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Piel, AK, Stampelli, P, Greathead, E, Hernandez-Aguilar, A, Moore, J and Stewart, FA (2017) The diet of open-habitat chimpanzees (Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii) in the Issa valley, western Tanzania. Journal of Human Evolution. 112. pp. 57-69. ISSN 0047-2484

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1	TITLE: The diet of open-habitat chimpanzees (Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii)
2	in the Issa valley, western Tanzania
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23 Abstract

24 Comparative data on the diets of extant primates inform hypotheses about hominin resource use. Historically, data describing chimpanzee diets stem 25 26 primarily from forest-dwelling communities, and we lack comparative data 27 from chimpanzees that live in mosaic habitats that more closely resemble those reconstructed for Plio-Pleistocene hominins. We present data on the 28 29 diet of a partially-habituated community of open habitat chimpanzees (Pan 30 troglodytes schweinfurthii) from the Issa valley, western Tanzania, collected 31 over a four-year period. Based mostly on macroscopic faecal analysis, Issa chimpanzees consumed a minimum of 69 plant species. There was no 32 relationship between plant consumption and either fruit availability or feeding 33 34 tree density; the most frequently consumed plant species were found in 35 riverine forests, with woodland species consumed more frequently during the late dry season. We conclude by contextualising these findings with those of 36 37 other open-habitat chimpanzee sites, and also by discussing how our results contribute towards reconstructions of early hominin exploitation of mosaic 38 landscapes. 39

40

41 KEY WORDS: great ape diet; savanna-woodland mosaic; food availability;

42 hominin; East Africa

#### 43 Introduction

Of the 14 mid- or long-term studies on wild chimpanzees, 11 are based 44 in tropical forests, whilst only three focus on drier (savanna-woodland mosaic) 45 46 populations. Thus, our understanding of extant chimpanzees as well as reconstructions of early hominin behaviour (e.g. bipedalism: Hunt, 1994; 47 hunting: Stanford, 1996) have been based mostly on data from studies in 48 49 tropical forests. However, Plio-Pleistocene hominin environments did not 50 resemble the tropical forests of most contemporary chimpanzee study sites. 51 Instead, there is increasing sedimentological, faunal, and isotopic evidence that especially early Pliocene hominin environments were mosaics comprised 52 of different vegetation types: woodlands, grasslands, and riverine forests 53 54 (WoldeGabriel et al., 2001; White et al., 2009, 2015; Cerling et al., 2011). 55 Consequently, the density and distribution of chimpanzee dietary plants in 56 similar, contemporary environments provides a paleoecological context for 57 reconstructing early hominin resources. Australopithecus diet, for example, is thought to have diverged from great ape diet, with those early hominins 58 59 probably consuming more seeds, nuts, underground storage organs, and soft fruits (Plummer, 2004; Ungar, 2004). Thus, a better understanding of the 60 61 abundance, distribution and consumption of contemporary (especially dry-62 habitat) ape plant foods may help us reconstruct floral paleocommunity-use 63 by hominins.

Moreover, it has long been recognized that early hominin evolution occurred at a time of increasing seasonality, and Foley (1993) suggested that responses to this seasonality may have catalysed the evolution of later hominins, especially *Homo*. However, our ability to consider the full

68 implications of seasonal resource variation on hominins is hampered by the relative lack of knowledge about seasonal resource distribution and use in 69 analogous habitats today, especially those of savanna or open-habitat 70 chimpanzees<sup>1</sup>, which are more strongly seasonal than forested sites (Moore, 71 1992). Chimpanzee responses to seasonal shortages of preferred foods can 72 result in a reliance on poorer quality, tougher foods than those consumed 73 74 during fruit-rich periods (e.g., tree bark [Pruetz, 2006]), or else can have 75 consequences for ranging behavior, whereby parties travel greater distances 76 to forage on preferred fruits (Sugiyama and Koman, 1992). 77 Studies using stable isotopes from open-habitat chimpanzees have provided insight into general patterns of resource use (Schoeninger et al., 7879 1999, 2015; Sponheimer et al., 2006). Schoeninger et al.'s (1999) analysis of 80 hairs from Ishasha (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Ugalla (Tanzania) chimpanzees highlighted the importance of woodland resources in their diets, 81 82 especially for the Tanzanian population. Sponheimer et al. (2006) followed this work by analysing samples from Fongoli (Senegal) chimpanzees, 83 reporting remarkably low C4 values, despite the abundance of C4 grasses in 84 their habitat, in stark contrast to what had been reported for Australopithecus. 85

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> No chimpanzee population is truly 'savanna', defined ecologically by mixed tree–grass systems immersed in a continuous grass layer with discontinuous tree canopy (Scholes and Archer, 1997; Ratnam et al., 2011; Domínguez-Rodrigo, 2014). Thus henceforth, we use the term 'open-habitat' to refer to chimpanzees living in open, dry habitats compared to forest-dwelling chimpanzees. See Moore (1992) for a review of this issue.

Whilst these studies provide information about broad dietary patterns and
some (in other apes, e.g., *Gorilla beringei*) revealed seasonal shifts
(Blumenthal et al., 2012), limitations are apparent, not least that using
isotopes to reconstruct consumption patterns can underrepresent botanical
diversity, with numerous foods failing to reveal isotopic signatures (FontesVillalba et al., 2013).

