

INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PARK WARDENS AND TIBETAN MACAQUES (*MACACA THIBETANA*) AT A TOURIST SITE IN HUANGSHAN, CHINA

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Previous work by our research team has focused on the influence that tourists have on Tibetan macaques' threat and stress-related behavior, via the tourists' behavior and noise level generated. However, park wardens have a potentially greater impact, for several reasons. First, as staff who follow and, as necessary, herd the macaques, they are a daily fixture in the monkeys' lives. Second, research by Carol Berman and colleagues has found that range restriction, accomplished by herding, is associated with higher aggression and infant mortality at this site; therefore, if and how herding is accomplished may have profound impact on the macaques. Finally, it is the wardens who are in charge of enforcing park rules for tourists and interceding if monkeys become aggressive to tourists. Over the past five summers, we have documented incidents of aggression directed to the macaques from some park wardens and anecdotally noted high variability in the wardens' tendency to enforce park rules (such as stopping tourists from feeding or antagonizing monkeys). Moreover, formal data collected during August of 2007 and 2008 indicate that the wardens receive disproportionately more aggression from the macaques (particularly adult males), than expected by chance. We conclude that park wardens do have a large impact on macaque behavior and suggest that mentoring in appropriate warden behavior may help decrease the negative aspect of this impact.

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