



Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

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© David Santiago

Newsletter April 2022



Wildlife

A new individual was born in the Mayele group at Mongambe field site. Indeed, the female Mapoki was observed with a baby in her arms on the morning of April 08 in open vegetation. The trackers gave it the name “Moandja” in reference to this type of vegetation – closed canopy with no undergrowth. Given the physical state of health of the mother and the baby, the birth would date back to April 07. Mapoki has two older offspring in the group; the blackback Lungu and 4-year old Meteyeba. With this birth the size of the Mayele group increases to 10 individuals.



Mom kissing Moandja, © Nuria Ortega

Since the beginning of April, the absence of the female Messupe was noted in the Mata group. Messupe who lost an infant in 2017 just few months after it was born remains the only female in the group with no offspring. Her regular mating with the silverback the previous months had brought hopes of a new offspring in the making but this may not be the case anymore. With this absence, the size of the Mata group drops to 07 individuals.

For the first time in many years, a baboon was observed in Dzanga bai. Even though this species is included in the DSPA primate list, they have not been observed in recent times in the Park. This adult male baboon is believed to have come from the woody grasslands north of Dzanga Sangha.



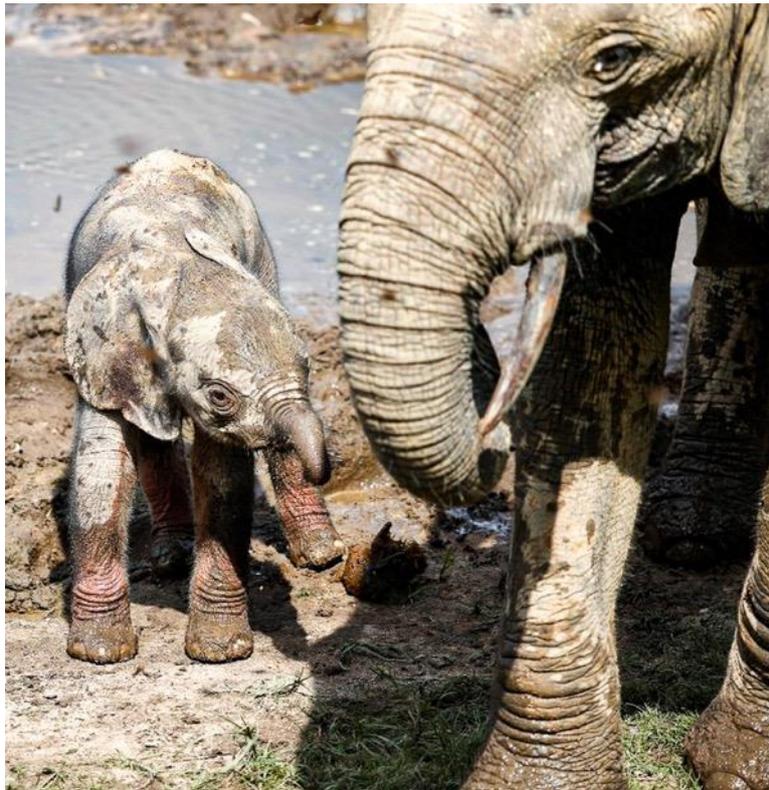
We receive tourists from everywhere © Ivonne Kienast



The Institute of Vertebrate Biology, Czech Academy of Sciences and University of Minnesota published an article on the bacterial and fungal part of microbiome of primates including humans based on data collected in DSPA. The results show that contemporary hunter-gatherers and agriculturalists from DSPA share more mycobiome traits with diverse wild-ranging nonhuman primates than with industrialized humans.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41522-022-00274-3>

On the other hand, we also observed a new-born elephant calf. Pepa, a young female, arrived Dzanga bai with her offspring who was born a couple of hours before this picture was taken. This affirmation is only possible thanks to the daily monitoring at the clearing, which allowed us to witness the moment Pepa expelled the placenta 2 hours after entering the clearing.



A two-hour old new-born elephant discovering the bai © Ivonne Kienast

The number of elephants in Dzanga bai has remained relatively higher than usual throughout the month and more interestingly we observed a large presence of calves less than a year old. This is very good news as it demonstrates that elephants in Dzanga Sangha live in tranquillity with the low poaching pressure.

Dzanga bai data: based on the number counted every 30 minutes between 11:00 to 16:30 each day of the month.

