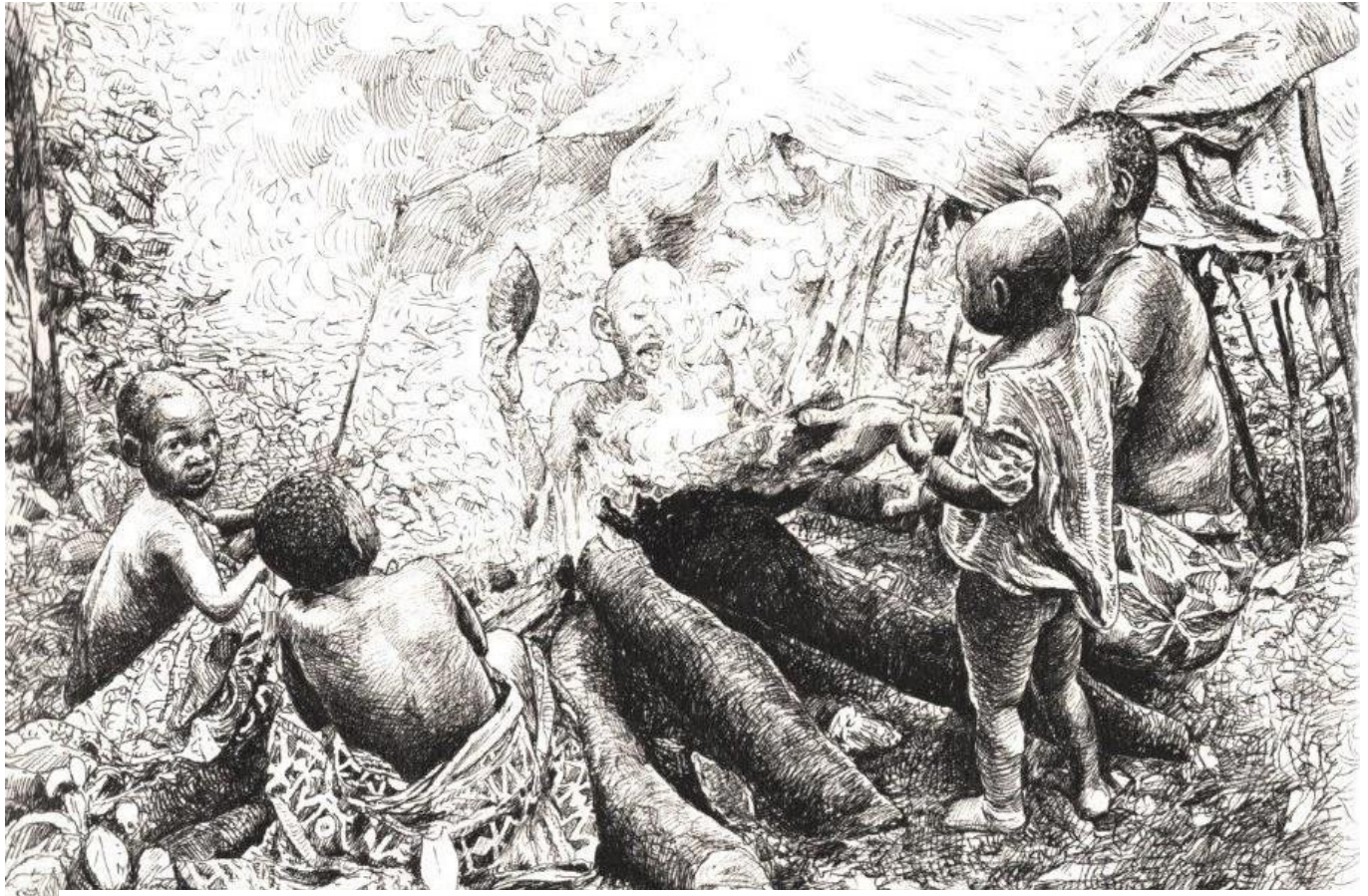




# Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

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



Jean Paul Rousseau

## Newsletter February 2024

DSPA receives funds from



Co-funded by the European Union



K Lisa Yang





## Wildlife

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The Dzanga Bai is mostly frequented by adult females and their offspring, as well as by young males. However, older adult males, who generally are solitary, frequent the clearing occasionally due to the need of minerals or for sexual encounters. The largest male registered since 2021 is known as Tyrone, a tuskless very peaceful male in his 30's. But on February 13<sup>th</sup>, an even larger adult male in full musth entered the clearing. As the big tusker could not be identified from the historical database, he was given the name "Yongoro", which means "the giant".



