Jane Goodall Institute
TANZANIA

Gombe Stream Research Centre (GSRC)

FACT SHEET

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GOMBE STREAM RESEARCH CENTRE (GSRC)

ADVANCING UNDERSTANDING OF CHIMPANZEES: GOMBE RESEARCH, CONSERVATION, AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

Over 66 years ago, on July 14, 1960, Dr. Jane Goodall first arrived in Tanzania to study the wild chimpanzees of Gombe. Her subsequent discoveries challenged the scientific norms of the time, demonstrating that chimpanzees have distinct personalities, complex minds, and emotions. Above all, her work revealed that there is no sharp dividing line between humans and other animals; we are part of, rather than separate from, the animal kingdom.

Dr. Goodall's observations have had a profound influence on the fields of primatology, animal behaviour, human evolution, health, and psychology. Today, Gombe remains a living laboratory and home to the world's longest-running wild chimpanzee study. This groundbreaking research continues to generate valuable scientific knowledge, with applications ranging from understanding health and zoonotic diseases to studying intergenerational tool use. *What will we discover next?*

Dr. Goodall's observation of 1960 that chimpanzees make and use tools, alongside her broader research on wild chimpanzees in Gombe, Tanzania, challenged established scientific thinking and fundamentally changed our understanding of non-human animals and ourselves.

From the 1960s to today, research in Gombe has continued to evolve, producing invaluable scientific information and some of the most important insights in modern primatology. From understanding the importance of social play in infancy to examining social hierarchies and disease transmission, researchers have established a wealth of knowledge with applications in ecology, conservation, evolution, human health, and behaviour.

With more than 165,000 hours of chimpanzee observations, over 300 peer-reviewed journal publications, and more than 600 broader articles on research in Gombe, this remarkable place continues to inspire curiosity and generate discoveries with far-reaching impacts.





THE "B" RECORD

Following Dr. Goodall's unique and innovative observational approach, **researchers in Gombe continue to follow selected chimpanzees daily, 365 days a year.** These observations, known as "focal follows," have been conducted since Dr. Goodall began studying chimpanzees in the 1970s.

Today, researchers record information about group composition, foods eaten, and interactions between the focal individual and other chimpanzees. This information contributes to Gombe's extensive research archives, providing opportunities for long-term analysis of **five generations of chimpanzee families.**

Scientists use these records **to investigate the lasting effects of childhood experiences and trauma,** the emergence of new behavioural patterns, and how changes in forest ecology influence the survival and success of individual chimpanzees. The continuous collection of this data provides an exceptional opportunity to understand chimpanzee behaviour, development, and social relationships across generations.





MOTHER-INFANT STUDY

In many ways, a chimpanzee's social position and future success are influenced by its early upbringing. **Young chimpanzees raised by more supportive and attentive mothers tend to achieve greater success as adults.** Males often attain higher social ranks, while females tend to become more successful mothers themselves.

Infant development and the relationships between growing chimpanzees, their mothers, and siblings have been central to Dr. Goodall's research since its early days. This remains an important and active field of study led by Gombe scientists.

One of the most famous examples from **Dr. Goodall's research was her long-term observation of Flo and her infant, Flint.** She followed their relationship from Flint's birth through his development into young adulthood, providing valuable insights into maternal care, infant development, and the importance of early social relationships. These observations were particularly significant because they developed alongside Dr. Goodall's own experiences raising her first child.

ONE HEALTH

Because chimpanzees share more than 98% of their DNA with humans, they are vulnerable to many of the same diseases. Even small disease outbreaks or individual deaths can have a disproportionate impact on small or isolated chimpanzee populations, making disease prevention and monitoring essential for their long-term survival.

For decades, Gombe researchers and their colleagues have worked to understand the interconnected health of humans, wildlife, and ecosystems through a One Health approach.

By observing and recording symptoms displayed by chimpanzees through regular health surveys, conducting non-invasive faecal sampling, and analysing post-mortem findings, researchers have developed an important system for monitoring disease transmission and helping prevent potential outbreaks.

Launched in 2020, the Gombe OneHealth Hub builds on more than 65 years of continuous chimpanzee research data, nearly 35 years of conservation efforts, and almost 25 years of standardised health records. It also integrates high-resolution satellite imagery from Planet and Maxar, innovative non-invasive research methods, disease risk maps, and interactive dashboards through the Esri ArcGIS platform.

