



Dzanga Sangha Protected Areas

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Newsletter September 2025



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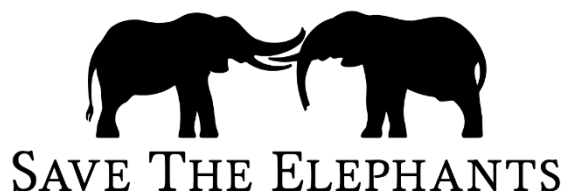




DSPA collaborates with



NDIMA KALI





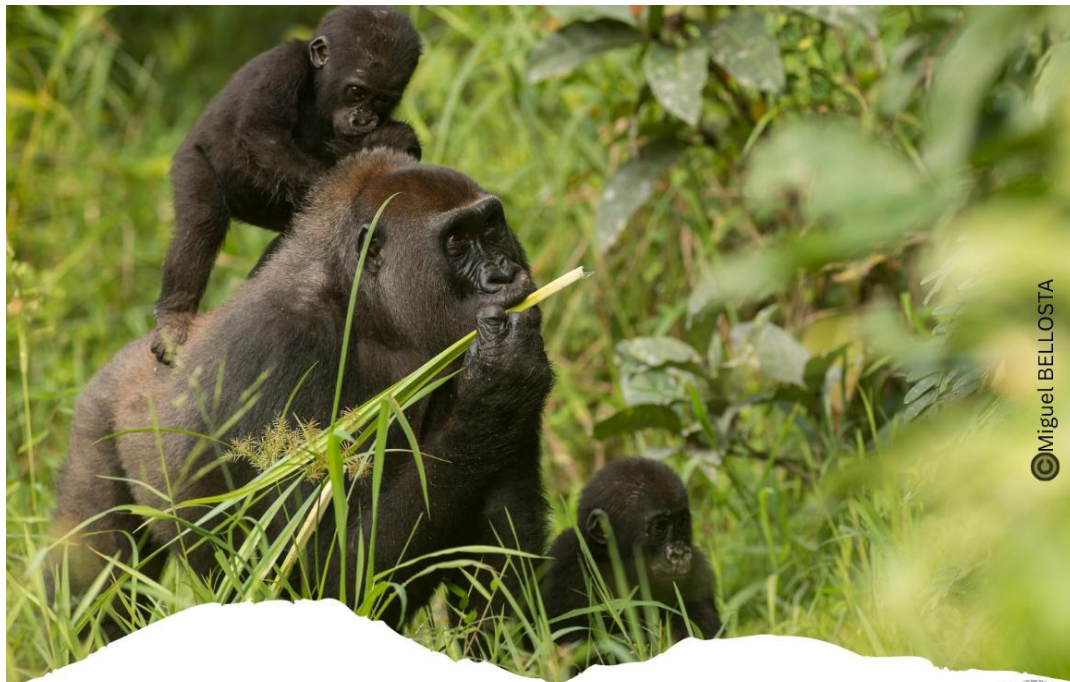
Special Announcement: Preparing for the Dzanga Sangha Day

We are delighted to announce that preparations are underway for a very special event: Dzanga Sangha Day, organized by the Government of the Central African Republic, in collaboration with WWF CAR and the Helmholtz Institute for One Health (HIOH).

This major celebration will take place first in Bangui, and will then be held in Bayanga, under the High Patronage of the President of the Central African Republic.

Held in November, this event will highlight the theme: “Dzanga Sangha: Reconciling Nature, Health, and Development.”

More details in the next edition.



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VISITEZ / ÂLA GA ABÂA
DZANGA-SANGHA

“Un trésor de biodiversité au cœur de l'Afrique Centrale”

Rencontrez les gorilles,
Contemplez les éléphants,
Partagez la culture BaAka

L'AVENTURE VOUS ATTEND!



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infodzangasangha@wwfcar.org



Wildlife



Tracking Progress: Introducing Bokala

This month, we have made great strides with one of our new gorilla groups, capturing new images of the silverback. We are doing daily contact (weather permitting), the silverback has started emerging from the thick vegetation and presenting himself to us, though with loud vocalizations and mock charges. Our team's calm response has led him to recognize we pose no threat, and now he even stops to observe us at closer distances.

Less than a year after we began tracking this group, we've named the silverback Bokala, which means "swift" in the Ba'aka language. The name fits him well given his impressive speed and the way he quickly appears and disappears during our encounters. This is typical behavior for silverbacks in the early stages of habituation, like another silverback, Makumba. Bokala's name reflects his majestic presence and agility.



