



Budongo Conservation Field Station

P.O. Box 362 Masindi, Uganda

Email: admin@budongo.org

Tel: +256 (0) 757 399174

Guidelines for visitors/researchers staying at Sonso camp

These guidelines apply to all visitors/researchers staying at the Sonso Camp. Before admittance to stay at Sonso, visitors/researchers must present proof of payment of all necessary fees. Exemption from paying camp fees can only be made by the Director. Please read and understand the guidelines and ensure that you sign the visitors' register upon arrival at Sonso.

Research and working in the forest

If you require access to the research area and the forest around camp, please contact the Director for permission.

- Please accept that YOU are a visitor in the forest. Take care not to scare the animals. Be as quiet as possible and show respect to animals and fellow researchers.
- Do not enter the forest when you are ill. Your germs can be transmitted to the primates and they could be lethal for them. Disease transmission between humans and apes is quite common.
- Please take everything out of the forest that you bring in there. Do not litter.
- Please give your hands a proper wash with soap or disinfectant before you enter the forest. Hands are usually one of the best transmitters of pathogens.
- Do not defecate in the forest. 'Long-calls' should happen in camp.
- If you are working with the chimpanzees, please keep a minimum distance of 7m from them. This is the distance for aerosol transmission of pathogens.
- For international guests at BCFS, please accept a 5-day quarantine after air-travel, before you can go into the research area. During the first three days upon arrival you are requested to stay outside camp.
- Do not enter the forest without a qualified field assistant from BCFS. Always carry a compass and a map of the research area.
- You are requested to have a dedicated set of forest clothes and shoes that you do not wear outside of the forest or in camp. Please change into your forest clothes before you enter the research area and change back as soon as you have finished your work.
- A grid system of trails in north-south and east-west direction covers the research area. You will be provided with a map of the grid system upon arrival.
- If you encounter a sick, injured or snared chimpanzee, report immediately to the Director or Assistant Director or Administrator.
- If you encounter illegal pitsawyers or hunters, DO NOT confront them. Note the details including the location and report to the Director.
- Flash photography with chimpanzees and other primates is strictly forbidden.
- Field assistants have a working schedule that is provided several days in advance. If you wish to change some days on your field assistant's, please seek permission from the Assistant Director.

- If you need to access long term data collected by the field assistants contact the Director. DO NOT ask the field assistants for such data.
- Researchers paying camp fees to the field station will be entitled to one field assistant. If the researcher wishes to work with more than one field assistant, the cost of employing such person(s) shall be met by the researcher.

Computers and Printing

- Staff and/or researchers performing BCFS official work shall always have priority to use the field station computers and printers.
- Researchers are encouraged to carry their own computers and modems or dongos in order to have access to internet.
- In case a researcher needs to print out any documents, they are encouraged to do so in Masindi or any other trading center where such services are offered. For small documents, please contact the Administrator to check the possibility of printing at camp.

Power and water supply

- Visitors/researchers are requested to use the power supply on camp sparingly. Do NOT leave your equipment charging longer than necessary.
- Whenever the solar charge controller indicates 'orange' all charging equipment MUST be removed and the solar inverters TURNED OFF. Frequent run down of batteries may cause unwarranted battery failure. Inverters SHOULD NOT BE TURNED ON until the batteries have recovered their full charge (indicated by green).
- A generator is available as a back-up source of power. Please contact the administrator if you need to use it. To avoid inconveniencing residents on camp the generator may not be used beyond 2100hrs.
- The field station is dependent on harvested rain water. Sonso residents are requested to use the available water sparingly especially during the dry season.

Transport

- The field station vehicles make regular trips to Masindi and Kampala. Visitors/researchers wishing to travel should contact the Director or Administrator for the scheduled of trips.
- It is NOT the responsibility of the field station to provide transport for researchers who wish to conduct studies away from Sonso. However, the Director may permit occasional use of the field station vehicle at a cost.
- Use of the field station vehicles and motorbikes can only be authorised by the Director or any such person acting on behalf of the Director.

Others

- Smoking in the rooms including the Banda is strictly forbidden.
- Always dispose-off all the rubbish and other waste into the provided bins or pits.
- Safety of personal belongings is your responsibility. Do not leave valuable items in communal work places. You may deposit valuable items with the Administrator for safe custody.
- Books borrowed from the library should be registered with the administrator and returned promptly.