Chimpanzees are highly frugivorous omnivores (Newton-Fisher, 1999; 92 Basabose, 2002; Watts et al., 2012). Previous research of open-habitat 93 94 chimpanzees has consistently revealed narrower diets (fewer total species consumed) than those of forest-dwelling populations and, except for Fongoli 95 96 (Pruetz, 2006), these studies have relied on indirect methods of diet 97 composition (Table 1). We add to this literature by providing data from the 98 Issa valley, western Tanzania, a particularly valuable sample given that most 99 work on open-habitat chimpanzees stems from western Africa, whereas the 100 hominin fossil record is dominated by eastern African deposits. Given the importance of studying diet in extant apes that live in environments similar to 101 102 those reconstructed for early hominins, we aimed to establish dietary breadth and seasonal consumption, as well as assess the relationship between the 103 104 distribution of those foods across vegetation types within the habitat. We 105 predicted that (1) Issa chimpanzees would resemble other open-habitat communities and consume fewer total plant species than forest-dwelling 106 chimpanzees. Additionally, given the increased species richness of gallery 107 108 forests compared to woodlands (Piel and Stewart, unpublished data), we expected that (2) chimpanzees would rely heavily on gallery forests for foods 109 110 throughout the year. Finally, if open-habitat chimpanzees exhibit 'savanna'

adaptations (sensu Moore, 1992) then we predicted that (3) preferred foods at
Issa will differ from those of nearby forest-dwelling chimpanzees at Gombe
and Mahale. Finally, we discuss what our results might reveal about the
relationship between environment, diet, and early hominin exploitation of a
mosaic landscape.

116

117 TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

#### 118 Materials and methods

#### 119 Study site and subjects

We collected data between January 2009 and March 2014 in the Issa valley, 120 western Tanzania (Figure 1). The Issa valley lies >90 km from the nearest 121 122 national park boundary (Mahale Mountains, along Lake Tanganyika) and ~60 km from the nearest village (Uvinza). The landscape consists of broad valleys 123 separated by steep mountains and flat plateaus ranging from 900 to1800 m 124 125 above sea level. Vegetation is dominated by miombo woodland- Brachystegia and Julbernardia (Fabaceae) – although it also includes swamp and 126 grassland (together, we classified all of these habitats as 'open' vegetation 127 types), as well as thin strips of riverine and thicket forests ('closed' vegetation 128 129 types, hereafter called just 'forest'). Forest comprises ~7% of the total study 130 area. There are two distinct seasons: wet (Nov – April) and dry (May – October), with dry months experiencing <60 mm of rainfall (Whitmore, 1975). 131 Rainfall averaged 1220mm per annum (range: 930–1490mm from 2009– 132 2014) and temperatures ranged from 11°C to 38°C (Figure 2). 133

134 Chimpanzees were first studied in this area from 2001 to 2003 135 (Hernandez-Aguilar, 2006), when researchers based themselves at a temporary camp 9 km north and 400 m lower in elevation than the current 136 camp, from which research has been continuous since 2008. Preliminary 137 genetic identifications suggest the core study area of  $\sim 85 \text{km}^2$  is used by a 138 single community of at least 67 individuals, although given their low density 139 (0.25 individuals/km<sup>2</sup> [Piel et al., 2015]), it is likely that the home range of this 140 community is substantially larger (Rudicell et al., 2011). Whilst the majority of 141 142 the data for the current study come from faecal sieving (see below), we supplemented with direct feeding observations that were made 143 144 opportunistically during party follows.

145

146 FIGURE 1 & 2 ABOUT HERE

147 Dietary composition

148 To obtain fresh chimpanzee faecal samples, research teams searched for 149 chimpanzees by listening for calling parties early in the morning, by targeting areas known from motion-triggered cameras and autonomous acoustic 150 recording units to be used by chimpanzees (Kalan et al., 2016), and by 151 152 conducting reconnaissance walks throughout the study area. We collected all 153 fresh (estimated at <12 hours old) chimpanzee faeces in clean plastic bags and brought them back to camp for sluicing in a 1mm-wide screened sieve. 154 155 We followed recommendations of macro-specific analytical techniques of primate faecal analysis (McGrew et al., 2009; Phillips and McGrew, 2013) 156

157 and estimated the proportions of matrix and undigested contents for each

158 sample. We categorized *Ficus* seeds and insect parts into many, some, few,

159 or none, and counted all other seeds as well as other animal matter, whole leaves, and parasitic worms. We described, photographed, and assigned a 160 seed type number to all unidentified seeds, and recorded data on datasheets 161 162 or Google Nexus 7 tablets using Open Data Kit software (ODK). We then stored a library of seeds for identification in transparent container boxes. We 163 collected data on consumed foods through direct observation of foraging 164 165 events by following chimpanzee parties. We recorded data on species and plant part consumed. 166

167 Phenology

168 In October 2008, we established two phenology transects to monitor monthly fruiting patterns of 597 individual plants (tress, lianas, and shrubs): 396 in 169 woodland and 201 in riverine forest. Transects were stratified by vegetation 170 171 type (woodland and forest), with the woodland transect following a randomly chosen compass bearing. The bearing of the forest transect was manually 172 173 selected to follow forest vegetation, being shifted 50 m at one location to ensure that it continued to follow the forest. We identified all trees over 10 cm 174 diameter at breast height (DBH) and above 2 m tall that lay within 2.5 m of 175 each side of the transect. We attached a metal tag with an identification 176 177 number to each tree and estimated counts of mature fruit. In July 2011, we added a phenology "trail", which was used to monitor an additional 423 178 woodland trees that met the above criteria, and that were also known to be 179 chimpanzee feeding species based on a previous study (Hernandez-Aguilar, 180 2006). 181

#### 182 Environmental monitoring

In January 2009, we deployed temperature/relative humidity loggers (Onset
Corp.) in woodland and forest 1.5 km from the researcher base station.
Measurements were recorded at 30-minute intervals. We also deployed an
electronic rain gauge (Onset Corp., HOBO, model RH3) at the base station
that recorded each 2 mm of rainfall.