Together, these resources strengthen disease surveillance, support evidence-based conservation decisions, and improve our understanding of the relationship between human, wildlife, and ecosystem health.



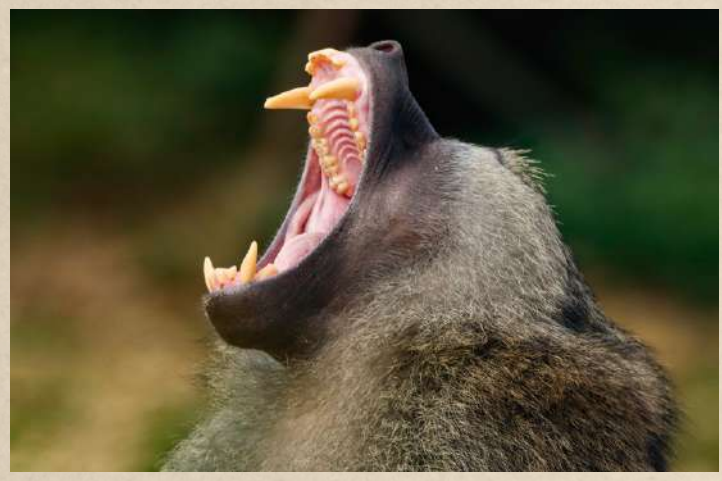




RESEARCH ON OTHER PRIMATES

Gombe's diverse ecosystem supports a rich variety of biodiversity, **including baboons, five species of monkeys (including hybrids), and several species of galagos.**

During her early chimpanzee research, Dr. Goodall also recognised the importance of studying the behaviour and ecology of other primates sharing same habitat with chimpanzee. This interest led to the development of long-term research programmes beyond chimpanzees.



One of the most impressive examples is Gombe's **baboon research programme, which has turned 60 years old of study.**

More than six decades of baboon research at Gombe have significantly expanded our understanding of primate social structures, family relationships, dominance hierarchies, reproduction, health and population dynamics, revealing how social interactions, competition and environmental conditions influence behaviour, reproductive success and survival across generations.

Monkey study; More recent research has focused on the hybridisation of blue and red-tailed monkeys, a rare phenomenon that offers valuable opportunities to understand primate evolution, genetic diversity, and the biological processes involved in the formation of new species.





NEW TECHNOLOGY AND CONSERVATION SCIENCE

As technology continues to advance, the Gombe Stream Research Centre (GSRC) has embraced innovative tools and approaches to strengthen scientific research and conservation monitoring. Building on decades of traditional field observations, GSRC has expanded its data collection methods to incorporate new technologies that provide additional ways to study chimpanzees, monitor wildlife, and understand their natural habitats.

These approaches include bioacoustic monitoring, using small sound recorders to capture and analyse wildlife vocalisations; camera traps to document wildlife presence and activity; and drones to collect aerial imagery and monitor forest habitats.

GSRC has also adopted digital technologies, including handheld devices for field data collection, helping researchers improve the efficiency, accuracy, and management of research information.

By combining these technological innovations with long-term observational research, GSRC continues to advance conservation science, creating new opportunities to understand wildlife behaviour, monitor biodiversity, and support evidence-based conservation decisions.

CONSERVATION CONNECTION

In 1990, while flying over Gombe, Dr. Jane Goodall was shocked to see that the park, once part of an extensive equatorial forest, had been reduced to a small island of trees surrounded by increasingly deforested hills. Poverty had driven growing human populations to clear forests to meet their basic needs. Recognising that the future of the forest, chimpanzees, and people was interconnected, Jane and her team developed TACARE, a community-centred approach that empowers local communities to take ownership of conservation planning, decision-making, and natural resource management.

Building on this legacy, the Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania continues to strengthen conservation efforts beyond Gombe National Park. Through chimpanzee surveys in the northern areas of Gombe, the team monitors chimpanzee presence and distribution while assessing the status of forest habitats and their connectivity. **These efforts are particularly important in maintaining the Gombe–Burundi corridor, which provides a potential pathway for chimpanzees to move between forest habitats and supports long-term population connectivity.**







Alongside field research and habitat monitoring, JGI Tanzania works closely with communities in villages surrounding Gombe through public awareness and conservation education initiatives. Activities such as community football tournaments and public gatherings create opportunities to engage residents, raise awareness about the importance of protecting forests and wildlife, and encourage collective responsibility for conservation.