©Andrea Sotto Mayor

©Andrea Sotto Mayor



Ear Injury of LEEANNE IV's Calf

Leeanne IV's male calf was first seen at the bai on October 6, 2024, in good health with no ear tears or holes. During his last visit on August 13, 2025, his right ear was intact. However, by September 19, 2025, just a month later, we observed that his right ear had been severely torn. Ear injuries in newborn elephants often occur due to accidental snags or vegetation, particularly from thorns in the wild.



Leeanne IV's Calf with a Large Tear in His Right Ear at Dzanga Bai, Seen on Sept 19, 2025© ELP for the Yang Center/WWF



Adult Female LEEANNE IV with Her Calf, Right Ear Intact, at Dzanga Bai, August 2025© ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.



Newborns at Dzanga Bai: Raisa V and Hamsini

We are excited to announce the arrival of two new calves at Dzanga Bai, one from Raisa V and another from Hamsini.

Raisa V, a 26-year-old female elephant born in 1999 (estimated), was first re identified in 2022. Since then, she has been a regular visitor to the saline. While pregnant, it was difficult to predict her calving date due to the lack of detailed data on forest elephant pregnancy stages. As elephants have a gestation period of 22 months, the timing of her birth remained uncertain. On August 3, 2025, Raisa V was last seen in her pregnant state, and three months later, on September 1, 2025, she returned with her newborn female calf.

Similarly, Hamsini, an adult female elephant who was not previously recorded in our database, has also become a frequent visitor to the saline. Like Raisa V, Hamsini's pregnancy was closely monitored, but due to the same data gaps regarding forest elephant pregnancy stages, we could not predict her calving date either. After being observed in an advanced stage of pregnancy, Hamsini was last seen pregnant on August 3, 2025. Three months later, on September 1, 2025, she returned with her newborn male calf.



Raisa V' baby in september 2025© ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.



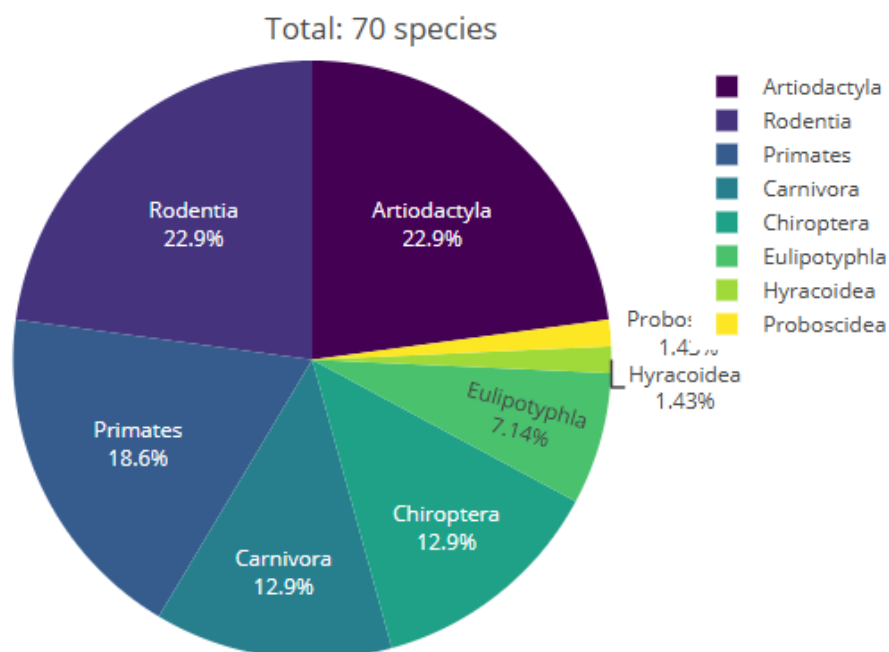
Hamsini with her newborn in september 2025© ELP for the Yang Center/WWF.

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 60 minutes from 11:00 to 16:00 each day of the month.