188 Botanical surveys and vegetation classification

To calculate feeding species density in the study area, we set an arbitrary 189 goal of *n*=10 stems/feeding plant species. To accomplish this, we sampled in 190 191 three ways. First, we placed 182 20x20 m botanical plots every 100 m from the start of six line transects that cross-cut the study area (Method A). 192 However, this method produced only minimal representation of forest species 193 194 (most forest strips are less than 50 m wide, for example). Therefore, when 195 botanical teams crossed forests, they sampled additional plots at 50 m 196 intervals following forest strips to increase forest species representation. In all 197 plots, we identified all trees over 10 cm DBH to species level when possible and recorded the vegetation type as either open or closed (see above). We 198 conducted surveys in 122 (67%) of these plots, or 4.88 hectares in forest 199 200 vegetation, versus 60 (33%) plots, or 2.4 hectares, in woodland vegetation. The inequality in survey effort was because forests host more diversity and 201 thus require more sampling than woodland vegetation. 202

The plot data provided density estimates for most feeding species. However, because many feeding species occurred at extremely low densities, we still did not obtain 10 specimens for each species, so we employed two additional methods that targeted the top 15 plants most frequently identified in 207 faecal samples, to increase our sample size. First, we overlaid a 50 x 50 m grid over a map of the study area, and randomly selected grid cells (Method 208 B). At the center point of each cell, we established a 10x10 m box, within 209 210 which we identified all trees that met the above criteria, including being a feeding species. We used the point center quadrat method (Walker, 1970; 211 Mitchell, 2010) to measure the distance of each member of the top 15 feeding 212 213 species to the nearest member of the same species within 100 m in four guadrats (if we observed no species member within 100 m, no value was 214 215 recorded). The results of these measurements provided additional density 216 estimates as well as data on feeding plant distribution. Finally, we restricted the grid coverage to forests (Method C), and repeated the above steps, 217 218 eventually adding an additional 111 plots using these last two methods, 219 bringing the total plots to 293 and the total surveyed area to 8.39 hectares. To ascribe a vegetation type to each plant species, we divided the 220 221 number of individual stems recorded in forest plots by the total number of individuals observed overall to obtain a "Vegetation score" from 0 to 1, with 0 222 representing no evidence of the plant in forest and 1 indicating that all 223 occurrences were in forest. We categorized those plants with scores 0–0.25 224 225 as woodland, 0.26–0.75 as both forest and woodland, and 0.76–1 as forest 226 plants. For those food plants that were absent in botanical survey plots, botanists familiar with the local flora ascribed categorization whenever 227 possible. 228

229 Data analyses

To calculate fruit availability, we followed Chancellor et al. (2012). We used 230 the density and basal area  $\left[\left(\frac{1}{2}(DBH)^2 \times Pi\right]\right]$  of each tree species and then 231 calculated a monthly fruit availability index  $(F_m)$  using the following formula: 232 233  $F_m = \Sigma P_{km} \times B_k$ 234 235 where  $P_{km}$  denotes the proportion of plants in fruit for species k in month m 236 and  $B_k$  represents the total basal area per hectare for species k. 237 To calculate a monthly fruit availability index (FAI – the total availability 238 of fruits in a given month), we used the total area of all transect botanical plots 239 240 in hectares (ha), to calculate the number of trees/ha of that species. We then calculated a mean DBH for all members of the same species, and 241 subsequently calculated the Bk value. We only used FAI values for species 242

for which we had a minimum of five individuals, to reduce problems

associated with small sample sizes.

We measured diet breadth in two ways: the mean number of plant 245 species per faecal sample, and the total number of different plant species 246 247 recorded in all samples collected over the course of a month, controlling for 248 total samples collected (following Pruetz, 2006). For the initial plot surveys (Method A), we calculated plant density by dividing the total number of 249 specimens of a given species by the total number of hectares surveyed in 250 251 each vegetation type. For the non-transect plots (Methods B and C), we followed Mitchell (2010) to calculate an absolute and relative density of each 252 key feeding species. To calculate the absolute density of a particular species 253

(individuals/hectare), we divided the number of plot quarters with that species
by the number of total quarters surveyed, then multiplied this value by the
absolute density of all the feeding species.

257 We calculated the relative density of each species by dividing the absolute density of a given species by the absolute density of all stems 258 combined, and then multiplying by 100 to convert into a percentage. Finally, 259 we compared the mean nearest neighbor distance (NN) of the top 15 species. 260 Plant species with lower NN distances were considered more clumped than 261 262 those with larger NN distances (see Clark and Evans, 1954). We conducted Pearson's correlations on rainfall and FAI, Spearman's rank-order correlations 263 on FAI and dietary breadth (total species consumed/month), and Student's t-264 265 tests on seasonal differences in species consumption. All tests were conducted in R (R Development Team, 2017). 266 All research complied with ethical policies, regulation, and guidelines 267

from the Tanzanian Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) and Commission for
 Science and Technology (COSTECH).

#### 270 Results

We analysed 810 chimpanzee faecal samples: 348 from the wet season and 462 from the dry season (monthly range = 2 to 72). Table 2 lists all identified chimpanzee plant foods, identified to species where possible. Peak seed diversity tended to be at the end of the wet and the beginning of the dry season (April–May).

276

277 TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

279 We identified 51 plant genera consumed by Issa chimpanzees, with another eight individual seeds to which we could not assign even a Family. 280 281 We identified 54 species, either based on seed morphology or direct observation, but could identify seven additional foods only to the genus, giving 282 a total of at least 61 species. Including the eight unidentified seeds brings this 283 284 to a minimum of 69 plant species. In addition, termites (probably *Macrotermes*) were consumed largely during the early and late wet season. 285 286 but also at times during the dry season (Stewart and Piel, 2014). Other invertebrates consumed include driver ants (Dorylus sp.) and beetle larvae 287 (Curculionidae). Most surprisingly, we did not find a single example of 288 vertebrate prey in any of the 810 samples. 289 Following Pruetz (2006), we considered key plant food species those 290 recorded in >50% of samples in any one month. These included nine species, 291 but of these, only Ficus sp. and G. huillensis, S. comorensis, and G. 292 293 *rugosifolia* occurred in >50% of faecal samples in more than two months (Table 2). Fruit availability showed a significant inverse relationship to rainfall 294 (t =2.57, df = 37, p=0.01), peaking in the early dry season during each of the 295 296 three full years where data were available (2009, 2012-2013) and showed a similar pattern in 2014 (Figure 3). The number of species consumed per 297 month ( $r_s = -0.06$ , p=0.72) was not influenced by monthly fruit availability. 298 Furthermore, no significant difference existed in the mean number of species 299 consumed per month between dry (M=3.24, SD=0.73) and wet (M=3.14, 300 301 SD=1.00) seasons (t(35)=0.33, p=0.74).

