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.)

	2025. 06. 06
Affiliation/Position	Wildlife Research Center/M1
Name	Amos Chua Yi Ping

1. Country/location of visit

Japan, Miyazaki Prefecture, Koshima Island

2. Research project

Field Training on Animal Behaviour and Ecology

3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)

2025. 05. 19 – 2025. 05. 25 (7 days)

4. Main host researcher and affiliation

Dr. Hideki Sugiura, Associate Professor at 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

During the Field Course for Animal Behaviour & Ecology, I got the opportunity to visit Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan to learn about the feral horses at Cape Toi and wild Japanese macaques (*Macaca fuscata*) on Koshima Island. I also got to visit the Miyazaki Prefectural Museum of Nature and History to learn about wildlife species, culture and history specific to Miyazaki Prefecture.

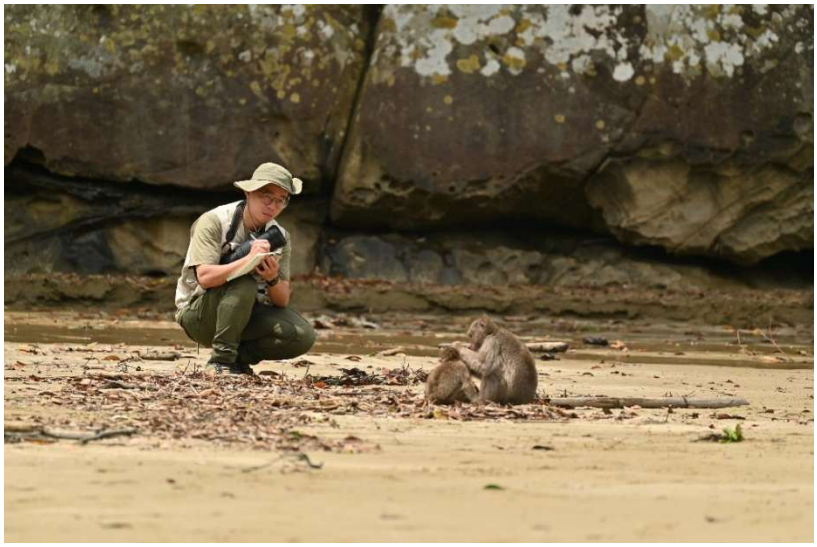

Photo 1: I was collecting grooming behaviour data on adult female – juvenile pair.

Photo credit: Dr. Aru Toyoda.

The main activity was going to Koshima Island to learn more about the Japanese macaques. We had to perform a short study on the Japanese macaques and I had the opportunity to practice my field research and data analysis techniques such as individual identification of monkeys, field photography, focal sampling and data analysis using R Studios.

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My research topic in this short study involves investigating the effect of age-sex class on grooming duration in different body parts in Japanese macaques. I had to use focal sampling technique to collect the specific grooming duration for each body part groomed in each sampled pair. The data collection process was intense as I had to pay close attention to the time and the change in body parts being groomed throughout the sampling period. However, this short study is going to be similar to the kind of research I intend to carry out for my Masters project, so it gave me an idea on how it felt like collecting data in those conditions and how I can improve my data collection methods in the field for my own Masters project.

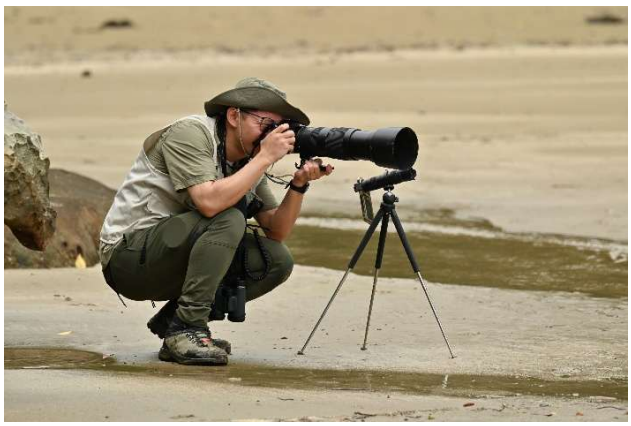
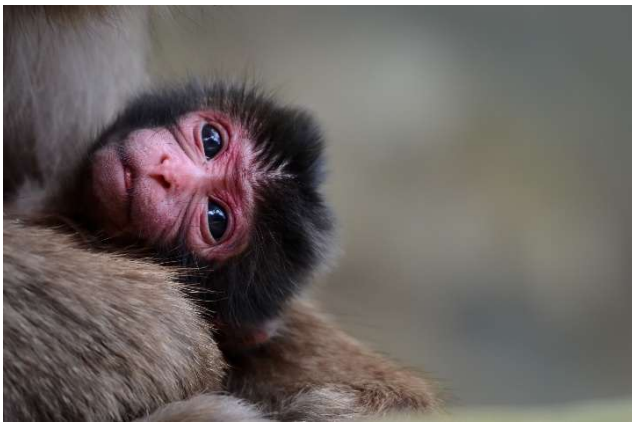

