



Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

www.dzanga-sangha.org



© David Santiago

Newsletter June 2022



Wildlife

This month, we celebrated the birthday of Mossika, an infant of the Mata habituated gorilla group at Bai Hokou, born on June 29, 2021, by the female Wusa. He therefore turned one year old and is in excellent physical health.






Mossika © Lara Nellissen

The Makumba habituated gorilla group at Bai Hokou occupied the northern sector of its home range at the beginning of June, an area in which they have been inactive for several years. Interestingly, this area also overlaps with the home range of the Mata group. It was quite surprising to find them there since the area has been mainly used by the Mata group the past years. This sudden change in sector could be caused by multiple factors, but it is possible they went to search for fruit trees. Gorillas can travel miles just in search of fruits and especially now that we are in the middle of the fruiting season.

A new study was published on the effect of group size on the diet and feeding time of groups of western gorillas. When the group becomes too large it is difficult to ensure that all individuals take in the optimal energy requirements without exposing them to risk. This may explain why western lowland gorillas limit group size to an average of 8-9 individuals.

https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-13728-7.epdf?sharing_token=rpW9MV4_Fsnmuw2v4RmC1dRgN0jAjWel9jnR3ZoTv0O6p22CflAzmTkq0CWyf-DMaQp3qv21fiz39-xx-Gilj0Rlr7N9yNaKl0Dq9JvEiqLE2Z6QRQ9B9ILnO7dkg01coxzllMn03eRd9h5bIsI3QaMmz9cG3W-F4jVm_mTtQ18%3D

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 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
|  | 0 | 83 | 144 |
|  | 0 | 5 | 28 |
|  | 0 | 7 | 9 |

Discover the Biodiversity of the DSPA



A juvenile fish eagle @ Miguel Bellosta

Scientific name *Haliaeetus vocifer*

English name: *African fish eagle*

Taxonomy:

- Class : birds
- Order : accipitriformes
- Family : accipitridae
- Genus : haliaeetus
- Specie : *H. vocifer*



The African fish eagle (*Haliaeetus vocifer*) is found throughout sub-Saharan Africa wherever large bodies of open water occur.

It is a large bird that exhibits sexual dimorphism. The female, with 3.6 kg and wingspans of 2.4 m is larger than the male, at 2.5 kg and wingspans around 2.0 m

The adult is very distinctive with a mostly brown body while the head, breast and tail are snow white, except for the featherless face, which is yellow. The plumage of the juvenile is brown in colour.

They usually mate for life. Pairs often maintain two or more nests, which they frequently reuse so, they can grow quite large. They have a distinctive cry.

The African fish eagle feeds mainly on fish but also on birds, small turtles, baby crocodiles and lizards. Occasionally, it may even carry off mammalian prey, such as hyraxes and monkeys.

The female lays one to three eggs and have a life expectancy of some 12 to 24 years

Antipoaching

In June the world of conservation was celebrating the World Female Ranger Week, and we were proud in DSPA that this event came following the incorporation of 3 new female ecoguards among the unit.

<https://www.discoverwildlife.com/news/its-world-female-ranger-week/>

One of them is Janita, 20 years old, who grew up in Bayanga as an orphan. During her youth, she was inspired by female rangers from DSPA to follow their paths and became determined to be on the frontline in conservation. Her mind was set for the goal, and she had amazing results this year during the whole recruitment process showing bravery and determination. She was noted by the trainers as a top recruit.

There are 8 female rangers in the unit now, and we would like to increase the number in the future. Bernadette, our senior female ecoguard, is proud to see the number of females increase in the unit but thinks that conservation needs more women as she believes "they can be more passionate about protecting wildlife and committed to conservation than men."



Bernadette and Janita, past, present, and future in DSPA @ Yoann Galeran

43 regular patrols and 2 patrols from the tri-national anti-poaching brigade were conducted. In total 1.693 rangers/days, 2.707 km traveled on foot and cover an area of 1.564 km². This resulted in the seizure of 9 manufactured 12-gauge shotguns, 353-gauge cartridges, 134 kg of meat and 4 kg of pangolin scales. In addition, 2,630 metal snares were dismantled. No elephant carcasses were found.