278

For those 12 species most often identified in faecal samples, the monthly proportions of samples that contained seeds were not significantly related to absolute densities ( $r_s = 0.06$ , p=0.84; Figure 4). On the contrary, species with seeds routinely found in faeces existed generally at low densities, whereas abundant species were not consumed as much as their density might predict.

308 FIGURES 3 and 4 ABOUT HERE

309 Food species distribution and density

310 The most common genus in the all plots was *Julbernardia* (37.5 stems/ha),

followed by *Lannea* (6.98 stems/ha), *Vitex* (6.11 stems/ha), and *Brachystegia* 

312 (5.68 stems/ha) (Table 3). Considering vegetation plots located only in valleys

313 (versus on plateaus where chimpanzees rarely nest or forage), *Vitex* (7.2%)

was the most commonly encountered species, followed by *Parinari* (6.08%),

315 Strychnos (2.98%), and Lannea (2.98%). Moreover, in those same areas,

316 *Vitex* and *Garcinia* were the most widely spaced, with mean distances

between trees of over 30 and 25 m, respectively. *Grewia, Keetia* and *Ficus* 

318 were the most clumped, with all averaging less than 10 meters between adult

trees (Figure 5). Of the twelve most frequently consumed plants, four were

320 observed only in the forests, with all others encountered in open and closed

321 vegetation types (Figure 6).

322

323 FIGURES 5 and 6 ABOUT HERE

324

325 Twelve plant genera appeared at least once a month on average in the 326 chimpanzees' diet over the course of the study. *Ficus* spp. was the most

327	frequently consumed food, with chimpanzees consuming them in 37 of 41
328	months (90.2%) and was the most common seed identified across seasons
329	(present in 83.9% of all samples); Garcinia (51.6%), Saba (38.2%), and
330	Grewia (27.8%) were the next most frequently found, followed by Cordia
331	(16.8%), Flacourtia (16.6%), Parinari (15.6%), Vitex (15.3%), Keetia (14.5%),
332	and Strychnos (10.9%), Citropsis (10.0%), and Lannea (5.4%). Whilst
333	chimpanzees consumed some plants frequently in both wet and dry seasons
334	(e.g., Ficus, Garcinia, Saba), others were more important during only one
335	season (e.g., <i>Grewia</i> , <i>Parinari</i> – dry; <i>Flacourtia</i> – wet – Figure 7).
336	When we compared the results from Issa to those reported at nearby
337	Gombe (Foerster et al., 2016) and Mahale Mountains (Nishida and Uehara,
338	1983) National Parks, we found considerable overlap in the 12 most important
339	foods (Table 4). Three genera (Ficus, Garcinia, and Saba) are important for
340	all three chimpanzee communities, whilst another five (Baphia, Parinari,
341	Pseudospondias, Pterocarpus, Vitex) are important for two communities.
342	

343 FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE

344TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

## 345 **Discussion**

- In the current study, we macroscopically analysed 810 chimpanzee faecal
- 347 samples from the Issa community that lives in a mosaic woodland
- 348 environment of western Tanzania. The limitations of this method are well
- established (McGrew et al., 2009; Phillips and McGrew, 2013), with vegetative
- foods (pith, leaf, stem) and flowers typically not identifiable and thus not

351 accurately represented in comprehensive food lists (Tutin and Fernandez,

1993). Consequently, our results likely underestimate plant diversity.

Nonetheless we interpret them here in the context of other studies of savanna
chimpanzees where the same methods were used to infer diet. We also
compare our results with published results from forest-dwelling chimpanzees
in nearby Gombe and Mahale National Parks to draw comparisons on plant
species consumption and preference across different habitats.

Issa chimpanzees consumed a minimum of 69 plants over a 41-month 358 359 study period. Combining our dataset with a previous study by Hernandez-Aguilar (2006) from nearly the same area (see Table 2), we reach a total of 77 360 consumed plants. As we predicted, their diet is very narrow relative to forest-361 362 dwelling communities, and consistent with other open-habitat chimpanzees. In fact, in a recent analysis of chimpanzee diet across the entire 3300km<sup>2</sup> Ugalla 363 region (which encompasses Issa), Yoshikawa and Ogawa (2015) listed only 364 365 100 consumed plants, considerably less than nearly every other study site of chimpanzees (Table 1). McGrew et al. (1988) reported Mt. Assirik (Senegal) 366 chimpanzees to consume 84 species (41 of which were inferred). Even at 367 Fongoli, the lone habituated open-habitat chimpanzee community under 368 study, dietary breadth reaches only 77 different species (Bertolani and Pruetz, 369 370 2011). Table 1 compares these figures to forest-dwelling chimpanzee communities, which regularly consume between 150 and 200 different 371 species. 372

When we compared the most important plants at Issa, Gombe, and Mahale, we found that three plants overlap at all three sites: *Ficus, Garcinia, and Saba* (Nishida and Uehara, 1983; Foerster et al., 2016). These species 376 are the three most important plants for the Issa chimpanzees and two of the top three at Mahale. In fact, almost a third (11/36) of the top consumed 377 species at the three sites overlap. With Issa chimpanzees favoring largely the 378 379 same plants as nearby forest-dwelling communities, despite dramatic differences in the physical environment, e.g., plant diversity and density, 380 seasonality, rainfall (Collins and McGrew, 1988), it is likely that population 381 density, ranging, and grouping patterns (rather than diet) are the most 382 significant and different in open-habitat chimpanzees compared to their forest-383 384 dwelling cousins. While population density is known to differ in significant ways (density at Issa = 0.25 individual/km<sup>2</sup>, compared to e.g., Gombe,  $\sim$ 3 385 individual/km<sup>2</sup>), data are not yet available from Issa on ranging and grouping 386 387 behaviour.