Through these combined efforts, JGI Tanzania continues to advance Dr. Jane Goodall's vision of a future where people, wildlife, and the environment thrive together. The work builds on the TACARE approach, recognising that lasting conservation depends on healthy ecosystems and communities actively participating in protecting the natural resources they depend on.

GOMBE RESEARCH AT A GLANCE

Discoveries and observations from Gombe have transformed our understanding of chimpanzees and other primates. These include chimpanzees making and using tools, eating both plant and animal foods, forming strong mother-offspring and sibling bonds, engaging in territorial conflicts, and demonstrating qualities of compassion and altruism.

165,000+

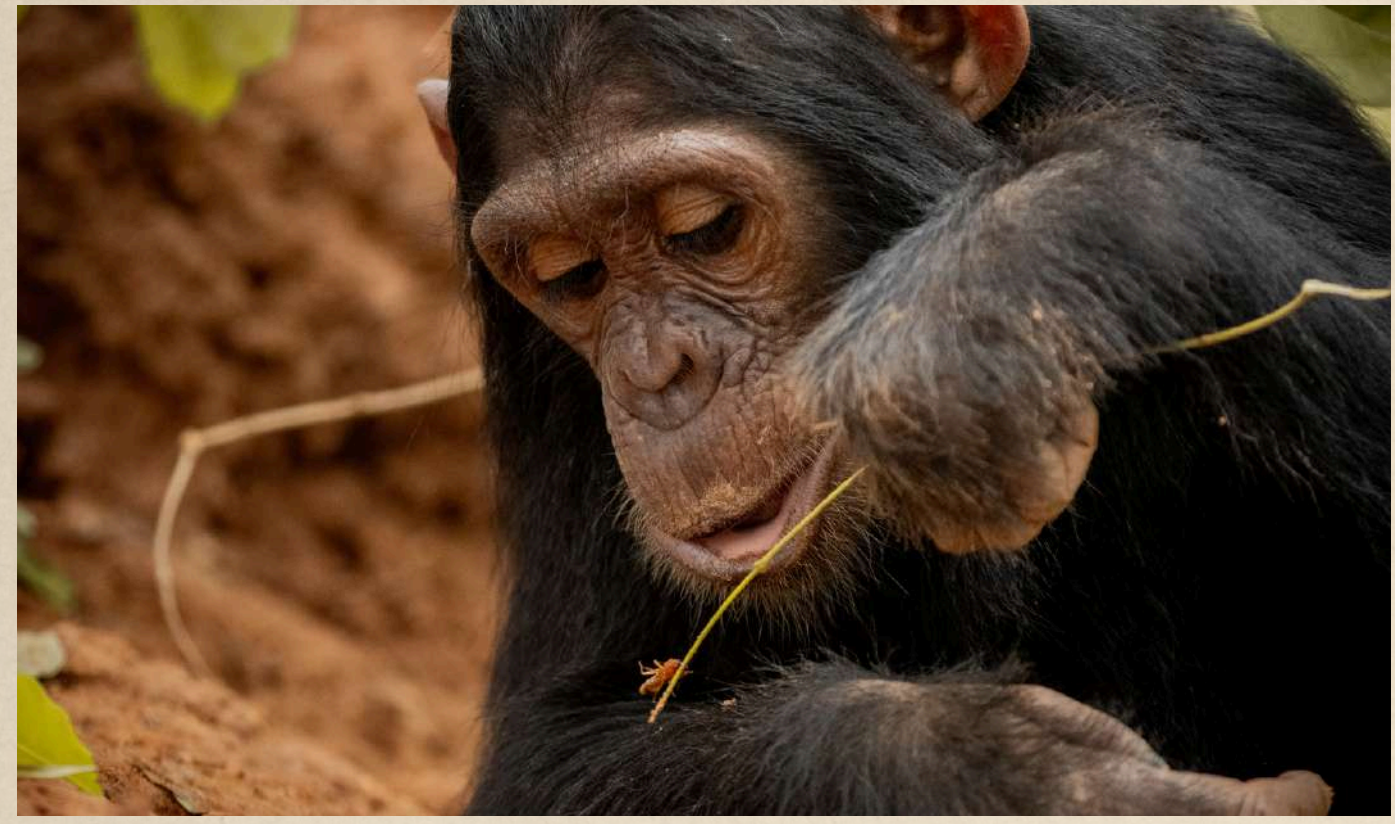
Hours of chimpanzee observation.

200+

Researchers and field assistants who have conducted research in Gombe.

600+

Theses and other publications, use the contacts below



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the Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania

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