

CATALOGUING BLOOD TYPES FOR SSP POPULATIONS OF GREAT APES

Jill Moyse: Lincoln Park Zoo

The project “Cataloging blood types for SSP populations of great apes” has had a very successful year. Thanks to the donation of cards from Eldon Biologicals, we were able to greatly expand the scope of the project and have distributed cards not only to SSP institutions that house great apes, but also EEP institutions, Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary and the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project. So far a total of 205 cards have been returned from SSP institutions, 1 card from the EEP, 31 cards from the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary and 5 cards from the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project for a total of 242 returned cards.

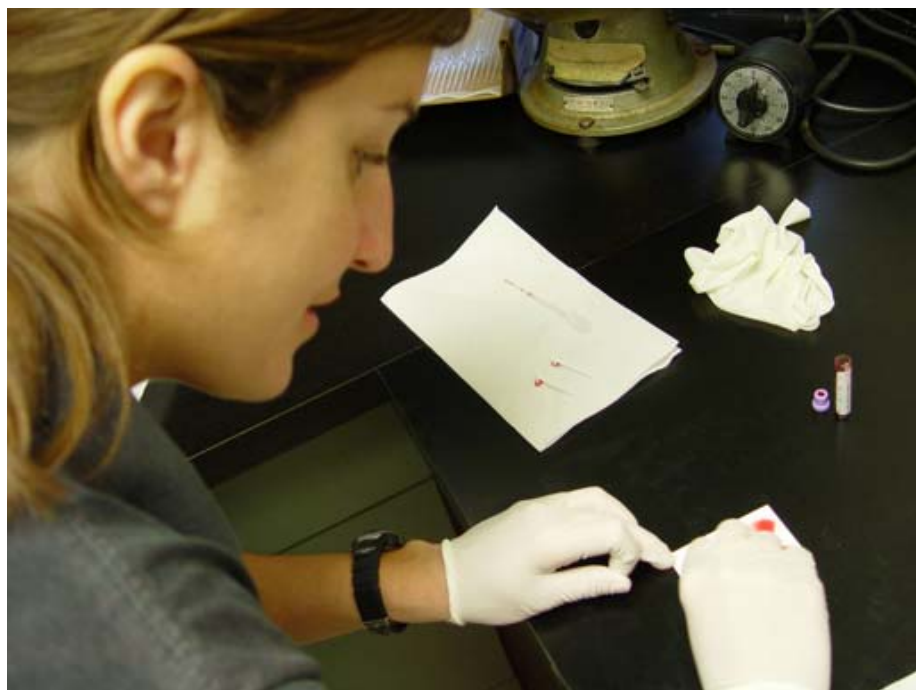
With the funds that I was granted I purchased bags to package all the donated cards that were distributed to the EEP institutions and storage sleeves and binders to house the completed cards. This storage will protect them from damage, provide them for long-term reference, and organize the cards for easy access.

Because of the generous donation of cards, I was able to re-allocate the majority of funds to purchase 5 digital cameras, 5 rechargeable battery sets, 5 adaptor/converters, 5 memory cards and 5 camera bags. I was very fortunate to forge a working relationship with Central Camera Company in Chicago. They found the project to be very important and provided all the supplies at cost. These cameras will be used by PASA (Pan African Sanctuary Alliance) sanctuaries in Africa. I will be traveling to Cameroon in November to attend the PASA veterinary workshop. At that time I will present the blood typing project, train veterinarians on how to complete the blood typing cards and distribute the cards. The digital cameras will provide the only reliable way of returning the data to the US as the cards themselves cannot be sent as they are biomaterials. The cameras will also give the sanctuaries a valuable tool for future use. The apes living in African sanctuaries represent a unique and important population of apes for this study. Given the difficulty of obtaining data from free-ranging wild apes, the sanctuary population is an extremely valuable resource for the project. Several of the PASA sanctuaries who have learned about the project are eager to participate.

The results to date are extremely exciting. The Eldon cards appear to be detecting differences in most of the great apes examined so far and we are in the process of validating the blood typing cards.

I am very grateful to have received the AAZK Research Grant and thank everyone who made it possible. I would also like to thank Shelly Roach and Barbara Manspeaker of AAZK.

The following photos show the author at work with the blood typing cards and photos are © Tali Melber, Lincoln Park Zoo. They are used courtesy of the author and photographer.





The following photo shows a blood typing card from the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary. It is used courtesy of the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary.