388

389 Absence of vertebrate remains in faeces

There was no evidence of vertebrate prey in the current study. Despite the 390 presence of red colobus (Procolobus tephrosceles) and galagos (Otolemur 391 crassicaudatus, Galago senegalensis, Galago moholi) in the study area, as 392 well as other species confirmed as chimpanzee prey elsewhere (blue duiker, 393 red-tailed monkey [Uehara, 1997]), the only evidence of vertebrate prev 394 consumption at Issa until 2015 consisted of a single antelope hoof (possibly 395 Oreotragus oreotragus) recovered in 2008 prior to systematic sampling (Piel 396 and Stewart, pers. obs.) and an unidentified bone reported by Hernandez-397 Aguilar (2006). The lack of evidence for meat-eating is surprising given not 398 just the propensity for hunting in other open-habitat communities Fongoli 399 (Pruetz et al., 2015) and nearby Gombe (Gilby et al., 2006) and Mahale 400

401 (Takahata et al., 1984), but also that Issa chimpanzees often encounter
402 potential prey (e.g., bushbuck, klipspringer, and yellow baboons - Piel et al.,
403 unpublished data].

404 This paucity of vertebrate consumption is consistent with other studies that relied on macroscopic analyses of open-habitat chimpanzee faecal 405 specimens (Suzuki, 1966; McGrew, 1983; Pruetz, 2006; Yoshikawa and 406 Ogawa, 2015), but contrasts with recent observations at Issa. A 2015 report of 407 blue duiker consumption at Issa (Ramirez-Amaya et al., 2015) and two 408 409 additional observations since then (Piel and Stewart, unpublished data) support earlier discussions on the limitations of using indirect methods to 410 reveal chimpanzee meat-eating (Boesch and Boesch, 1989). 411 412 Vegetation type and spatiotemporal patterns in plant consumption 413 414 There was no relationship between fruit availability or feeding tree density and 415 416 consumption. Nonetheless, despite the dry-season reliance of Issa chimpanzees on woodlands, of the 60 food plants to which we were able to 417 assign a dominant vegetation type, a similar proportion was found in each 418 vegetation type (38.3% for forest, n=23, and 43.3% - for woodland, n=26), 419 420 while 11 were categorized from both. These proportions parallel results from 421 Mahale (Tanzania), where Nishida and Uehara (1983) reported 41.7% of feeding species to be from forests, versus 38.0% from woodlands, and 5.7% 422 to be from both. Similar to most other communities (Doran, 1997; Newton-423 424 Fisher, 1999; Basabose, 2002; Pruetz, 2006; Watts et al., 2012),

425 chimpanzees consumed at least some fruit in every month.

426 Twelve of the 15 most often-consumed plants were recorded in forest, and six of the top seven were exclusively from forest (Table 2). This reliance 427 on forest species is striking given that only 7% of the study area is classified 428 429 as forest, versus over 60% woodland. It also contrasts with how McGrew and colleagues (1988) described chimpanzee feeding species distribution at Mt. 430 Assirik: 59% of consumed foods from woodland species, versus only 29% 431 from forest species. Seasonally, the data suggest that Issa chimpanzees 432 consume forest fruits for much of the year, but increase their foraging in 433 434 woodlands in the dry season, when forest fruits are less abundant. In that sense, similarly to some chimpanzees increasing travel distance (Sugiyama 435 and Koman, 1992) or eating tougher foods (Pruetz, 2006) in response to food-436 437 poor times, Issa chimpanzees may also shift primary use of vegetation types, 438 in line with what occurs with their nesting locations (Hernandez-Aguilar, 2009; Stewart et al., 2011). 439

Relatedly, we observed chimpanzees consume bark 27 times over the study period, and most observations were made from the late wet season, the period of lowest (overall) fruit availability. Multiple studies have reported bark consumption across the Order (e.g., *P. troglodytes* - Nishida, 1976;

444 *Cercopithecus l'hoesti* - Kaplin et al., 2000; *Lemur catta* - Yamashita, 2002;

*Alouatta belzebul* - Pinto and Setz, 2004) and wood is known to provide a
critical sodium source not just for primates (Rothman et al., 2006), but also
herbivorous mammals (Iwata et al., 2015). In Mahale, chimpanzees exhibited
two annual peaks of bark consumption, both during fruit-lean times (Nishida,
1976). Moreover, whilst they were observed to consume the bark of 21
different tree species, one third of observations were of *Brachystegia bussei*

451 bark consumption – similar to at Issa (8/27 = 29.6%). Thus, as at Mahale, 452 chimpanzees at Issa may be compensating for low nutrient consumption during fruit-poor periods by stripping and eating woodland bark. Bark was also 453 454 likely to have been an important and seasonal component of Australopithecus sediba diet as well (Henry et al., 2012), but the extent of its importance 455 throughout hominin evolution remains unclear. Our results support the idea of 456 an ape reliance on bark at certain times of the year, at Issa probably to 457 compensate for a scarcity of higher-quality foods. 458

459 Contemporary eastern African seasonality patterns strongly resemble those predicted for the same area between 3.0 and 2.0 Ma, during a critical 460 461 time of Australopithecus – Homo evolution (Reed and Rector, 2007). Such 462 seasonality has been implicated as a primary catalyst for the origins of *Homo*, with a transition away from anatomical and towards technological adaptations 463 to a shifting environment (Foley, 1993). One key element of adapting to new 464 465 environments involves how animals exploit available foods, from where, and when during the year. As a result, improvements in our comparative data for 466 the diets of extant primates can directly inform our predictions about the diet 467 of extinct hominins (Wood and Schroer, 2012). 468

In her analysis of how hominins would have responded to harsher,
drier habitats that offered widely distributed food sources during the PlioPleistocene, Copeland (2009) suggested that such conditions may promote
consumption of underground storage organs (USOs), expansion of home
ranges, and restriction to thin, forest strips. Previous work has inferred
chimpanzee consumption of USOs at Issa (Hernandez-Aguilar et al., 2007),
and preliminary evidence suggests that day and annual ranging distances are

