

**READAPTATION OF INJURED JUVENILE GORILLA AND CARE BY OTHER MEMBERS IN THE GROUP OF WESTERN GORILLAS IN MOUKALABA-DOUDOU NATIONAL PARK**

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Since 2003, we have tried to habituate western gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) for the purpose of scientific research. As a result we succeeded in habituating single gorilla group, 'Group Gentil (GG)' by 2007 and now we are able to observe them with 10~20m distance. GG is composed of 20 individuals as one silverback, one black back, 7 females and 11 juveniles. In August 2008, one female, 'Ngoû' emigrated from the group leaving her infant. When Ngoû emigrated, her son, 'petit ngoû' (about three years old) injured himself seriously and lost his right forearm. Although he got weak, he recovered dramatically after one month. He climbed trees with his left forelimb and hindlimbs, and sometimes using his teeth. Silverback, blackback or older juveniles always stayed by him. In contrast, all females were completely indifferent to the injured juvenile. The capacity to overcome one's short-term physical disabilities and the care received from other members of the group aided in petit ngoû's recovery. There are some reports in mountain gorillas that silverback care for orphaned offspring, however this is the first reports of older juveniles caring for smaller juvenile. Our observation seems to reflect the social relationships of western gorillas. We report how petit ngoû overcame his handicap and readapted in the environment. We also discuss on the social relationship in western gorillas.

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