

**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.)

2024. 06, 26	
<b>Affiliation/Position</b>	Center for the Evolutionary Origins of Human Behavior, Kyoto University (EHUB)/M2
<b>Name</b>	DASHTI RAHMATABADI SARV

<b>1. Country/location of visit</b>
Japan Monkey Center, Inuyama
<b>2. Research project</b>
Participate in the Zoo Science course
<b>3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)</b>
2024. 06. 14 – 2024. 06. 16 (3 days)
<b>4. Main host researcher and affiliation</b>
Dr. YAMAMOTO SHINYA, Professor at the Institute for Advanced Study, Wildlife Research Center, Kyoto University
<b>5. Progress and results of your research/activity</b> (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>The goal of this course was to deepen our understanding of Zoo animals and the role of zoos and museums in the education and conservation of various species. Here, I will briefly explain the activities we did each day and what I learned from them.</p> <p>Day 1, Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup> We met at the entrance of JMC and went inside to attend the first lecture in the visitor center. This lecture covered the history of JMC from the day it was opened to the present, and how its role and purpose changed throughout this time. After the lecture, we were introduced to all the living species kept at JMC and we were told important points about their needs and how JMC is trying to provide the best balance between exhibitions that are interesting for the public to view while recreating a housing that is as close to their wild habitat as possible. I learned that by knowing each species' specific characteristics and natural behavior, it is possible to create exhibitions that are safe and creative at the same time; for example, by surrounding the exhibition of a species that can not jump or swim, we can create a cage-free view for the visitors while keeping the safe distance for the wellbeing of both humans and the exhibited animals.</p> <p>Day 2, Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup> We were divided into two groups to choose a topic and observe the species of our choice and gather data to answer our question. Our group chose to observe 8 species and record their response to the presence of us, an observer, and their possible change in response to our presence over time. We coded all behavior and vocalizations in time blocks of 10 minutes [first encounter] – 7 minutes [break] - 10 minutes [habituation]. We concluded that depending on the group size and the type of housing, species that can choose to hide may do so in response to visitors while species that can not do that, may show a reduction in their behavioral response to the observers as time passes. We also hypothesized that it might be possible for species that are solitary and/or do not have a hiding place available to them at all times to have gotten more habituated to the presence of visitors. We presented our findings at the end of the day to the other students.</p> <p>After the morning observations, we were introduced to some of the duties of collection management, including creating species taxidermy and conservation of body tissues. I learned that in collection management, we are responsible for preserving as much sample/data as possible for future researchers; since we can not predict what kind of data will be valuable for future research we have to try our best to preserve existing resources for future as much as possible.</p> <p>After visiting the collections, we were asked to categorize and label the skeleton of some recently dried bones of species for collection. We categorized the bones according to the guide that we were given, wrote the specimen's number on larger bones, and created a label for the box containing them. This was one of the most enjoyable parts of this course for me since I knew that I was taking part in preserving these materials for possible future research usage.</p>

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*Figure 1 - categorization of bones*



*Figure 2 - Our group presentation*

Day 3, Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup>

On the morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, we were divided into multiple groups to join keepers responsible for different parts of JMC. I was assigned to join the keepers taking care of South American species. We helped the keepers move some transportation cages around the zoo and later, we installed a swing made of a fire extinguishing hose inside an empty cage to provide enrichment for the monkey residing in it later.

In the afternoon we attended a lecture on the importance of zoos in the education of the public and we were asked to record the behavior and opinions of visitors. It is important to know what the visitors think about their experience so that we can adapt and improve. I chose to stay close to Mop-kun’s cage and record visitors’ behavior. Although this could be a valuable learning experience if I could understand the content of what visitors were talking about, I ended up not learning much because of the language barrier. I think it is important to design activities that all students can benefit from when a course is offered as bilingual (Japanese and English). After presenting our findings during the observation, we attended a short lecture. It was a bit difficult to follow the contents of these lectures as the explanations were all in Japanese and one of the students had to translate them into English for us, which would make it hard to hear well because they had to speak low enough so that their voice does not bother other students. I had the same problem during the morning practice as the role of translation had fallen on the student who was accompanying me and I did not understand most of the explanations provided by the keepers because of the language barrier. Since the language of instruction for the course was announced as Japanese and English, I think the accessibility could improve by providing the necessary translation whenever applicable so that no student is left behind.

The course officially ended after we all took a group photo in front of the building.

Overall, I learned a lot about the kind of job that is done by the staff in the zoos, from collection management to animal husbandry.

## 6. Others