Species	Minimum	Average	Maximum
	0	95	175
	0	0,2	12
	0	8	11

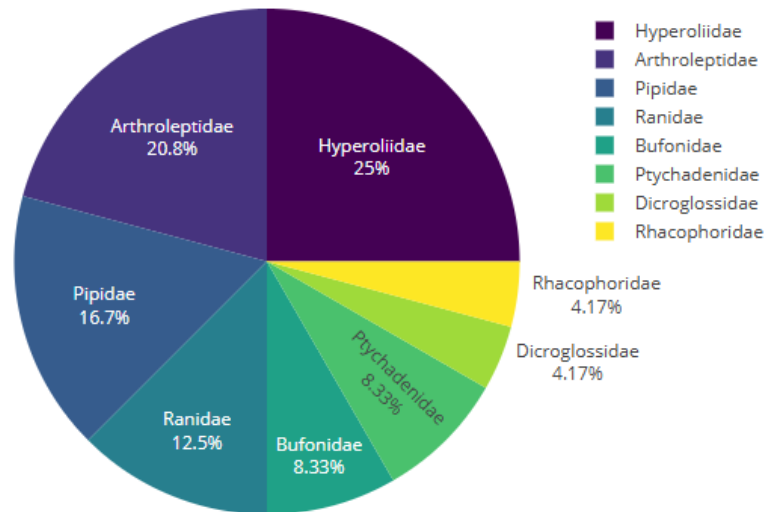
In 2024, **environmental DNA (eDNA)** sampling was launched within the DSPA, in collaboration with the University of Zurich and WWF US. This innovative technique detects species by analyzing DNA found in water, soil, and air, offering a non-invasive and efficient way to monitor biodiversity. By September, the first results revealed 230 species, including fish, small mammals, and amphibians often overlooked in previous studies. These findings, presented in graphs, provide insights into species detection, location, and co-occurrence. By 2026, all data will be made publicly available on a dedicated platform and integrated into international biodiversity databases like GBIF. This project, overseen by DSPA and ETH Zurich, represents a major advancement in long-term biodiversity monitoring in the region.

Mammals





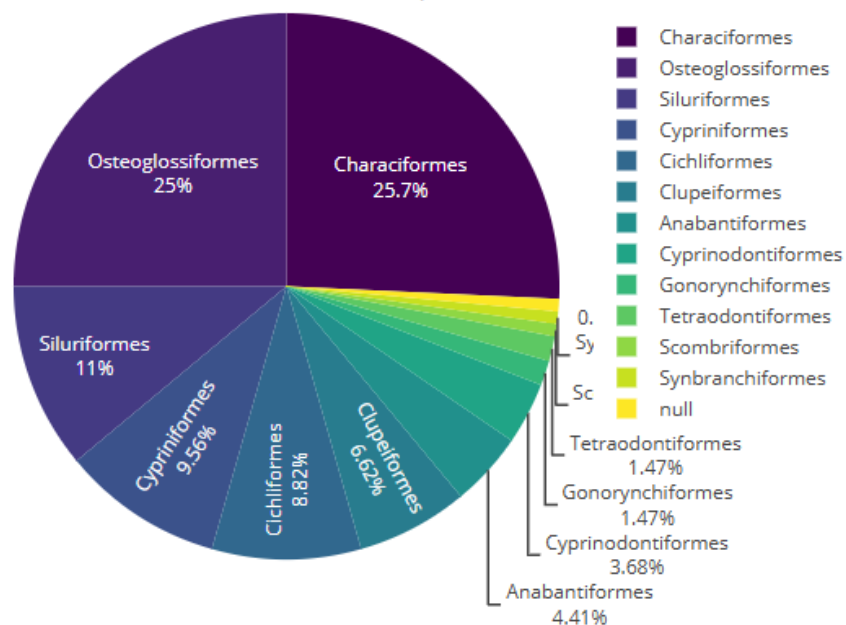
Total: 24 species



	Species	Class	Sites Detected	Total Reads	avg_detection_freq	total_sites	Detection Rate (% of all sites)
1	Sclerophrys	Amphibia	17	35578	1	20	85.0%
2	Ptychadena_mascareniensis	Amphibia	7	659	1	20	35.0%
3	Amnirana_lepus	Amphibia	5	486	1	20	25.0%
4	Leptopelis_millsoni	Amphibia	3	82	1	20	15.0%
5	Cryptothylax_greshoffii	Amphibia	3	76	1	20	15.0%
6	Hoplobatrachus	Amphibia	2	613	1	20	10.0%
7	Hylarana_albolabris	Amphibia	2	349	1	20	10.0%
8	Leptopelis_notatus	Amphibia	2	100	1	20	10.0%