Photo 2 (left): I was taking photos of Japanese macaques; Photo 3 (right): Photo of newborn Japanese macaque infant. Photo credits: Dr. Aru Toyoda (left) and Amos Chua (right).

Wildlife photography has always been one of my hobbies and I enjoy using photos I take to share and teach other people about the animals I see. I was able to apply my field photography skills during this field course to take high quality images of the Japanese macaques for my short study. Even though I have been taking photos of animals for several years, this field course made me think about how to take better field photos for research purposes, instead of treating it as just a hobby. For example, the photos taken should capture clear physiological features and show the behaviour of the animal. Additionally, taking photos while recording data can be challenging because it is difficult to perform both activities simultaneously. As a result, important evidence of behaviour by the animals might not be captured in photos or videos sometimes. Therefore, this made me think about how I should record my data while still being able to capture important photos and videos effectively for my own Masters project.

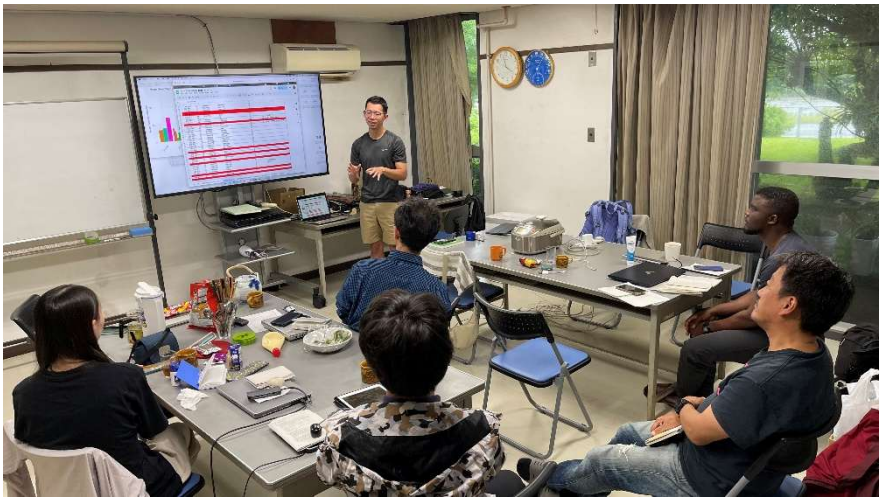

Photo 4: I gave an oral presentation on my short study. Photo credit: Dr. Aru Toyoda

I also did an oral presentation, the day after the data collection on Koshima Island, to share about my findings from my short study. While the time to prepare for the presentation was only a few hours, it was still good practice on my scientific communication skills. It taught me how to present my information in a clear and effective, but still simple and interesting, manner. This is especially useful when I have to prepare presentations regarding my Masters project.

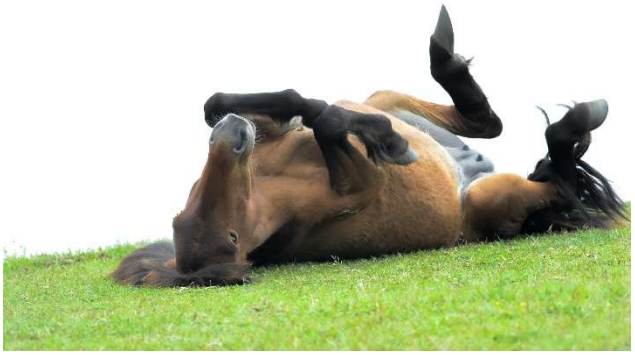

Photo 5 (left): We were observing the feral horses on Cape Toi; Photo 6 (right): Photo of a horse playing by itself.

