

PRESS RELEASE

21 April 2015

Participation sought: new citizen science project Volunteers will screen video footage filmed by camera traps and identify wild African animals

With Chimp&See, scientists at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (MPI-EVA), the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) and the Pan African Programme: The Cultured Chimpanzee are embarking on a new citizen science project hosted by the online platform Zooniverse. Anyone wishing to help biologists evaluate video sequences taken from camera traps in Africa can find general information and watch short clips at <http://www.chimpandsee.org>; with a little luck, they will spot chimpanzees and other wild animals.

In celebration of Earth Day on April 22nd, a special citizen science project called Chimp&See will be launched online. The platform <http://www.chimpandsee.org> brings amateur researchers together with scientists and shows the general public just how exciting research can be. Citizen scientists, as these members of the public are called, can make an invaluable contribution to the study of chimpanzees and other animals in the wild; no previous knowledge is necessary. The amateur researchers simply watch the short clips uploaded to the online platform and name any animals which have been captured by the automatically triggered cameras in the African wilderness. Forest buffalo, duiker or pangolin? Describing the animals is not always an easy task so a digital guide containing reference photos helps the citizen scientists identify each animal while also providing fascinating background information. Anyone lucky enough to be the first person to discover a unique chimpanzee on a video clip can even give it a name.

Chimp&See is based on an effective principle: the higher the number of volunteers participating and providing data on the clips, the greater the accuracy of identification. The results will eventually be evaluated by scientists and compared to the list of animals supposed to be present at each site. An open forum also allows volunteers to discuss the project among themselves and to contact experts.

Christophe Boesch, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, hopes that the citizen science initiative will provide new insights in primate research. "With the help of enthusiastic and

Press contacts:

Sandra Jacob
Max Planck Institute for
Evolutionary Anthropology

Tel. +49 (0)341 3550-122
Email info@eva.mpg.de

Annette Mihatsch
German Centre for Integrative
Biodiversity Research (iDiv)
Halle-Jena-Leipzig

Tel. +49 (0)341 9733106

Email presse@idiv.de

engaged citizen scientists, this exciting project has the potential to change our understanding of wild chimpanzee ecology", says the behavioural scientist. Using the analysed data, the experts are looking to draw conclusions on, for example, how chimpanzee predator and prey species are distributed, the intensity of human threats, what behavioural diversity is present across the chimpanzee range and whether some habitats are preferred over others by certain animals.

The research also focuses on the use of tools, a major feature of chimpanzee behavioural complexity. "We want to find out more about how the primates specifically use tools", says Hjalmar Kühl, head of the research group "Sustainability and Complexity in Ape Habitat" at the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv). Kühl explains that long-term studies have already shown that chimpanzees use tools for the same purpose in different ways, but experts are yet to discover how and why this variance evolved.

Anyone interested in the project can take part in Chimp&See. During the start-up phase, around 200,000 videos will be hosted on the online platform, split up into sequences of around 15 seconds each. A further 200,000 clips are planned to be added in the future. The citizen science project will be online until 2017.

Platforms:

Chimp&See www.chimpandsee.org
Zooniverse www.zooniverse.org/
Pan African Programme:
The cultured chimpanzee <http://panafrican.eva.mpg.de/>

Contact:

Prof. Christophe Boesch
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
Phone: +49 (0)341 3550 200
Email: boesch@eva.mpg.de

Dr. Hjalmar Kühl
German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig
Phone: +49 (0)341 9733 147
Email: hjalmar.kuehl@idiv.de

Dr. Mimi Arandjelovic
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
Phone: +49 (0)341 3550 200
Email: arandjel@eva.mpg.de

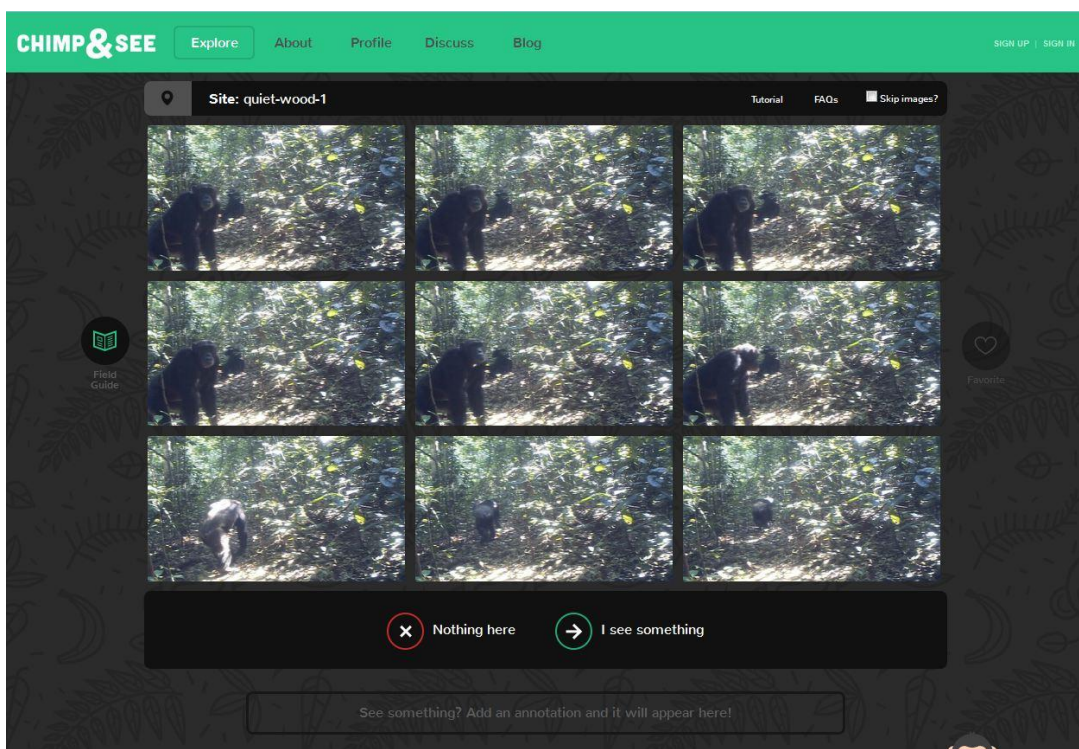
Press contact:

Sandra Jacob
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
Phone: +49 (0)341 3550-122
Email: info@eva.mpg.de

Annette Mihatsch
German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig
Phone: +49 (0)341 9733106
Email: presse@idiv.de

Screenshots:

Credit: chimpanzee.org



FIELD GUIDE ✕

[← Back](#) **CHIMPANZEE**
Pan genus


This primate, a close relative of humans, has a coat of black hair with hairless face, palms, and soles. Long, powerful arms; no tail; swings through trees and often knuckle-walks on all fours on the ground. Males are slightly larger; infants have white spot on rear.

Example Images



CHIMP&SEE Explore About Profile Discuss Blog

Site: quiet-wood-1



✕ Nothing here + Add Annotation

See something? Add an annotation and it will appear here!