



Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

www.dzanga-sangha.org



© Miguel Bellosta

Newsletter July 2024



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Wildlife

The habituation of the new group is going really well, and the silverback approaches closer during his charges. He vocalizes less and spends more time observing us, sometimes even sitting down for it.

We are now sure that Wusa as well as Indolia and Mpokapoka, all three of them females of the deceased Mata, followed by our teams for many years, are present in the new group. Two other individuals, a female and a juvenile are also observed more often.

The trackers, who traditionally name the habituated gorillas, have decided to call the male Limo.

Limo, in the Ba'aka language, means the orphan, or the one who is alone. As we have lost all our habituated gorilla groups in the last two years, with the deaths of Mayele and Mata in 2022 and of Makumba in 2024, Limo is the only silverback we have left, which is why our trackers wanted to give him this name, in tribute to all of those that we have lost.



Limo. The successor of Makumba will be soon ready for tourists. © Andrea Soto-Mayor



After more than 18 years of service as a research assistant within the Primate Habituation Program, Ludovick M'bouty Tchikaya transferred at the end of July to the tourism department. We thank him for his involvement and efforts throughout his career at the PHP and we wish him continued success within the teams of the Protected Areas of Dzanga-Sangha.



From now on, Ludovick will show DSPA to the tourists ©Andrea Soto-Mayor

Those responsible for the ELP gave the name of Yamal to a new young elephant male, in honor of the young football player who brought Spain to the European Football Championship. (The fact that the park manager is Spanish, had nothing to do with that).



Yamal, a bit older than the young Spanish football player © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF



Pintu, a male that had not been seen since 2017 has been reidentified using a picture that dates back to 2015. A very characteristic tear on his left ear, and a detailed analysis of the pattern of veins and nerves on his ears, allowed us to identify him. Very little information exists of Pintu and we only know that he was first seen in 2008, when he was given his name. An age estimation puts him in his late twenties, maybe early thirties.



Pintu in 2015 © Andrea Turkalo / WCS



Pintu, 9 years later (it looks like if the climate in DS is good for the skin) © ELP for the Yang Center/WWF






The giant forest hog family welcomes a new member. A baby was born at the end of July increasing the group size to 9 individuals.



© ELP for the Yang Center/WWF

This month, the number of elephants in the bai has dropped considerably, and this is because it is the season of the wild garlic, “yembé” and the Ba’aka have entered the park to collect it. The guards have had extra work to prevent the collectors from approaching the bai, not only because they disturb the elephants, but above all, because it is a great risk for them, most of whom are women with small children.

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.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
	25	51	135
	0	7	35
	0	4	11

Antipoaching

Dog handler training was held in July with the support of Chengeta Wildlife and Wildlife Solutions, which provided the detection dogs and previous trainers. Our dogs, Ringo and Bizzy are proficient in detecting pangolin scales, ivory and ammunitions.



Playing and training at the same time © Alice Peretié

This month, we regret the loss of two elephants that were killed by poachers. After a thorough investigation we arrested two suspects, who were found in possession of an AK -47 (the gun which killed the elephants) and a large caliber weapon.

We celebrate the World Ranger Day, and we take advantage of it, to again emphasize that all the work we are doing, and all the funds that come from donors for the protection of protected areas, would be useless if it were not for the rangers.

48 regular patrols were conducted involving 93 rangers. In total 1.650 rangers/days. 2.104 km were traveled on foot.

This resulted in the seizure of 4 manufactured 12-gauge firearms, and 3 homemade firearms, with 102 ammunitions.

104 kg of illegal wild meat were seized, and 4.087 metal snares were dismantled.

Two elephants were poached this month and 2 suspects arrested for hunting in the National Park.



Community Conservation

This year, the Day of the African Child was celebrated on July 16, 2024 in Bayanga. An estimated 400 people were reached by the local awareness campaigns carried out. The celebration started with a carnival in the city of Bayanga followed by games, dance competitions and entertainment in the PAPA house.



© Luis Arranz



© Luis Arranz



Two consultants from the ECOTRAING Sarl group came for data collection and analysis of the chains of value of agro-ecological and non-timber forest products (NTFP) in the APDS. Business relationships were established between the Bayanga Traders' Association and 4 Cameroonian entrepreneurs for the creation of a trade chain from the forests surrounding the APDS.

Immediately after these discussions, we unfortunately noted a huge drop in elephant numbers at Dzanga Bai - indeed, the population mobilized in masse to collect all kinds of NTFPs, without respecting the legal boundaries of the park.

Mass awareness-raising followed in the villages near the Dzanga park in the presence of the development and protection & surveillance services, and we noticed a gradual increase of the number of elephants at Dzanga Bai. People continue collecting products in the area dedicated to these practices.

This experience demonstrates the fragile balance between human well-being and the conservation of the natural environment of the APDS. We will continue to work towards the sustainable, legal, and human rights-respecting development of the area.



Ba'aka collecting yembé in the Park © Ivonne Kienast



The yembé, (wild garlic) is very appreciated inside and outside the DS © Ivonne Kienast



Thanks to a private donor we can give support to the hospitals in Monassao and Belemboke. The number of patients treated has almost doubled, and among other things, the hospital has now running water and electricity all day long.



This photo, that for most of us looks mundane, has completely changed the life of those responsible for the Belemboke hospital © Luis Arranz

The monkeypox epidemic has spread again over a large part of the Central African Republic. The country has recorded a total of 40 cumulative confirmed cases, including 8 cases in the Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas (the fact that we are analyzing every suspicious case, probably explain these numbers).

We continued with awareness sessions in the villages and, together with the public hospital, isolating the positive cases.



Night sensibilization session in Moussapola © Frederick Singa

Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients

Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	671
Belemboke Health Post	805
Total	1476

Park Administration

In addition to the water supply system, we have built a kitchen, a dining room, a hospital room, and we have put a wall around the precinct of the hospital in Belemboke to be able to control it better.



A new kitchen at the hospital of Belemboke © Luis Arranz



The hospital is now better protected © Luis Arranz

We have started intensive English classes at DS. They are intended mainly for staff who have contact with tourists, both at the Lodge and at the Dzanga Bai and Bai Hokou camps, but anyone who wants to learn English can attend.

Tourism and Marketing

This month, a new tour operator, Ducret expeditions <https://www.expeditions-ducret.com/> who organizes cruises on the Congo River, has started to come to Dzanga Sangha.



After crowds of tourist visiting Venice and Barcelona, cruise ships are looking for quieter ports © Olivier Gabersek



Tourists must arrive to Bayanga by boat, as the level of the Sangha River is too low for the cruise ship © Luis Arranz



Boat parking at the Bayanga harbor © Luis Arranz



Lunch after the trip © Lambert Padou

For the moment, even if we are still unable to take visitors to habituated gorillas, the number of tourists continues to increase and at Bai Hoku most of them visit the mangabeys. This month, we received almost 100 tourists, of which 72 visited the monkeys.

It is worth noting that in just one day, DSPA had 43 tourists.



We have recovered one of the first posters ever made of DSPA and we will try to reproduce it again.



Arrivals and departures



© Ivonne Kienast

The English teacher, Isidore Ganaye, who will bring our teams to a proficient English level.



© Stef de Bethune

Dr. Guy Merlin et Mr. Leopold Nazaire have come to DS for data collection and analysis of value chains of agro-ecological and non-timber forest products in APDS



© Andrea Soto-Mayor

Leon Faure, a student from the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, CNRS & Université Paris Cité, is spending the rest of the year collecting data and dung samples for their work on the Gorillas diet in DSPA

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