Center.

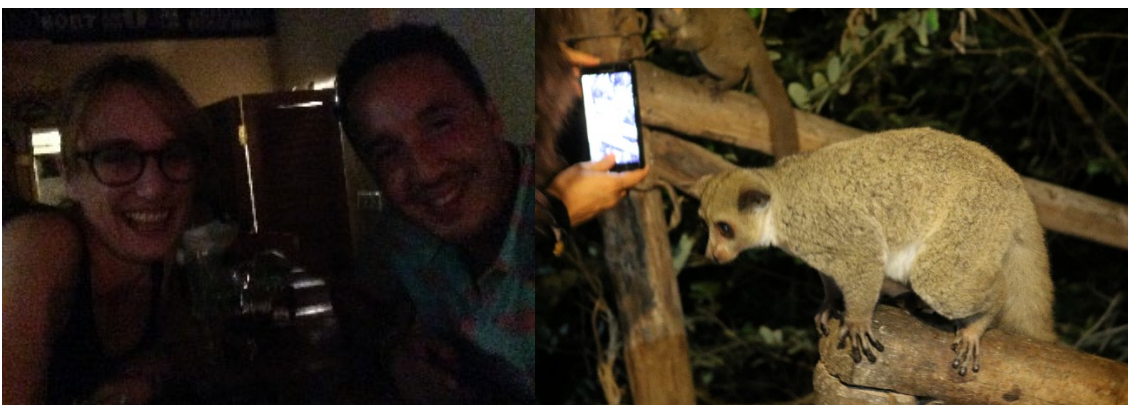
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4 primate species that could be seen daily entering human habitat areas.



Visit to the Colobus Conservation Center and outreach tour by local volunteer student.



With Kelly Martin, manager of Colobus Conservation Center, and dinner at a night feeding of wild bush babies. An interesting but controversial practice of provisioning wild animals and its implications, but also giving conservation awareness and providing job opportunities for locals.

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Masai local and camels at east coast in Kenya and a beautiful monkey walking along tree.



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A baboon eating garbage from the hotel next to my room.



Monkey invading restaurant during breakfast and fishermen heading out in Kenyan coast.

Submit to : report@wildlife-science.org

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