

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.)

2016.10.05

Affiliation/Position	Primate Research Institute/D2
Name	Liesbeth FRIAS

1. Country/location of visit
Tanzania/ Gombe Stream National Park, Selous Game Reserve
2. Research project
Tanzania
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2016.09.21 – 2016.09.30 (10 days)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Dr. Koichiro Zamma (Kyoto University Center for African Area Studies)
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>The 8th Tanzania tour was held between September 21st and September 30th, and with exception of Zamma-san (our group leader), it was the first time in Africa for all of us, which gave us a lot to talk about during our waiting hours in different airports.</p> <p>Our trip to Tanzania had two main goals, visiting Gombe Stream National Park and Selous Game Reserve. To get to Gombe, we took a boat from Kigoma, in western Tanzania. From there, it was a ~3 hours ride along Lake Tanganyika, the second largest and second deepest freshwater lake in the world, and so it was difficult to grasp the notion that we were traveling along a lake and not the open sea. Gombe is the smallest national park in Tanzania and only accessible by boat (Fig. 1). Famous as the location where Jane Goodall conducted behavioral observations on chimpanzee populations, the place is quite paradisiac, with long and smooth beaches frequented by olive baboons, and vegetation ranging from grassland to tropical rainforest. There we had two days of chimpanzee tracking inside of the forest with experienced rangers that knew every single individual, their ancestry, their personality and even the way they related to other individuals. On the first day we found a group in the forest and observed them from close. Before this, the only chimpanzees I had observed were in captivity, at PRI and at JMC, thus seeing them in the wild gave me a completely different feeling about them. On the second day we ran into a mother-infant pair fishing for termites. This was one of the most important observations Jane Goodall reported during her stay at the park; this was the first time that an animal, other than a human, was observed to modify an object to be used as a tool. That afternoon, a group of us went for a walk with one of the rangers, which had offered to show us around (Fig. 2) and try to find other primate species, like red colobus, red-tailed monkeys and blue monkeys. We left Gombe right after lunch. The last thing I saw from the distance was a few baboons running along the shore.</p>

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Fig. 1. Arriving in Dar es Salaam (we made it!) and landing in Kigoma (top). Small town along Lake Tanganyika, entrance to Gombe Stream National Park, baboons on the shore (middle). Termite fishing and grooming in chimpanzees (bottom). Photo credit: Liesbeth Frias.

The second place we visited was Selous Game Reserve, one of the largest animal reserves in the world, located in southern Tanzania. Although an UNESCO World Heritage Site, most of the reserve has been set aside for regulated game hunting, while a section of the park has been reserved for tourism. In Selous we were assigned a ranger, who took us in a boat ride along the Rufiji River on the first day. There we saw hippos, crocodiles, baboons, elephants, and different bird species. We then went for an evening drive where we saw zebras and several artiodactyl species, like warthogs, giraffes, gazelles, buffalos, and wildebeest (Fig. 3). Before starting the safari, we had made a list of the animals each of us wanted to encounter, and up until that point we hadn't been lucky. On the last day though, the rangers had spotted a group of lions nearby and took us there. It was an incredible view; several young lions following an adult female had stopped to get a rest, and we saw them climbing up and down a tree. This was definitely the best way to say goodbye to Selous and to Tanzania.

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Fig 2. Primates watching primates. On the first day, chimpanzees went to the research station looking for us (top). Ranger showing us the camp. Unlike zoos, he said, people stay inside cages here, while animals move around freely (middle left). Game drives in Selous (middle right, bottom left). Morning walk with our Maasai guide. We didn't see animals this time, but there were traces of them everywhere! (bottom right).

Photo credit: Liesbeth Frias.

