

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.)

2016. 3. 28

Affiliation/Position	Wildlife Research Center/D1
Name	Miho Saito

1. Country/location of visit
Sasagamine, Niigata
2. Research project
Sasagamine snow season field tour
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2016. 3. 23 – 2016. 3. 27 (5 days)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Prof. Matsuzawa, Prof. Sugiyama, Prof. Takizawa, Akiyama-san
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.
The purpose of this trip was to learn a basic skill of backcountry skiing and Wakanjiki. <u>Backcountry skiing</u> This was my first time to experience backcountry skiing. At first, I felt a bit strange because heels are not immobilized, like normal ski. However, it became comfortable after spending three days with skiing. It was nice that I could feel warm even if snow was blowing because we walked long distance and consumed energy. The bad thing was I felt so much pain on shin which was more than that I usually felt during normal skiing. We could walk on fresh snowfall on the morning of the third day. The main purpose was to accompany Prof. Koshima on his way to go down the mountain. We walked without talking and most of the time the path was up, I felt this is like training. When I walked in front of everyone, I could enjoy new snow and the great view in front of me. Finally we could have a chance to slip in the afternoon of the third day. The snow of piste is usually fitted out, so I found it was very difficult to make a turn because ski gets buried into new snow easily. I got tired to climb the slope, so I could manage to slip that slope only three times in total. The 4th day was good weather and I could see mountains very clearly. We saw wild fox and his body hair looks very black. <u>Wakanjiki</u> As the same as mountain ski, this was my first time to try Wakanjiki. Unfortunately, we walked through a bit melted snow, so I expect I can walk on the new snow next time. Then I will be able to enjoy more about the feeling of snow. I assume we can understand much better how this tool works after walk without Wakanjiki. <u>Others</u> As the number of people was fewer than the time of fall season, the stay was comfortable because kitchen and room didn't crowded. Meals were tasty as like before, I could be refreshed when I ate delicious meals even if I got tired by skiing. The Zenzai and instant ramen on the snow with open fire were especially delicious. During winter season, only few people come up to this Sasagamine area, so it was very quiet near cottage. It was such a nice environment that we see beautiful snowing mountains from the living room. As I found backcountry skiing is interesting, I would like to come again in winter season if I have a chance.

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Fig 1. 2nd day. Not so many snow in this season



Fig 2. 4th day. We had a good weather

6. Others

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the PWS program for supporting this course. Many thanks to Prof. Matsuzawa, Prof. Sugiyama, Prof. Takizawa and Akiyama-san for guiding this course.