Community Development

This month we organized two major awareness raising campaigns:

As part of the permanent support system to indigenous people, the Department of Development and Community Rights and the Ndima-Kali association organized a series of awareness campaigns in the northern zone of DSPA through traditional-modern music and plays by theatre on the importance of education. There were 5 concerts in 5 different villages that brought together more than 2.000 people



There was a sold-out concert in every village. © Martial Betoulet



With the participation of the general public. © Stef De Bethune

During the commemoration of the Day of the African Child, we organized an awareness campaign on the rights of the child and sensitized the children of Bayanga on the objectives of the DSPA so that the spirit of nature conservation could be instilled into these future conservation actors.
 More than 865 children participated in this activity.



Commemoration of the Day of African Child in DSPA © Christian Bassoum

The mobile clinic has resumed its full functions. It visits the different villages in the area every week.



The mobile Clinic again operational © Odilon Abouka

Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients

| Structure | Number of patients |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Monasao Health Post | 311 |
| Belemboke Health Post | 506 |
| Mobile Clinic | 70 |
| Total | 887 |



Park Administration

DSPA hosted the 36th session of the Tri-National Planning and Execution Committee (CTPE) of the Sangha Tri-National (TNS) in Bayanga, from June 08 to 10, 2022,. This meeting brought together the managers of the three Parks (Lobeké NP in Cameroon, Nouabalé Ndoki NP in Congo and Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas in CAR), as well as the representatives of the FTNS, members of the TNS Scientific Committee, and CAR regional authorities

During this session, the previous TNS Three-Year Plan (2019-2021) was evaluated and the objectives and activities of a new Three-Year Plan (2022-2024) defined.



Participants to the CTPE meeting © Christian Bassoum

Two experts came to DSPA to carry out an evaluation of ongoing European Union funded projects. The objective of the evaluation is to assess the level of implementation of the projects, to analyze their synergies, to make recommendations for their continued implementation as well as for the design of future projects.

On this subject, to prepare future EU projects, we had a meeting with WWF Germany in Berlin.

This year again, Liza Yang, a private donor from the US, has contributed funds to carry out a professional training program for the population, mainly focused on the Ba'Aka.



Within the collaboration program with other national parks in the region, DSPA Director visited the Salonga National Park (DRC) also managed by WWF in collaboration with the ICCN to exchange experiences and see how we can help each other. This Park, located in the centre of the Congo Basin, has an area of 34,000 km², and is only accessible by boat, or plane.



Salonga National Park, 34.000 square kilometres of tropical forest © Jean P. Vande weghe



A three-week cruise to arrive there, on the five-start yacht "Heart of Darkness" © Luis Arranz



Turismo and Marketing

Due to the shortage of fuel for airplanes in Bangui, all flights planned for Bayanga, and therefore the reservations to visit the Park, have been cancelled for an unknown period. Following almost two years being closed to tourism due to COVID 19, this is not good news for DSPA.

A new cook has been recruited by Doli Lodge to reinforce the kitchen staff

Two articles on DSPA, one from WWF US and one from Radio France International (RFI) have appeared this month

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/a-baby-gorilla-and-multiple-elephant-calves-make-their-debut-in-dzanga-sangha/>

<https://www.rfi.fr/fr/médias-partenaires/20220628-centrafrique-habituer-les-gorilles-aux-humains-grâce-au-savoir-traditionnel-des-pygmées-ba-akas/>

The screenshot shows the top of a Radio France International (RFI) website. The header includes the RFI logo, navigation links for 'Direct MONDE' and 'Direct AFRIQUE', and a menu icon. Below the header is a red navigation bar with links for '#UKRAINE', '#POLITIQUE FRANÇAISE', 'PODCASTS', 'AFRIQUE', 'AFRIQUE FOOT', 'LES PLUS LUS', and 'STOP L'INFOX'. The main headline reads 'Centrafrique: habituer les gorilles aux humains grâce au savoir traditionnel des pygmées Ba'Akas'. Below the headline are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Email, and a generic share icon. The publication date and time are listed as 'Publié le : 28/06/2022 - 12:19'. The article features two images: a close-up of a gorilla in a forest on the left, and a large herd of elephants in a savanna on the right.

Arrivals and departures



Maurice Tadjidje and Dr. Bihini were in DSPA from June 12 to 18 to conduct an evaluation of ongoing European Union funded projects.



Emmanuel Kette from Bangui has a lot of experience in the kitchen. He worked for a few years as a cook at the American Embassy

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