

Tribute

June 12th 2011

I am deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Toshisada Nishida. I have known Toshi for over forty years and his name will always be associated for me with the chimpanzees of the Mahale Mountains. His careful research has provided us with a rich picture of the way of life and the personalities of these chimpanzees.

Toshi was tireless in the field, logging up thousands of hours of direct observation and building up a dynamic team of researchers, so that the work could be maintained throughout the year, on an ongoing basis. These researchers studied different aspects of chimpanzee social life and ecology. All of this information has been shared not only in Japanese, with Japanese scientists, but also, in English, made available to primatologists around the world. He also initiated "Pan Africa News", a forum that encouraged all chimpanzee researchers to contribute short articles about their scientific and conservation work, so that it brought together information from many different places and disciplines.

The death of Dr. Toshisada Nishida marks a milestone in the long history of Japanese primatology. He made a huge contribution to our understanding of chimpanzees during his lifetime, and he inspired many young people to follow in his footsteps, not only in Mahale, but in other parts of Africa. But it is not only Toshi the scientist who will be missed. I also shall miss Toshi as a friend; I shall miss all the marvellous gatherings and small dinners that he organized where people could relax and share chimpanzee stories in an informal setting. Indeed, I find it difficult to imagine Japan without him. My deepest sympathies go out to his family and to all his many friends.

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***Editorial Note:** We asked Dr. Jane Goodall to pay tribute to "Toshi Nishida", one of her long-time friends who shared an interest in the wild chimpanzees of the lakeshore of Tanganyika. She responded quickly, although she was fully occupied with her lecture tour of Australia. We express our deepest gratitude for her kindness and generosity.