Photo credits: Dr. Aru Toyoda (left) and Amos Chua (right).

Additionally, we got to learn about the feral horses and some of the student's research work on them at Cape Toi. It was interesting to observe the horses' behaviours, especially because they behave differently from my focus group of animals – primates. For example, the Miyazaki horses have a completely different social structure from primates, where individuals are arranged in harems, and the dispersal of individuals to other harems include both females and males. Compared to macaques, where groups are mainly multimale-multifemale societies and dispersal of individuals to other groups are usually the males, while the females stay within their natal group. I also had the opportunity to ask some of the students about their respective projects on the Miyazaki horses, which gave me inspiration on how I should prepare

for my own project.

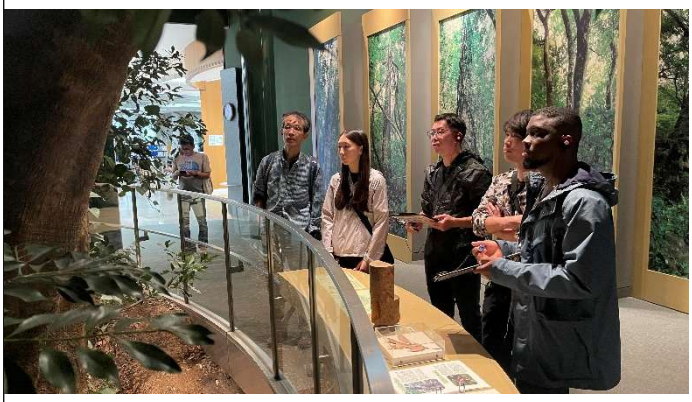
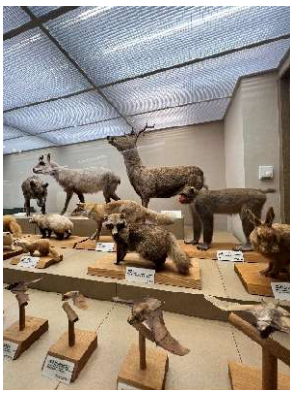
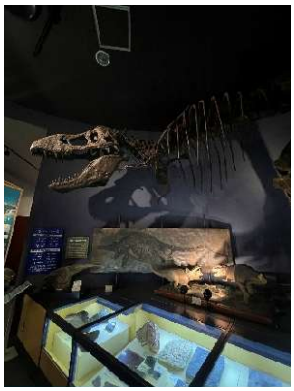

Photo 7 (left): We were learning about plants from one of the exhibitions; Photo 8 (middle): Exhibition for the Mammals in Miyazaki Prefecture; Photo 9 (right): Fossil of a Dinosaur. Photo credits: Dr. Aru Toyoda (left) and Amos Chua (middle and right).

We also visited the Miyazaki Prefectural Museum of Nature and History on one of the days as we could not leave for Koshima Island due to bad weather. It was still an enjoyable experience because we got to learn about the various wildlife species and cultures of Miyazaki Prefecture. The nature and wildlife section of the museum had many interactive elements such as playing of bird calls from various bird species, viewing of specimens through microscopes and showcasing short movies of animals, which enhanced the overall learning experience. Before this trip, I had no idea that Miyazaki Prefecture had a large biodiversity! The historical and cultural section of the museum was also interesting. It showcases the rich history of Miyazaki Prefecture, from the hunter-gatherers lives to the daily tools and equipment used in the past. There were so many exhibitions and displays that we did not manage to spend time on all of them!

Overall, the one-week field course was a fruitful and enjoyable experience that has taught me a lot about the knowledge and techniques I need for my Masters project. It also made me reflect on the necessary preparations I need to make for my Masters project, which allows me to plan better for my field data collection and data analysis schedules.

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

6. Others

None