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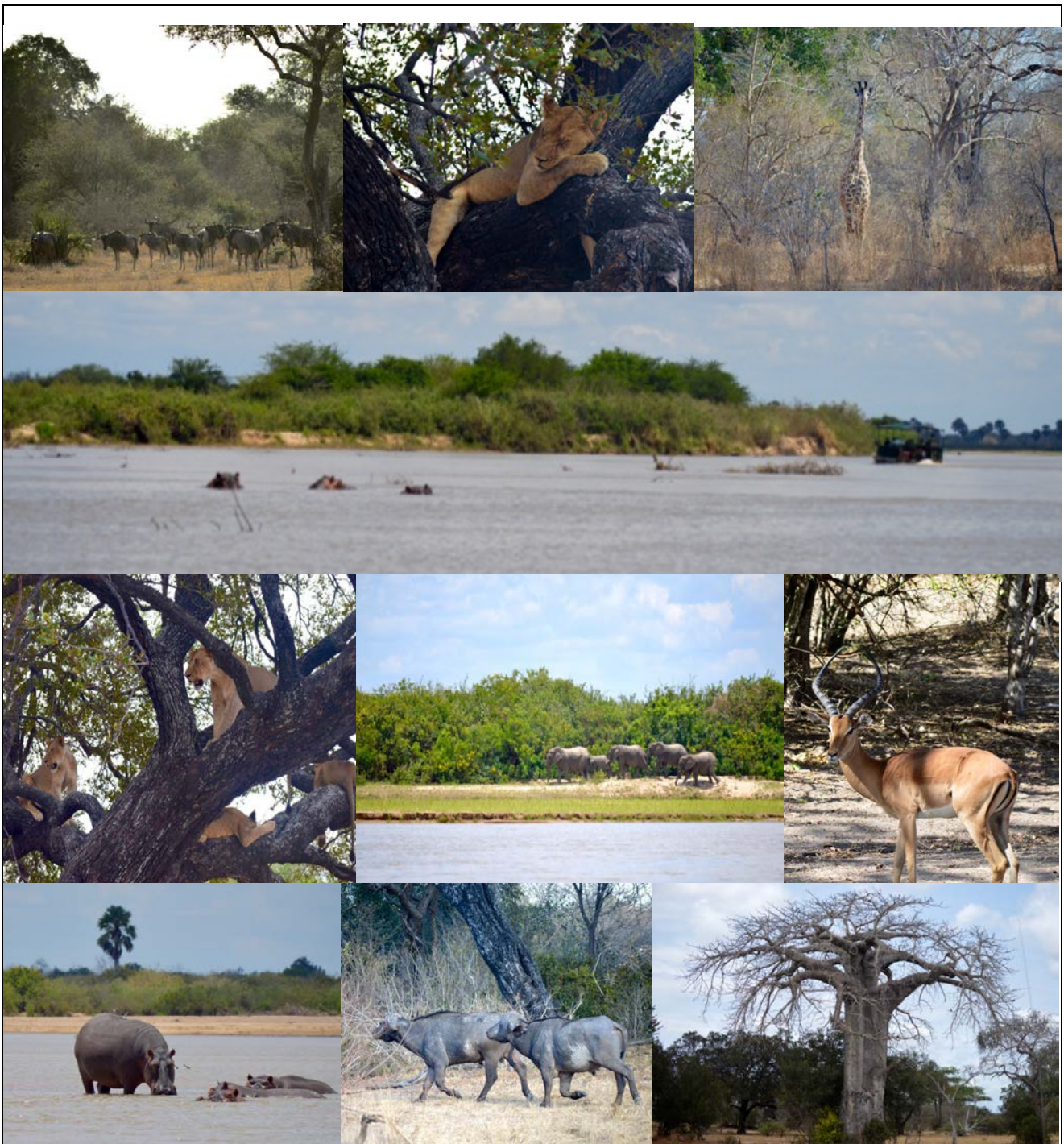


Fig. 3. Selous Game Reserve and the many mammal species we found there. Plus a baobab tree, which I only knew from books. Photo credit: Liesbeth Frias.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to PWS and Prof. Matsuzawa for supporting my attendance to this once in a lifetime experience. To Zamma-san, for being our guide and official interpreter, to the experienced rangers throughout the trip, and a special thanks to all the group members which made of this an unforgettable experience.