Brief Communication:

Extending the Northeastern Distribution of Mandrills (*Mandrillus sphinx*) into the Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon

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Mandrills (*Mandrillus sphinx*, Linnaeus, 1758) are restricted to forests of the Atlantic Equatorial Forests Ecoregion, eastern portions of the Northwestern Congolian Lowland Forest Ecoregion, and northern portions of the Western Congolian Forest-Savanna Mosaic Ecoregion of Central Africa (Olson *et al*. 2001; Oates & Butynski 2008). The species distribution is imperfectly known, especially the northeastern limits of its estimated range. Here we report on the presence of mandrills in the northwestern region of the Dja Faunal Reserve in south-central Cameroon, a protected area with no known published records for this species.

We found no published records after evaluating available surveys and faunal lists for the reserve (specifically, Bergmans 1994; Lejoly 1995; Williamson & Usongo 1995; Nzooh Dongmo 1999; MINFOF/IUCN 2015; GBIF 2016) and no reports through consultations with specialists who had worked within the reserve for several years (T. Smith, pers. comm. 2016). The current IUCN Red List description states mandrills are not known east of the Dja River (Oates & Butynski 2008). This new locality documents the species in the northwest sector of the Dja Faunal Reserve in south-central Cameroon, a protected area with no known published records for this species.

An array of 40 infrared-triggered trail cameras (Bushnell Trophy Cam Aggressor), each roughly 2 km apart in a square grid pattern, was in place for approximately 3,725 trap days for a wildlife survey in late 2015 and early 2016. All cameras were in primary tropical lowland rainforest. Two cameras (C11 at N3.2621 E12.83306 and C39 at N3.17567 E12.81618) photographed a single mature male mandrill on March 1, 2016 and April 9, 2016 (Figure 1). It is not known if they are different males or the same individual and if groups of mandrills, in addition to wandering males, also occur east of the Dja River. The two locations were 10.5 km apart. Each camera took six sequential images of each animal within six seconds (Figure 1).

Given the clear documentation of mandrills east of the Dja River presented here, we recommend the primary distribution for the species of Oates and Butynski (2008) and Abernethy and White (2013) be extended to encompass the new localities.

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Figure 1. Male mandrills photographed by two infrared trail cameras in the Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon. The black dots on the range map show the approximate location of cameras that documented mandrills. The dark shade represents the IUCN Red List distribution of the mandrill and protected areas are shown in light shade. The disjunct range polygon to the north of the Dja Reserve is likely an error (F. Maisels & K. Abernethy, pers. comm. 2016; range map source: Oates & Butynski 2008). The lower map shows the approximate location of the camera trap grid used in the survey with the cameras that photographed mandrills shown in circles.
LITERATURE CITED


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