

Figure 6: Map of the Forests Reserve of Kenya showing the Mathews range forest reserve

2.2 Materials

1. Cameras
2. Pair of binoculars
3. Global positioning system (GPS)
4. Data sheets
5. Stationary (Field notebooks, clipboards, Pencils and pens)
6. First aid kits

7. Primates identification cards
8. Samburu thematic map

2.3 Data collection

2.3.1 Field observation

General survey methods suitable for collection of data on geographical distribution, estimating densities, assessing habitat and limited information on age and sex composition over a short duration were used (Struhksaker 1981). Six Research assistants with a university degree in the related field were recruited in the study and 18 local guides and scouts. These recruits were first trained on basic primate survey skills and data collection methodologies. The recruits helped in the navigation and location of troops within the dense unexplored forest, while the research assistants did the observation and data recording.



Figure 7; Training local Samburu on how to use a GPS. The projects aim to use the scouts' trained in the successive studies in future.

De Brazza is largely riparian (Hill 1966, Kingdon 1974, Gautier-Hion and Gautier 1978, Wolfheim 1983) and all field visits were directed at the section of the Rivers valleys (“*laggas*”). The search was done in the morning hours from 08:00 hours to 11:00 hours and in the afternoon from 15:00 hours to 17:00 hours when the De Brazza’s are active. The walk along the “*laggas*” was slow and quiet, at less than 1km/hr stopping every 60m for 50 seconds. (Butynski, 1984). Since the survey’s immediate goal was first to locate the troops in the Mathews range, the natural Transects (“*laggas*”) were used. This was also necessitated by the difficult undulating terrain and inaccessibility of some areas.

All areas in the Mathews Range were covered, starting with those on the periphery and low elevations and then to the interior and higher elevations. Time spent in these regions depended on the area to be covered and accessibility. One region was done first before proceeding to the next to avoid the error of double counting. Each *lagga* was surveyed at least twice in different times to increase the chances of sighting the De Brazza. *Laggas* adjacent to each other were done

simultaneously to avoid double counting the individuals in the groups that could be using two laggas as their home range. All *laggas* were sampled from the foot of the slope to the foot of the cliff or to the top where one or more *laggas* would emerge or where the area is inaccessible.

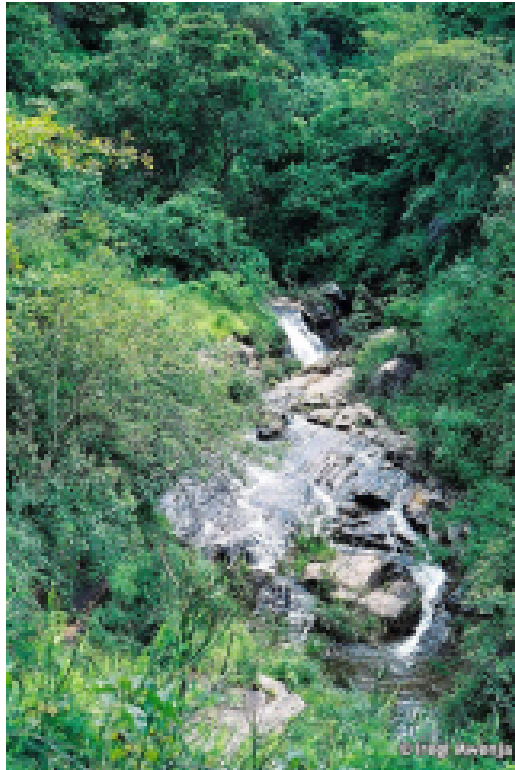


Figure 8: a tributary of the Wamba River. The rivers have a high population on the endangered *Colobus guereza percivali*

2.3.2 Interviews

The interviews were in form of a short semi-structured schedule that largely targeted those who had gone into the forest and had seen the De Brazza's. Many respondents were interviewed but those who had seen the De Brazzas, and their livelihood is highly dependent on the forest were regarded as the key informants. Interviews were meant to compliment the data collected from the field surveys. The information collected via the interviews included the name of the respondent, social-economic aspect (duration of stay, occupation), population and distribution of De Brazza (number seen, area seen, and frequency of sighting), diet and habitat preference.

2.3.3 Data Recording

The data collected was recorded in data sheets that had been well-structured to tackle the question of distribution and abundance of the De Brazza monkey in the Mathews Range. The information gathered included the date, name of the place, time spent (starting and finishing time), number sighted (adults and young), activity, association with other animals, tree species, elevation, GPS co-ordinates, mode of detection and any other important remarks. Each data sheet represented one Lagga, which in turn represented a single transect or sampling unit. Photographs were also taken where possible to compliment the data recorded.

2.3.4 Limitations

1. Inadequate awareness on the species in the area by the local community making it hard to secure guides familiar with the primate and its ecology.
2. There was poor visibility caused by dense under growth and sometimes heavy rainfall limiting the sight distance to only a few meters.
3. The undulating terrain of the study area is very steep and rough in some areas making those areas virtually inaccessible.
4. Lack of established tracks/trails and dense undergrowth making movement very difficult and time consuming.