

<NEWS>

Editor's Note

Primatologists studying wild chimpanzees assume the responsibility to meet the academic curiosity of the general public interested in their scientific findings and conservation activities. However, there have been very few cases of “biomimicry” in which an investigation of chimpanzee artifacts inspires manufacturers to create a new product that can make our living more comfortable. Here, we introduce such a rare project in which a researcher, a designer and a bedding product expert are collaborating to produce “the Human Evolution Bed” that has received media coverage both in Japan and abroad (e.g., McCurry 2016).

McCurry J 2016. Chimpanzees hold secret to ultimate comfy bed, says expert. *The Guardian* [online] June 21. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/21/chimpanzees-bed-sleep-humankind-evolution-bed>. [Accessed December 24, 2016]

What is the Human Evolution Bed?

The Human Evolution Bed Project Team

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The Human Evolution Bed came from the desire to have the comfort of a chimpanzee bed in our lives. In an era when many are anxious about sleep, we wished to bring them a new kind of sleep, one that they have never before experienced.

A wild chimpanzee makes its own bed each day, 365

beds a year, and over 10,000 in a lifetime, in a tree, by folding branches to form a shallow oval bowl. It looks different from our beds, which are flat and rectangular. One day in an African forest, Koichiro Zamma (Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University) climbed a tree and lay on chimpanzee bed. He found that it was amazingly comfortable. Ever since, he has dreamt of sleeping on a bed like a chimpanzee



Figure 1. Human Evolution Bed. Megumi Kaji of the Research Association of Sleep and Society lies on the bed at the Kyoto University Museum.



Figure 2. A chimpanzee day bed. Fimbi, a juvenile female chimpanzee in Mahale, lying in the bed on December 21, 2010.



Figure 3. The Human Evolution Bed (the 4th prototype).

bed at home. He shared his idea about creating a chimpanzee bed on a human scale with the designer Shinichi Ishikawa, and Arichika Iwata, a bedding product expert/sleep environment instructor (IWATA Inc.), who showed interest in supporting the project.

After much discussion and the production of two prototypes, the Human Evolution Bed was made. When

Zamma lay in it, he felt the same comfort as when in the chimpanzee bed, or even more. This final prototype was exhibited at the “Exhibition on Sleep: Evolution and Diversity of Material Cultures for Sleep” at the Kyoto University Museum in 2016. Now we, the project team, are trying to make a final prototype that is durable and suitable for the market.

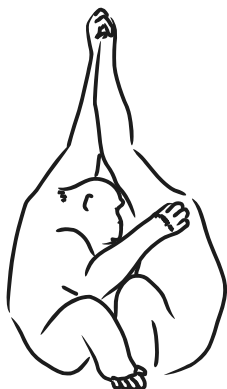
<From the Editor>

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