Example of Amphibians species or genus detected

Total: 136 species





Discover the biodiversity of DSPA



An exceptional observation at Dzanga Bai: a servaline genet, a species rarely recorded in the bai ©ELP for the Yang Center/WWF



A servaline genet captured on an arboreal camera trap ©The forest Collective/Sapeli

Order: Carnivora
Family: Viverridae
Genus: Genetta
Species: *G. servalina*

The **servaline genet** is a species of carnivore of the family Viverridae, related to civets and linsangs, found throughout dense forests and woodlands of Central Africa. Like all genets, although feline in appearance, it is not a close relative of the cat family. Servaline genets are nocturnal, solitary and secretive animals with a slender body, long, banded tail, and distinct spotted fur. They live on the ground but also spend much of their time in trees. These agile climbers prey on small vertebrates and insects as well as fruit.



Antipoaching

A team of Dzanga Sangha ecoguards participated in the prestigious Wildlife Rangers Challenge (WRC), 21 km run with 22kg backpack, organized by Tusk and Game Rangers Association of Africa (GRAA), marking the first time DSPA ecoguards joined this renowned event. The WRC is an important initiative that not only celebrates the incredible work of rangers but also brings together key conservation partners.

Tusk and GRAA, alongside other partners, have long been at the forefront of supporting and empowering rangers across Africa. For the DSPA eco-guards, being part of this event was an immense honor, as it provided an opportunity to showcase their dedication alongside some of the world's most respected conservation partners.

©Stef
De
Bethune



©DSPA/WWF



THE OFFICIAL
2025 CERTIFICATE



WILDLIFE
RANGER
CHALLENGE

Presented to Ranger Team:

**WWF CAR - AIRES PROTÉGÉES DE DZANGA-SANGHA (APDS)
TEAM MAKUMBA**

for participation in the Wildlife Ranger Challenge

Date SEPTEMBER 20th 2025



Mark
Scheinberg



NATURAL STATE



ORSA

Congratulations to the 2025 Wildlife Rangers Challenge Champions :

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Men's Rwanda Wildlife Conservation team from Rwanda, the Women's Gonarezhou Conservation Trust team from Zimbabwe, and the Mixed Tashinga Initiative Chirundu Task Force team from Zimbabwe for their outstanding victories in their respective categories.



At the 3rd African Rangers Congress in Lewa, Gervais Pamongui, DSPA Deputy Director, and Modiki Claver, Best African Field Ranger for 2024, represented the DSPA delegation, accompanied by our partner Chengeta Wildlife. The event was rich in networking and experience sharing. Modiki handed over his title to the new nominee, and DSPA was honored with presentations and an invitation to participate in key discussions.



© GRAA



©GRAA

September Patrol Highlights from Dzanga-Sangha

In September, 31 regular patrols were conducted involving 95 eco-guards. A total of 964 eco-guard/patrol days were logged, covering 2,971 km on foot.

The patrols resulted in the seizure of 10 weapons, including 7 homemade firearms and 3 hunting rifles, as well as 45 hunting rifle cartridges.

Additionally, 4,121 wire snares were seized, along with 26 pieces of bushmeat totaling 69.5 kg.

One arrest and 17 awareness sessions were carried out during the month in the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas.

Community Conservation

Back to School 2025-2026: Strong Mobilization in Sangha Mbaéré

The start of the 2025-2026 school year saw strong efforts by the DSPA to revive educational activities in the Sangha Mbaéré region. Key highlights include:

- **Preparatory Meetings:** Two working sessions in Nola with the Academic Inspector of Sangha Mbaéré, school directors, and sector leaders from Bayanga, Nola 1, Nola 2, Nola 3, and Bambio, totaling 56 participants.
- **Scholarship Awareness Sessions:** Three meetings with 40 Ba'aka scholarship recipients from the DSPA education program, including new 6th grade students, their biological parents, and host families in Salo and Bayanga. After conducting background checks and signing parental agreements, 14 host families were identified, with 13 in Salo, each taking in 2–3 students.
- **Teacher Assessment:** A level test was organized for parent-teachers in the Bayanga, Nola 2, and Nola 3 school sectors. This aims to update the teaching staff panel by replacing less dedicated or skilled teachers with a new team of young educators trained at the Nola training center. The test saw 55 participants out of 88 expected, representing a 62.5% participation rate.



