

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

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1. Country/location of visit
Japan/Fukushima
2. Outreach project
33 rd Annual Conference of The Primate Society of Japan
3. Date
2017. 07. 15-17
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Dr. Goro Hanya (KUPRI)
5. Progress and results of your research activity
<p>This year, the Primate Society of Japan (PSJ) meeting was held in Fukushima. One reason was apparently to attract other PSJ members to attend, besides the usual Kyoto and Aichi folks. Another reason was symbolic and historic as Fukushima prefecture counts numerous troops of Japanese macaques that have remained unmonitored in areas close to the nuclear power plant since 2011. One of the reason I wanted to attend PSJ this year was also because I heard there would be a visit of the evacuation area near the nuclear power plant where the disaster happened. But this was without knowing that there was a pre-registration for it and I learnt it too late before the meeting to be able to join. This would have been interesting to see and hear about.</p> <p>It was my third time attending this annual meeting and it was professionally and personally enriching. I could present some results of my PhD via a talk entitled: “Avoiding infection: Perspectives from Papionini and Hominini”. It was well received and I was asked a few questions by/had a few chats with other researchers following it, including Prof Mitsuhiko Asakawa, director of the Wildlife Helminth Diseases Center at Rakuno Gakuen University School of Veterinary Medicine about future experiments I could conduct; Prof Miho Murayama from Kyoto University Wildlife Research Center about a potential collaboration; and Prof Yoshihito Niimura working on olfactory receptor genes at The University of Tokyo.</p> <p>Although almost all the talks were in Japanese (- there were only 4 talks in English including mine), I enjoyed watching the videos of some of the talks and could even get some content. However, while looking at the room and at the talks themselves, my first impressions were: female Japanese primatologists are endangered and if PSJ wants to become more international (but I am not sure as it is a national society) then, more talks should be English friendly. This reminds me a SFECA (The French Society for the Study of Animal Behaviour) meeting in Dijon a few years ago where an invited keynote speaker was from South Africa and all other talks were in French (although she could not understand French).</p> <p>One of these “video-talk” was about Touch Baby Genital (TBG) in stump-tailed macaques of Khao Krapuk Khao Taomo non-hunting area in Thailand (- I think I found a new winner for “the best Primatology field site name” after Moukalaba-Doudou NP in Gabon). This is when a group member touches the genital of a mother-holding infant which can be followed by sniffing and/or sucking. The function of this behaviour remains unclear although one hypothesis is that it may reduce the probability of aggressiveness and reinforce bonds between individuals of a group. These videos would make amazing footages for National Geographic!</p> <p>This conference was also a good way to discuss future project possibilities with Rie Akami from the Japan Monkey Center in Inuyama and Yumi Yamanashi from Kyoto City Zoo regarding Conserv’Session.</p>

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From left to right and top to bottom: social gathering in a local restaurant on the first night; meeting with locals; inter-generational poster session; Primates most cited articles; 360 degrees' virtual experience of Lake Tanganyika in Tanzania; “Corasse” or the meeting place; wishes at Fukushima Inari shrine.

6. Others

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank PWS for supporting my trip, PSJ members for the fun discussions and Dr. Goro Hanya for inviting me.