

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

2018. 04. 02

Affiliation/Position	Primate Research Institute PhD student
Name	Himani Nautiyal

1. Country/location of visit
Sasagamine, Nagano, Japan
2. Research project
Winter Students program in SASAGAMINE (Snow survival training)
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2018. 03. 22 – 2018. 03. 26
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Prof. SUGIYAMA, Shigeru
5. Progress and results of your research/activity
<p>Moving towards wilderness</p> <p>Riding in snowmobiles toward Sasagamine and moving far from human settlement each second I was enjoying nature beauty and was excited for spending the next 4 days in the wilderness. As soon we arrived at Hütte Prof Sugiyama gave us brief tour to Hütte and a brief idea of activities for the next 4 days. It is such a perfect and comfortable place. Location of Hütte is unbelievably beautiful, as far you see just snow covered mountains.</p> <p>Ski lesson</p> <p>This is first time I learned to ski and it was quite challenging for me. I am very thankful for Pro. Koshima for teaching me the basics of skiing. At least at the end I was able to walk with my skis. From this lesson I learned that ski is really helpful for snow areas because you can save so much time when you come back downhill and definitely very useful for the students who are studying in the snow areas. It is quite important for me as well but I need to practice a lot for skiing in tough terrain like the Himalayas where I do my research.</p> <p>Walking on the snow</p> <p>On the second day we went to the ridge of mount Mitahara with our snow boots and on the way we were looking for animal tracks on the snow. When ground is under the snow most of the herbivore who graze on the grass during summer were feeding on the bark of the trees. I found similarity in the Himalayas where in winter when there are no leaves Himalayan langurs feed on the bark. We saw tracks of Raccoon dog, Goral and Hare. Prof, Sugiyama taught us important information about the snow avalanches.</p> <p>Project Igloo</p> <p>I really enjoyed this activity where we needed to make an igloo as a team. In harsh weather conditions it is very important to learn to work in a group for survival. This activity was just perfect for us to learn igloo making and a perfect demonstration for working as a team. I made a short time-lapse movie from this activity.</p>

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

Survival fire

In my field site when we are completely wet at the elevation of 3500 m and shivering from drastic cold, fire saved us lots of times. Learning how to light a fire on snow or in general in the forest is very important for anyone. I think this is a very important component of this project because if we know these techniques it might save our life in bad conditions. I recommend students who has not done this before to learn these lessons carefully.

Similarity and differences between my field site (Himalayas) and Sasagamine

I found lots of similarity between my study site and Sasagamine. I was looking at the guide of flowering plants in summer and most of the species are similar. We also have them in alpine meadows but the only difference is we have timberline at 3300-3600 meters and here it was about 2000 meters. Goral and Asiatic Black bear are the same species we have in the Himalayas. The 4 days experience in this area was very helpful for me to study langurs at elevations between 3300-3600 meters.

Acknowledgement

I am Thankful to Prof. Matsuzawa, Prof. Sugiyama and Prof. Koshima for their guidance during this field trip. I am thankful to all students who joined this course and helped each other in cooking wonderful food every day. I really appreciate help from Maegan and Kei during my ski lesson. It was a wonderful field trip with lots of learning experiences and I am very grateful to PWS for providing such amazing opportunities to us. At last special thank to Fukushima-san for the course guidance from the starting and also helping us getting the necessary gear for the course.

6. Others

I would like to share a few wonderful moment spent during this trip in the form of photographs under this section.



First day ski training

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



Second day excursion on the way to mount Mitahara



Animal tracks (Goral) on the way to Mt Mitahara

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



Glimpse of Japanese Alps from the base of mount Mitahara



Day 3rd getting ready for the ski

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



Mission accomplished: project Igloo