

**LONG-TERM CHANGES IN HUNTING BEHAVIOR OF THE MAHALE CHIMPANZEES**

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Wild chimpanzees are known to prey on some small sympatric mammals in most long-standing study sites in Africa. This behavior exceptional in the order Primates has been studied for more than four decades in the Mahale Mountains, Tanzania. The purpose of this study is to update some basic information of this behavior for M group chimps; to focus on some remarkable changes over the past two decades; and to suggest some ideas for further studies. (a) Frequency of successful hunting fluctuated irregularly during the two decades. Changes of both overall party size and excellent hunters may account for such a fluctuation. (b) Red colobus remained the most frequently hunted prey and other mammals such as red-tailed monkeys and blue duikers were hunted very rarely. However, there was a qualitative change: Predation on baboons that had never occurred at Mahale took place for the first time (Nakamura 1997) and showed a gradual increase (Nishie 2004, this study). Feeding competition between the two species may have increased so that chimps got more motivated to hunt baboons. (c) One major change is an increased aggression of colobus against chimps. These years, researchers have noticed that some colobus troops mob chimps more aggressively than before. Frequently, male colobus climbed down the tree to chase chimps on the ground. It is possible that colobus approach and attack chimps more easily because they have gotten more accustomed to humans. Otherwise, they may have developed a counter-strategy in response to intensive chimpanzee predation since 1990s.

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