476 also atypically high for the species (Piel and Stewart, unpublished data). In 477 contrast to Copeland's prediction of forests as a limiting factor, though, chimpanzees at Issa may seasonally expand their foraging niche. Analysis of 478 479 nesting patterns at Issa suggested that chimpanzees ranged more widely in the dry season (Hernandez-Aguilar, 2009). Here is where habitat 480 reconstructions, and definitions, are important (White et al., 2009a; 481 482 Domínguez-Rodrigo, 2014). If the savannas that surrounded early paleoforests comprised treeless 'savannas', then hominins may very well have 483 484 been confined to forest strips that afforded protection from terrestrial carnivores. However, if something more akin to woodlands surrounded the 485 forests, hominins may have exhibited a chimpanzee model of exploitation of 486 487 this open vegetation that would have offered, like at Issa, important foods such as Parinari and Keetia. 488

Morphological, microwear and isotope data are the most common ways 489 490 of reconstructing hominin diet. Yet a fundamental problem with modeling hominin behavior is that, even within the hominins, there is no single story, 491 and Sponheimer et al. (2013) note the significant variability in, for example, 492 isotope data once hominins regularly began consuming C<sub>4</sub> foods. Despite the 493 Issa chimpanzee reliance on *Ficus* throughout the year, they consume a wide 494 495 variety of plant foods, which are all  $C_3$  (similar to the pattern at Fongoli [Sponheimer et al., 2006]). Thus, either australopithecines had a dramatically 496 different diet than do extant open-habitat chimpanzees, or the (fossil) isotope 497 498 data mask variability in dietary composition. Given the importance of fruit to extant chimpanzees, future studies should examine the isotope composition 499 500 of heavily consumed fruit species and incorporate those figures where

501 possible into models. For example, non-photosynthesizing plant parts are 502 slightly more <sup>13</sup>C enriched than leaves, but the leaves form the basis of our 503 understanding of <sup>13</sup>C/<sup>12</sup>C distribution across landscapes. By doing this, it may 504 be possible to have a more nuanced understanding of dietary components for 505 extant and extinct primates, including the relative importance of C<sub>4</sub> plant 506 consumption in open habitats.

Our results here add to a growing body of data revealing how extant 507 chimpanzees live and use a potentially mosaic habitat, one analogous to 508 509 those reconstructed for early hominins. White and colleagues (2015) have argued that fossils, phytoliths, and soil-based isotopic data all suggest the 510 511 presence of grass in Ardipithecus habitat, but the plentiful colobine and kudu 512 remains, combined with Ardipithecus morphology, suggest "woodland-toforest" adaptations for a species living in a mosaic landscape. However, the 513 temporal and phylogenetic distance between extant chimpanzees and extinct 514 515 hominins should not be underestimated. The limitations to chimpanzees as analogous models for hominin evolution are well-established (Sayers and 516 Lovejoy, 2008). Added to this, recent work has emphasized how intraspecific 517 ecological differences can result in profound cultural (Kamilar and Marshack 518 519 2012) and life history variation among chimpanzee communities, which in turn 520 may skew our understanding of the transition to a 'human-like' pattern (Wood et al. 2017). Significant variation has been demonstrated even between 521 communities within the same national park, for example, where chimpanzees 522 523 at Ngogo feed most frequently, and for longest, on Ficus species, versus at Kanyawara, where Ficus reoresents a negligible part of the diet (Watts et al. 524 525 2012). One emergent challenge when using extant primates in models for

526 human evolution is therefore to understand and account for the effects of variation and variability, and how it might alter our perceptions of the shift from 527 a more chimpanzee-like last common ancestor to a more human-like grade. 528 529 Another, recurring, challenge is for primatologists to identify much more explicitly which hominin species is being modeled when data from extant 530 animals are being applied. The shared characteristics between the mosaic 531 habitat of Issa chimpanzees and reconstructions of Ardipithecus habitat 532 (White et al., 2009a), suggest that our data have more bearing for earlier, 533 534 rather than later (e.g., Homo) hominins. This idea is supported by analyses of hominin dental anatomy that suggest a shift in early and especially later Homo 535 away from soft, fibrous foods towards tough plant products and likely animal 536 537 tissues (Ungar, 2012), extremely infrequent foods in Issa chimpanzee diet. Overall, our data contribute to the debate on the behavioral ecology of the 538 earliest hominins (e.g., Ardipithecus) and simultaneously highlight major 539 540 differences between extant open-habitat chimpanzees and early Homo.

## 541 Acknowledgements

542

543	We thank the Tanzanian Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) and
544	Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) for permission to
545	conduct research in Tanzania and field assistants for invaluable help and
546	enthusiasm in the field. S. Elton, J. Lee-Thorp, W.C. McGrew, C. Most, and D.
547	Watts offered valuable feedback on earlier versions of this paper. K. Hunt, J.
548	Junker, B. Mugerwa, W.C. McGrew, D. Morgan, J. Pruetz, C. Sanz, and C.
549	Stanford shared unpublished data. R. Gereau of the Missouri Botanical
550	Gardens and Y. Abeid helped with plant identifications, K. Petrzelkova
551	identified the beetle larvae that we recorded, and G. Sandars helped mine
552	data from other Tanzanian chimpanzee communities. Many thanks to the
553	Carnegie Trust for Universities of Scotland, the Harold Hyam Wingate
554	Foundation, L.S.B. Leakey Foundation, and Wenner Gren Foundation for
555	financial support to FAS; to the National Science Foundation, Ruggles Gates
556	Fund for Biological Anthropology, University of California, San Diego, and
557	Wenner Gren Foundation for financial support to AKP. We are especially
558	grateful to the UCSD/Salk Center for Academic Research and Training in
559	Anthropogeny (CARTA) for on-going support to the Ugalla Primate Project.