*Yongoro in the clearing. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.*



*Yongoro walking away from a group of adult females. His height surpasses more than 1/3 of the largest females in the clearing. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.*





A 64-years old female, called Gargantua, has been killed in an accident by an adult male. 14 minutes after entering the clearing, Gargantua approached the water pit where a male was extracting minerals. When she lowered her head into the water, the male pushed her with his tusks, poking her straight into the neck. Gargantua immediately fell to the ground and bled out in a matter of a few hours. It is common for elephants to slightly aggress each other to defend the water pit that they occupy, and we believe that Gargantua's death sentence was the unfortunate posture that she was in when the attacked occurred, combined with the pointy tusks of a strong aggressor and her slow reaction time due to her advanced age. Gargantua has been registered in the database for the first time in 1994 and has never been seen with offspring. Her tusks were recovered by the law enforcement department some days later .



*Gargantua, 11 minutes before the attack that killed her on February 3rd. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF*



*Gargantua on the ground. On the left: the male that attacked her. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF*





While red river hogs are commonly seen during the nighttime, observations in pure day light are rare, and do normally not comprise more than one or two individuals. In February, a group of 13 hogs entered the clearing in the middle of the day and spend a few minutes foraging on the edges. Due to the number of individuals present we believe that it is the same group that visits the clearing during the night.






Red river hogs visiting the clearing during the day. © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF



© ELP for the Yang Center/WWF

Dzanga Bai data collected in collaboration with the Elephant Listening Project: presence of mammals at the clearing based on the number of individuals counted every 30 minutes from 11:00 to 16:30 each day of the month.

Species	Minimum	Average	Maximum
	25	90	191
	0	8	35
	0	5	11

## Discover the Biodiversity of the DSPA

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© Miguel Bellostá

<b>Scientific name</b>	Lophoceros fasciatus
<b>English name:</b>	African pied hornbill
<b>Taxonomy:</b>	Class : birds Order : bucerotiformes Family : <b>Bucerotidae</b> Genus : Lophoceros Specie : L.. fasciatus



The African pied hornbill is a common resident breeder in much of equatorial Africa. It is a large bird, reaching 54 centimeters, and has mainly black plumage, with a white belly and tail tip. The long, curved black and yellow bill has a medium-sized casque.

Both genders have a similar size, but the females have smaller casques. Immature birds are duller, have a smaller bill, and no casque. The flight of this species is described as undulating.

The African pied hornbill is mainly found in forested habitats, and it is omnivorous, eating fruits and insects.

The female lays up to four white eggs in a tree hole which is blocked off during incubation with a cement made of mud, droppings and fruit pulp. There is only one narrow aperture, big enough for the male to transfer food to the mother and the chicks.





## Antipoaching

This month we have lost a gorilla to a gunshot, for the first time that we know of in over 10 years. It was a silverback, and we don't know exactly what could have happened, since the gorilla was intact when we discovered it. But he certainly was killed by a bullet.

On the other hand, Armand Mozengha, an ecoguard who had been working at DS since 2010, has died due to a sudden illness.



Armand, trying to cross a River during a patrol. We can see that their work is not always easy © Yoann Galeran

40 regular patrols were conducted involving 88 rangers. In total 1597 Rangers/days. 1.840km were traveled on foot.

This resulted in the seizure of 5 manufactured 12-gauge firearms, and 8 homemade firearms, with 66 ammunitions. 52 kg of illegal wild meat were seized, and 1133 metal snares were dismantled.

1 elephant carcass was found and 2 suspects arrested.

1 gorilla was killed by poachers.





