

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.)

	25 Nov 2017
Affiliation/Position	Primate Research Institute/M2
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1. Country/location of visit
Iriomote Island, Okinawa prefecture, Japan
2. Research project
Field course in Iriomote Island
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
11 Nov – 15 Nov 2017 (5 days)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Professor Kajita at Iriomote Station Tropical Biosphere Research Center, University of the Ryukyus
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>Schedule</p> <p>11 Nov = arrival & guidance of facility</p> <p>12 Nov = mangrove forest walk, river kayaking, tour of Urauchi river</p> <p>13 Nov = lecture on coral reef organisms, snorkeling</p> <p>14 Nov = lecture on Iriomote mountain cat, camera trap analysis, feces observation by microscope, Iriomote Wildlife Conversation Center</p> <p>15 Nov = departure</p> <p>I had the opportunity to join others and visit Iriomote island, located in the Yaeyama islands, Okinawa prefecture. Iriomote is known for its nature and ecotourism industry, which adds to the local economy. The island’s population is approximately 2,000 inhabitants. Mountainous terrain (highest point ≈ 500 m) and dense forest can be found on the inside of the island while most human development can be found along the island parameter. Unfortunately we experienced rain for most of our stay on the island but that didn’t deter our group.</p> <p>On November 12th, our first full day, Prof. Kajita gave a morning lecture and toured us through a mangrove forest providing explanations on local plants and animals. Our group quickly learned that walking through mangrove could be challenging. The mangrove tour was followed by river kayaking, where we planned to trek on a nearby mountain trail but the rain prevented us from hiking.</p> <p>On November 13th we received lectures and guidance by Profs Sakai and Naruse about Iriomote’s coral reefs and marine wildlife. We had the opportunity to snorkel at two coral reef areas by boat. We could see the difference between two nearby coral reefs, where one closer to an ocean slope exhibited greater diversity and number of sea life. However, the possible reason for such difference is still unclear to me.</p> <p>On November 14th we were able to learn about the Iriomote mountain cat from Prof. Izawa. The Iriomote mountain cat is probably the most famous of endemic species on Iriomote. This is a nocturnal and solitary mountain cat that inhabits and protects its home range from other mountain cats. They are omnivorous and only number a few hundred. Furthermore, due to their elusive nature they are difficult to study. However, we were able to analyze some data from videos taken via camera trap and the usefulness of such a method became very obvious. The camera traps used were also relatively inexpensive which adds to its practicality. Prof. Izawa also kindly showed us the placement of camera traps in the nearby forest. Finally we were able to tour the Iriomote Wildlife Conversation Center, which I think nicely connected the concepts and information we learned on this trip.</p>

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Prof. Izawa shows us a new conservation strategy to prevent wildlife from entering road areas. Underground tunnels are also being utilized.



The removal of a camera trap in the nearby forest.

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6. Others

I would like to thank Profs Kajita, Sakai, and Izawa and all supporting staff at the Iriomote Station Tropical Biosphere Research Center for their warm reception.