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778

#### 779 Figure captions

- 780
- 781 **FIGURE 1** Map of western Tanzania, with the Issa study area (black box) as
- well as Gombe and Mahale National Parks (green shaded) labeled. Credit: L.
- 783 Pintea, The Jane Goodall Institute, USA.
- 784 **FIGURE 2** Mean monthly rainfall (shaded) and minimum, mean, and
- 785 maximum temperatures in the study area.
- 786 **FIGURE 3** Mean monthly Fruit Availability Index (FAI).
- 787 **FIGURE 4** The density of the twelve most frequently observed plants in
- faeces and the mean monthly proportion of faecal samples that contained
- each plant. Plants are ordered from left to right in order of consumption rank.
- 790 **FIGURE 5** Mean distance to the nearest neighbor of the same species, with
- plants ordered from most commonly occurring (i.e., *Ficus*) to the least (i.e.,
- 792 *Canthium*).
- 793 **FIGURE 6** Eleven of the 12 most frequently observed plant seeds observed
- in faeces and the vegetation types in which they were categorized. The
- individual plant consumption rank is in parentheses next to the name. We did
- not encounter the fourth most consumed plant, *Grewia rugosifolia*, in botanical
- 797 plots.
- 798 **FIGURE 7** Proportion of faeces with the seeds of the top 12 consumed
- plants, separated between wet and dry seasons. Plants are ordered from left
- 800 to right in order of consumption rank

Table 1 Environmental metrics, isotope values, mammalian fauna diversity, and chimpanzee feeding data from medium and long-term study sites.<sup>a</sup>

Dominant vegetation	Site (Country)	Annual rainfall	Dry season (months)	Annual temp	Temp Monthly LOW	Temp Monthly HIGH	Vegetation score	Isotope data (13C value)	Sympatric medium-large mammalian fauna species	Diet sample size	Plants consumed	Method
	Bossou											
	(Guinea,											
	Conakry)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	NA	200	D
		1489										
	Budongo	+-										
Forested	(Uganda)	196.6	3	20-38	-	-	0.0%	-	15	2641	58	D
	Bwindi	1100-										
	(Uganda)	2400	-		-	-	0.0%	-	29	187	32	I/D
	Gishwati											
	(Rwanda)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1381	23	Ι
	Gombe	1430-	6		19*	28*	34.0%	-	25	807	147	D

(Tanzania)	2542										
Goualougo											
(Rep. of											
Congo)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	NA	116	D
Ituri (Dem.											
Rep.											
Congo)	-	-	-	-	-	NA	-16%	-	-	-	-
Kahuzi											
Biega											
(Dem.											
Rep.											
Congo)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7212	110	I/D
Kibale											
(Uganda)	1536	5	19.2	12.3	26.6	0.0%	-14.5	37	1059	102	D
Liberia	-	-	20.1	16	26.1	26.6%	-21.5	23	-	-	-
Lope											
(Gabon)	-	6	25.2	26	28	NA	-	25	1854	132	I
Mahale	1762	5-6	20.2	12	27	82.5%	-	30	-	198	D

	(Tanzania)	+- 125										
	Tai (Ivory	1803						-				
	Coast)	+- 66	3	26.2	21.7	30.1	0.0%	24.7/25%	25	-	-	D
	Fongoli											
	(Senegal)	900	7	28.4	17.1	38.9	97.6%	-22.20%	22	1320	77	I/D
	Ishasha											
	(Dem.											
	Rep.											
	Congo)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-23.10%	-	-	-	-
Open-		1094										
habitat	lssa valley	(827-										
	(Tanzania)	1395)	6	23.9	11.7	38.7	93.0%	-22.12%	36	812	77	I
	Kasakati											
	(Tanzania)	962	6	22.1	16.5*	26*	90.1%	-	37*	7	78	I
	Mt. Assirik	954+-										
	(Senegal)	182	7	29	23.1	34.9	95.5%	-	27	60	43	Ι
	Nguye,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	465	100	Ι

Bhukalai											
(Tanzania)											
Semliki	1389										
(Uganda)	+- 41	5	24.06&	20^	34^	87.8%	-	26	72	36	I

<sup>a</sup> "Indirect" evidence includes faec**al** analysis and feeding remains, whilst "Direct" refers to observations. Table modified from Moore (1992) and Morgan and Sanz (2006).

- 1
- 2 Table 2 A list of all consumed plant species at Issa, recorded from our faecal analysis and direct observations and those of
- Hernandez-Aguilar (2006), the dominant vegetation type in which they were found, and when and to how often seeds were
   recorded in >50% of faecal samples in any one month for nine important species (in bold).
- 5

Genus	Species	Family	Identified from	Number of	Calculated	Predominant	Months	Months	Season
			faeces (F), our	individuals	vegetation	vegetation	observed	consum	
			direct	recorded in	score	type	>50% of	ed	
			observation (O),	plots			samples		
			or recorded by				( <i>n</i> =41		
			Hernandez-				months)		
			Aguilar, 2006 (H-						
			А)						
Aframomum	angustifolium	Zingiberaceae	F	10	0.7	Both			
Allophylus	congolanus	Sapindaceae	F	20	0.95	Forest			
Ampelocissus	spp.	Vitaceae	F,O			Woodland			
Anisophyllea	boehmii	Anisophylleaceae	F,O	28	0.179	Woodland			
Annona	senegalensis	Annonaceae	F	6	0.167	Woodland			
Antidesma	venosum	Euphorbiaceae	F			Woodland			
Aspila	pluriseta	Asteraceae	F	1	0	Woodland			

Bauhinia	thonningii	Fabaceae	H-A						
	boehmii		0	40	0.325	Both			
	bussei		0	35	0.029	Woodland			
Brachystegia	microphylla	Fabaceae	0	56	0.321	Both			
	spiciformis		0	9	0.222	Woodland			
	sp.		0	161	0.124	Woodland			
Canthium	spp.		F	13	1	Forest			
Carpolobia	goetzei	Polygalaceae	F			Forest			
Carissa	spinarium	Apocynaceae	H-A						
Cissus	spp.	Vitaceae	F			Both			
Citropsis	articulata	Rutaceae	F,O	24	1	Forest	2	July-Aug	Dry
Combretum	sp.	Combretaceae	0	40	0.525	Both			
Cordia	sp.	Boraginaceae	F,O	13	1	Forest	2	Мау	Dry
Costus	macranthus	Zingiberaceae	F			Woodland			
Dalbergia	Mochisia	Fabaceae	H-A						
Diplorhynchus	condylocarpon	Apocynaceae	0			Woodland			
Fadogia	triphylla	Rubiaceae	F			Woodland			
	exasperata		ο	12	1	Forest	14	Jan-Sept	Both
Ficus	ottoniifolia	Moraceae	ο						
	variifolia		0						
Flacourtia	indica	Flacourtiaceae	F	4	1	Forest			
Garcinia	huillensis	Guttiferae	F,O	33	0.97	Forest	8	Jan, Oct-	Wet