Image of Teachers During the Selection Test for the 2025-2026 School Year ©Lassy Epoua



Follow-up on Ba'aka Students in Bangui: Léonie's Story

After completing her first year of nursing studies at the University of Bangui, Léonie returned to her biological parents in Monasao for her break. She was welcomed with great emotion and admiration by her family and other young Ba'aka in the village. Léonie has become a major success story, inspiring many other Ba'aka youth to follow in her footsteps. She will return to Bangui in November 2025 to continue her studies, supported by DSPA. The results of her makeup exams are still pending.



Left: Léonie and her parents on November 8, 2024, the day of her departure for her new life as a student in Bangui ©Amandine Toumbou
Right: Léonie with her parents on her return to the village 11 months later for the school holidays ©Amandine Toumbou

Robert: A New Host Family

With financial support from DSPA and guidance from Father Michelle of the SMA, Robert has successfully completed his enrollment and begun intensive first year courses in agronomic engineering at the Catholic University of Bangui. A new host family has been identified for him in Bangui.

Capacity Building of Staff

As part of its efforts to strengthen staff capabilities, WWF-CAR supported the participation of the Head of DDDC at the WWF Africa Policy and Advocacy Workshop held in Uganda from August 23–26, 2025. The workshop brought together WWF staff from 14 African countries (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe), along with the WWF International team (Regional Office Africa – Policy & Partnerships, Communication Units, People Powering Biodiversity, Africa Energy Access Initiative, Global Policy Impact Department). The workshop aimed to enhance the strategic advocacy work of WWF offices in Africa, with a particular focus on deepening understanding in four key areas of WWF's work.



©WWF

Main DSPA Health Data Number of patients

Structure	Number of patients
Monasao Health Post	274
Belemboke Health Post	605
Community consultation	267
Total	1146

One Health

The human clinical surveillance study, led by HIOH in collaboration with the local hospital and health posts, officially launched on September 18. The project was introduced to local authorities at a meeting attended by over 100 people at Maison Papa. Following this, researchers and assistants trained health post staff (chef de poste, agent de santé, and community health workers) across six DSPA health posts. The training covered sampling methods, materials, and procedures for collecting samples for malaria, yaws, leprosy, mpox, and anthrax. These sessions were highly informative and collaborative. We are now in the pilot phase, which will last two months, with the first malaria and skin lesion samples already arriving at the lab.



©HIOH

The DSPA laboratory equipment was installed by two technicians from the Helmholtz Institute for One Health during the month of September. This installation has improved biosafety, technical capabilities, and the turnaround time of the One Health laboratory.



©Frederic Singa

DSPA Administration



©DSPA/WWF

We contributed to the completion of a new hospital building. The building includes a pediatrics and neonatology section, providing specialized care for premature and low-birth-weight babies. It also features a training room with a capacity of 100 people and an expanded internal medicine department with 12 beds.

Creation of the Local Land Use Management Committee:

As part of common efforts to improve sustainable land management and foster harmonious coexistence between local communities and wildlife, we have initiated the creation of a Local Land Use Management Committee. This committee will be tasked with developing and implementing a land use plan for the agricultural areas surrounding villages and the boundaries of the national park. In collaboration with local stakeholders, authorities, and experts in natural resource management, this initiative aims to promote responsible farming practices and peaceful coexistence between human activities and wildlife. It marks a significant step forward in strengthening ecosystem resilience while supporting local communities in managing their natural resources effectively.



The Local Land Use Management Committee©APDS/WWF

On September 3, 2025, a workshop to present the "Sustainable Landscape Management of the Tri-National Sangha Landscape" (GDP-TNS) project was held in Bayanga, at the Salle Polyvalente / Maison PAPA. The event brought together 68 participants, including members of the Reflection and Exchange Committee of Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas, local authorities, civil society organizations, and traditional leaders. The main objective of the workshop was to inform local stakeholders about the project's goals, components, and activities, encouraging local ownership and gathering recommendations for the sustainable and coordinated management of the Tri-National Sangha Landscape. This UNESCO World Heritage site encompasses the protected areas of Lobéké (Cameroon), Nouabalé-Ndoki (Republic of Congo), and Dzanga-Sangha (Central African Republic).



Arrivals and departures



Alexis Routhier, a documentary producer and director, visited Dzanga Sangha to produce a documentary about our work.

@APDS/WWF



Lisa Ndjanda, Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant at FTNS, Eustache Watsop, Communication Expert at FTNS, and Marie Grâce Atsama, Gender and Governance Tools Specialist at FTNS, visited DSPA to monitor some of our activities and strengthen our work in the field.

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- *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.*