Species	Minimum	Average	Maximum
	4	75	169
	0	21	29
	0	6	9



All these elephant calves, which are less than one year old, were observed at the bai recently. © Ivonne Kienast





Discover the Biodiversity of the DSPA



© Miguel Bellota

Scientific name *Actophilornis africanus*

English name: *African jacana*

Taxonomy:

- Class : birds
- Order : charadriiformes
- Family : jacanidae
- Genus : actophilornis
- Specie : C.africanus



The African jacana (*Actophilornis africanus*) is identifiable by long toes and long claws that enable them to walk on floating vegetation in shallow lakes, their preferred habitat. This species is found in sub-Saharan Africa.

They can measure between 23 and 31 cm (9.1 to 12.2 in) long. Females are averagely larger than males. They have chestnut upperparts with black wingtips, rear neck, and eye stripe. The underparts are also chestnut in the adults. The blue bill extends up as a coot-like head shield, and the legs and long toes are grey.

African jacanas feed on insects and other invertebrates picked from the floating vegetation or the surface of the water.

They are sedentary apart from seasonal dispersion. They lay four black-marked brown eggs in a floating nest. The males have evolved some remarkable adaptations for parental care, such as the ability to pick up and carry chicks underneath their wings.

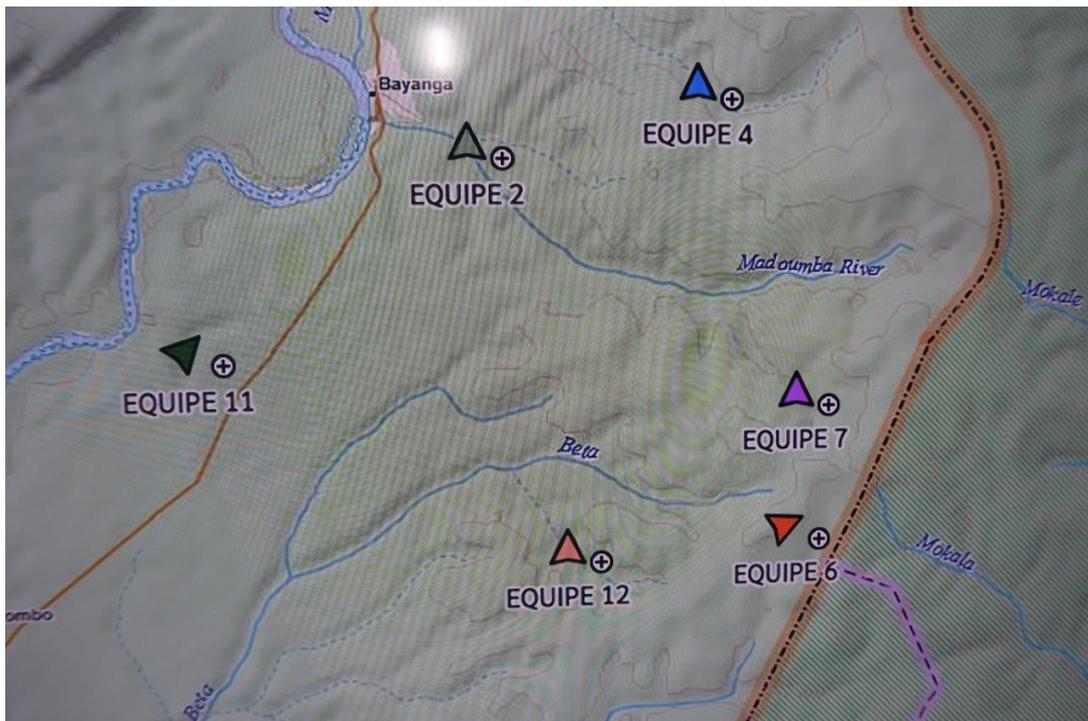
Antipoaching

The training of future eco-guards is still ongoing. After eight weeks at the Kongana Training Centre, the candidates went on a summary patrol to put theory into practice on the field.

This patrol led them to the second training site (temporary camp on a bank of the Sangha River) where they will continue their professional training for an additional month. They are still supervised at this stage by Chengeta trainers but also by Team Leaders who are beginning to take charge of their future elements and at the same time following a “Team Leader” training.