## Community Conservation

On the 9th of February, a delegation from the long-term One Health partner, the German Helmholtz Institute for One Health (HIOH), arrived in Bayanga. The purpose of their visit was for all department heads to get to know the field site better, to introduce the long-term One Health projects to the community, and strengthen collaboration with local partners in both Bangui and Dzanga Sangha. The visiting HIOH team encompasses various disciplines, ranging from pathogen evolution and antimicrobial resistance to the ecology and emergence of zoonotic pathogens. Additionally, Josef Penninger, the scientific director of the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research in Germany, which oversees HIOH, visited to witness the research firsthand. He gave his full dedication and support to HIOH's research endeavors, alongside WWF CAR and DSPA, for future collaborations on One Health related projects.

Dr. Marie Noël Mbaikoua, head of veterinary services at the Ministry of Livestock in Bangui, and Dr. Clotaire Rafai, director of the National Lab in Bangui, joined the field visit to Bayanga to familiarize themselves with the research and work conducted both in the forest and the laboratory there.



*The team of the Bayanga lab posing together with the HIOH visitors in front of the new laboratory. From left to right: Souleman Singa, Frédéric Singa, Yanthe Nobel, Katharina Schaufler, Josef Penninger, Fabian Leendertz, Livia Patrono, Fee Zimm ermann Sebastien Calvignac-Spencer, Jephthé Kandou © DSPA / WWF*







HIOH, in collaboration with APDS, hosted a soccer tournament at the stadium near Bayanga to inform Dzanga Sangha communities about its long-term One Health project plans for human, animal, and environmental health within DSPA. Nine clubs participated, and a tenth team, comprised of HIOH researchers kindly helped by local star players, also competed. After several rounds, DIAMANT SPORT emerged as the tournament's champion. Additionally, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February a workshop was organized to inform the representatives of the different villages of DSPA about the One Health surveillance plans and giving the opportunity for the audience to pose interesting questions on health-related subjects to the HIOH team.



*Ten teams of seven players participated in the championship © Ivonne Kienast*



*And once more, a sold-out match in the Bayanga Stadium © Ivonne Kienast*





Once the multipurpose room of the PAPA building was completed, the Ndima Kali association <http://www.ndimakali.org/> has celebrated a cultural week for children. In total, more than 500 children (all at the same time) have participated in the different activities (theater, music, stories, games, etc.). The PAPA building receives its name from the funding project, the EU project Support Program for Autochthonous Populations (Programme d'Accompagnement de Peuples Autochtones).

From now on, this room will be used for meetings, concerts, parties, and other activities, to achieve a greater integration of the native populations in the management and conservation of the DSPA.



More than 500 children in the new multi-use hall © Luis Arranz

**Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients**

<b>Structure</b>	<b>Number of patients</b>
Monasao Health Post	356
Belemboke Health Post	321
<b>Total</b>	<b>677</b>





## Park Administration

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The Director of the Congo Basin Sub-Region from WWF International, Martin Kabaluapa, has made his first visit to Dzanga Sangha with the aim of getting to know the park and the work we are doing.

Furthermore, his mission was to introduce the new director of WWF CAR.

Indeed, after 18 years as director of WWF CAR, Jean Bernard Yarissem has retired, and will be replaced from now on by Etienne Longe. Both have accompanied Martin to the DSPA.



*The director of the WWF Congo basin, second left ©Luis Arranz*

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This month, it was the turn of USAID to confirm us the approval of a new funding for DSPA (another logo in our front page). The funds will be used for developing the tourism activities.

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## Tourism and Marketing

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February has once again been a month in which we have hosted many tourists. And this year we already breaking visitor records.



*Visitors arriving by boat and staying at Doli Lodge ©Nuria Ortega*

We have started the rehabilitation work at the lodge. One of the tasks has been to change the doors of the tourism bungalows, as we did not manage to do it during our last renovation process and the doors started to be in bad condition.



*New doors for the bungalows © Nuria Ortega*





## Arrivals and departures



Etienne Longe has joined the WWF office in Bangui as Country Director.

© Luis Arranz



Jean Ordinaire NGONDANG has been appointed by the Ministry as Deputy Warden in DSPA.

© Luis Arranz



Elise Heral, from WWF D, has come again to help us draft the proposal for the new funds that the EU has granted us.

©Nuria Ortega





©DSPA / WWF

After 18 years of working with WWF in RCA, Jean Bernard Yarrissem, has retired. DSPA would like to express gratitude for his years of service to the conservation of this unique place.

- *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.*