



# Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

[www.dzanga-sangha.org](http://www.dzanga-sangha.org)



©David Santiago

## Newsletter February 2023





## Wildlife

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EPESEKELE Jacques, a tracker in the Primate Habituation Program since 2005, was attacked by an elephant on February 28 while tracking a new gorilla group at the Mogambe field site. Upon hearing his screams, his companions ran to his aid and managed to chase the elephant away. He was immediately rushed to Bayanga hospital, but he unfortunately passed away before arriving. May his soul rest in peace.

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Mopangu, a former member of the Mayele habituated gorilla group, was observed on the afternoon of February 26 in a tree near the Mongambe camp (precisely behind the trackers' hut) feeding on young leaves and fruits of *Ficus* sp (known as Ngumu in Aka language). He was unfazed and seemed in good shape. He emigrated from the group since 2017 at an estimated age of 15 and it had been a while since we had seen him. Now silverback and over 20 years old, he is still alone and probably in search of females to start his own family.

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The latest member of the Makumba family born last January by the female Mabor is in excellent physical condition. It has been named "Mbonga", which means "to wait" in the Aka language. The name reflects the fact that the birth had been expected in December but since it did not occur, we knew that it could occur at any time in January, thus 'the wait'



*Mbonga, already one month old and in perfect physical condition ©Nuria Ortega*

A 32-year-old female elephant known as Ste III; second daughter of Ste mother was identified in 2022 at Dzanga bai. Since this first observation, she visits the bai frequently. Ste III was pregnant, but due to the lack of detailed information on the exact stage of gestation, it was not possible to predict a calving date. We just know that gestation in elephants lasts 22 months. Ste III was last observed in her pregnant state on February 24, 2023, and when she returned to the bai on February 26, 2023, she was observed with a new-born calf.






Adult female Ste III at Dzanga Bai last seen Feb\_24\_2023. Picture showing her belly swelling on the right side. ©M.Boungalo pour le Yang Center/WWF



Adult female Ste III at Dzanga Bai seen in Feb\_27\_2023 with her newborn. ©M.Boungalo pour le Yang Center/WWF

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
	27	105	164
	0	7	8
	0	28	36



## Discover the Biodiversity of the DSPA



© Nuria Ortega

<b>Scientific name</b>	Gorilla Gorilla
<b>English name:</b>	<i>Gorilla</i>
<b>Taxonomy:</b>	Class : mammalia Order : primates Family : hominidae Genus : gorilla Specie : G. gorilla



The Gorilla is an herbivorous primate that inhabits the forests of central Africa. In DSPA, we have the western gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla*).

Its appearance is unmistakable, black in colour and by far the largest of all primates. Males can reach 1.75 meters in height and weigh up to 200 kg.

They live in groups of between 8 and 15 individuals made up of the male or silverback, generally over 18 years of age, some females and their young.

At Dzanga Sangha we have been habituating gorillas to human presence for almost 30 years and their sighting is guaranteed. According to the last census, we have about 3,000 individuals in the protected area.



## Antipoaching

The rangers carried out patrols throughout the entire month and arrested two suspected elephant poachers that were sent to the court in Nola for trial. Luckily, they were arrested before they could kill any elephant.



*The training for the rangers in DSPA continues all year © Mark Garrigues*

35 regular patrols and 31 patrols from the tri-national anti-poaching brigade were conducted. In total 1.723 ranger/days, 1.976 km traveled on foot to cover an area of 2.201 km<sup>2</sup>. This resulted in the seizure of 12 manufactured 12-gauge shotguns, and 2 war guns. 38-gauge cartridges, 7 war gun cartridges, and 350 kg of meat. In addition, 408 metal snares were dismantled.

24 people arrested in total, of whom 22 were sensitized then released and 02 arrested for trial.

No poached elephant carcass was found in the Park.

## Community Development

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We distributed school supplies to 587 students (248 girls and 339 boys) in several villages.



©Martial

We also launched vocational training on saponification. Ten young girls participated in this training on soap making techniques, during which they made a total of 1275 bars of soaps



© Martial



The Ba'Aka Community Union joined the DSPA Development Department and the Human rights centre to organize a workshop for traditional Chiefs and community leaders on Human Rights and Gender-Based Violations in the Ba'Aka environment. 25 people took part in this workshop.

The Ba'Aka Community Union also carried out an awareness campaign on the community radio and within the communities on poaching or complicity in poaching in the Ba'Aka environment.

The Ndima-Kali Association organized five major awareness campaigns on the role that women play in the transmission of traditional culture. 180 women and 145 men participated in these campaigns



*Learning to build huts © Martial Betoulet*

***Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients***

<b>Structure</b>	<b>Number of patients</b>
Monasao Health Post	507
Belemboke Health Post	419
<b>Total</b>	<b>926</b>

## Park Administration

A new tank with a capacity of 30,000 litres equipped with duo pumps ordered in October 2022 and financed by FTNS was finally received in Bayanga on February 22, 2023. This acquisition will increase the storage capacity of petroleum products (20,000 litres of diesel and 10,000 litres of gasoline), and greatly ease the logistical burden of transporting fuel as it will allow us to transport fuel just once per year, during the dry season.



*The new tank will ensure proper storage of fuel in Bayanga ©Claude Mbengono*

We constructed a new structure at the Dzanga Bai camp to provide capacity to house collaborators from the Elephant Listening Project at Cornell University.



*A new house at Dzanga bai for the research team ©Nuria Ortega*



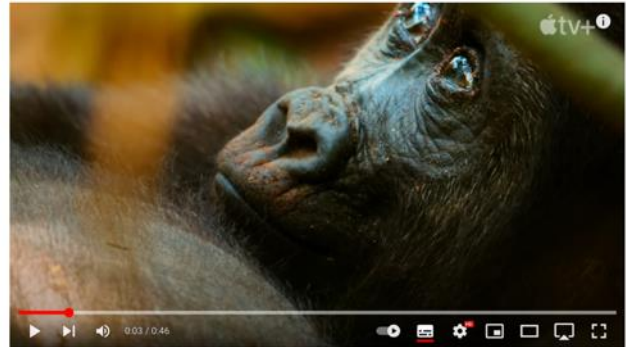


# Tourism and Marketing

We are extremely pleased to announce that **BIG BEASTS** is due to premiere on Apple TV+ on Friday 21st April, which also marks the celebration of Earth Day. The series trailer has been released and is available to watch [here](#).



Big Beasts – Official Trailer | Apple TV+



Big Beasts – Official Trailer | Apple TV+

An article was published in our website about the new elephant babies in Dzanga Bai.

The screenshot shows a website article with a main image of an elephant in a pond. The article title is "Bais - Forest elephant paradise in the middle of the rainforest". Below the title, there is a sub-heading "Elephant's love bath" and a paragraph of text. Further down, there is a section titled "The first years of the little giants" with a small image of a young elephant. The article also includes a section "Elephant calves" and "Young animals". At the bottom of the article, there is a section "Securing protected areas, strengthening the population". The website footer includes a "Jobs" button, a "Public Library" section, and a "Language" dropdown menu. The footer also features logos for WWF, Dzanga-Sangha, and other partners.



## Arrivals and departures

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Dondy Bangagby Dieu Beni Alex, new accountant at DSPA

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Marina Estelle ASSEMBYA, new Assistant accountant for WWF/FTNS

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Cédric Jerry Dominique Yenguere Mbandy new accountant to focus on management of tourism revenues.

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