The Analyst from Langland Conservation completed his mission to develop the capacities of the DSPA Command Centre. The objective was to install the new version of SMART (SMART 7) and provide SMART 7 with a new data model and a mobile application that will facilitate data collection by ecoguards in the forest.

This improvement in the quality of data entry puts more emphasis on numerical entry, improves the quality of the Park's database as well as the analysis capacities to query the database.



Now we are able to know where all our ranger teams are, in real time © Luis arranz

41 regular patrols and 3 BLAB patrols. In total 1.360 rangers/days, 2.367 km traveled on foot and cover an area of 1.376 km². This resulted in the seizure of 6 manufactured 12-gauge shotguns, 27-gauge cartridges, 350 kg of meat and 2 kg of pangolin scares. In addition, 619 metal snares were dismantled. 16 people were arrested, sensitized and released. No elephant carcass was found



Community Development

The Center for Human Rights of Bayanga, organized a learning and capacity building workshop for 24 Community monitors from 12 villages as part of the continuous training of community monitors in notions of human rights and national legislation as well as on their roles and attributions in the DSPA villages.

After summarizing data collected from hunter-gatherers and fishermen, as part of the early warning program, meetings were organized with local communities in Lindjombo and Babongo villages to share the findings and raise collective awareness on the sustainable management of forest resources. About 280 people attended these meetings.

Community awareness campaigns were carried out in Bomandjokou, Lindjombo and Yandoumbé with the performance of the 'Kingo Ya Ndimá' music group and the Ndimá-Kali theatre group on issues of parental responsibility in the education of their children. Parents were mobilized and students encouraged to stay in schools till the end of the current school year.



Sensitizing through music ©Nuria Ortega

Over 800 people attended the official lunch of activities of community representatives as they begin implementing the support project for indigenous people (locally known as PAPA project).

We have not had any COVID 19 positive case

<i>Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients</i>	
Structure	Number of patients
Lindjombo Health Post	
Monasao Health Post	261
Belemboke Health Post	413
Total	674

Park Administration

Construction works on the new building containing three classrooms for the Bayanga Secondary School have been completed and the building handed over to the school Director in the presence of regional authorities.



Waiting to use the new classroom © Luis Arranz

DSPA employees elected new staff delegates following the end of mandate of previous ones.

For the first time in the history of DSPA, a female Ba'Aka candidate was elected as one of the delegates. Before this, neither a woman nor a Ba'Aka had been elected as delegate. Today we have a Ba'aka woman from the Community Conservation department serving as staff delegate.



Prisca Mbota, new staff delegate. DSPA is evolving © Nuria Ortega

Tourism and Marketing

April was again a busy month with tourists of different nationalities. The population is also happy sharing their knowledge with the tourists and having some revenue after these difficult pandemic years.



©Nuria Ortega



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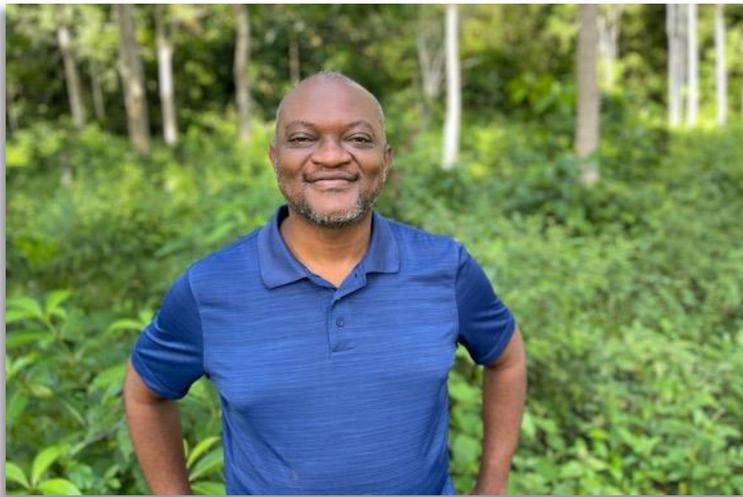
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Arrivals and departures



© Nuria Ortega

Franck Mavinga has left us after three and a half years working here, first as head of the BENG0 health project, and then, in the Community Conservation department.



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Njungkeng Fualefac, who spent three months in DSPA as interim financial officer, has been recruited for the position.

- *This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of WWF CAR and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*