Grewia	rugosifolia	Tiliaceae	F,O			Both	4	August	Dry
Guizotia	scabra	Asteraceae	F						
Hexalobus	monopetalus	Annonaceae	F	1	0	Woodland			
Isoberlinia	tomentosa	Fabaceae	0	16	0	Woodland			
Julbernardia	unijugata	Fabaceae	0	163	1	Forest			
Julbernardia	globiflora	Fabaceae	0	67	0.164	Woodland			
Keetia	gueinzii	Rubiaceae	F	5	1	Forest	2	Sept	Dry
Landolphia	owariensis	Apocynaceae	F,O	2	1	Forest			
Lannea	spp.	Anacardiaceae	F	38	0.868	Forest			
Manilkara	mochisia	Sabotaceae	H-A						
Monanthotaxis	poggei	Annonaceae	F	3	1	Forest			
Opilia	amentacea	Opiliaceae	F	1	1	Forest			
Oxyanthus	speciosus	Rubiaceae	F	2	1	Forest			
Parinari	curatellifolia	Chrysobalanaceae	F,0	18	0.167	Woodland	2	Aug	Dry
Piliostigma	thonningii	Fabaceae	F,O	2	1	Woodland*			
Pleurostylia	africana	Celastraceae	F			Woodland			
Pseudolachnostyli	maprouneifolia	Euphorbiaceae	H-A						
S									
Psychotria	spp.	Rubiaceae	F			Both			
Pterocarpus	tinctorius	Fabaceae	0	45	0.133	Woodland			
Pyrostria	lobulata	Rubiaceae	H-A						

Dec

Rothmannia	fischeri	Rubiaceae	F	21	0.952	Forest			
Saba	comorensis	Apocynaceae	F,O	3	1	Forest	6	Jan;	Both
								Sept,	
								Oct, Dec	
Sclerocarya	birrea	Anacardiaceae	F,O			Woodland			
	cocculoides		F,O	31	0.903	Forest			
Strychnos	innocua	Loganiaceae	F,O						
	pungens		F						
Syzygium	guineense	Myrtaceae	F	38	0.974	Forest			
Tacca	leontopetaloides	Taccaceae	F			Woodland			
Thespesia	garckeana	Malvaceae	F,O			Both			
Tricalysia	coriacea	Rubiaceae	F	3	1	Forest			
Trichodesma	Zeylanicium	Boraginaceae	H-A						
Uapaca	kirkiana	Phyllanthaceae	F,O	8	0.125	Woodland			
Uapaca	nitida	Phyllanthaceae	F						
Uvaria	angolensis	Annonaceae	F			Forest			
Vangueria	Volkensii	Rubiaceae	H-A						
Vigna	monophylla	Fabaceae	F			Both			
Vitex	doniana	Verbenaceae	F,O	38	0.421	Both	2	Мау	Dry
Vitex	mombassae	Verbenaceae	F,O						
Ximenia	caffra	Olacaceae	F,O			Both			
Zanha	africana	Sapindaceae	F,O	2	0	Woodland			

	Ziziphus	abyssinica	Rhamnaceae	F	Woodland
6					

<sup>7</sup> \* Indicates the species was found only once in botanical plots, and in forest, but is a well-established woodland species, and so has been labelled accordingly

Table

1 TABLE 3 Density, basal area (per hectare [ha]), mean distance to their nearest neighbor of the same species, % of faecal samples

2 containing seeds of the top-25 consumed plant species and their corresponding frequency rank.<sup>a</sup>

Plants	Life form <sup>b</sup>	Density	Mean distance to nearest neighbor	Basal	% faeces with	Rank
				area (B <sub>k</sub> )	seeds	
		(stems/ha)	(m)	(cm/ha)		
Aframomum angustifolium	Herb	1.62			0.86	25
Anisophyllea boehmii	Tree	4.55		1767.37	3.69	16
Annona senegalensis	Tree	0.97		129.68	1.97	21
Canthium burttii	Shrub	2.60	10.1	141.21	3.94	14
Cissus quarrei	Herb	0			2.95	19
Citropsis articulata	Tree	3.90	6.7	242.93	6.15	10
<i>Cordia</i> (all species)	Tree	2.11	13.2	2352.89	6.27	9
Ficus (all species)	Tree	2.11	7.7	2199.73	33.91	1
Flacourtia indica	Tree	0.65		381.49	5.41	11

Garcinia huillensis	Tree	5.36	26.7	848.40	30.14	2
Grewia rugosifolia	Liana	0	3.3		13.78	4
Keetia guenzii	Tree	0.81	6.5	141.15	9.10	7
Lannea schimperii	Tree	6.98	12.5	3298.92	4.55	12
Opilia celtidifolia	Liana	0.16			3.57	17
Parinari curatellifolia	Tree	2.92	23.7	1160.81	12.18	5
Psychotria (all species)	Tree	1.30		98.76	4.06	13
Saba comorensis	Liana	1.12	8.1		21.89	3
Strychnos (all species)	Tree	5.03	13.0	902.40	9.84	6
Thespesia garckena	Tree	0.16		8.78	1.23	24
Uapaca kirkiana	Tree	0		0	1.84	22
Uapaca nitida	Tree	1.30		278.71	1.60	23
Uvaria angolensis	Shrub	0			3.69	15
Vitex (all species)	Tree	6.11	30.3	2709.0	7.63	8
Ximenia americana	Shrub	0.32		50.77	1.97	20

Zanha africana	Tree	0.32	106.64	3.20	18

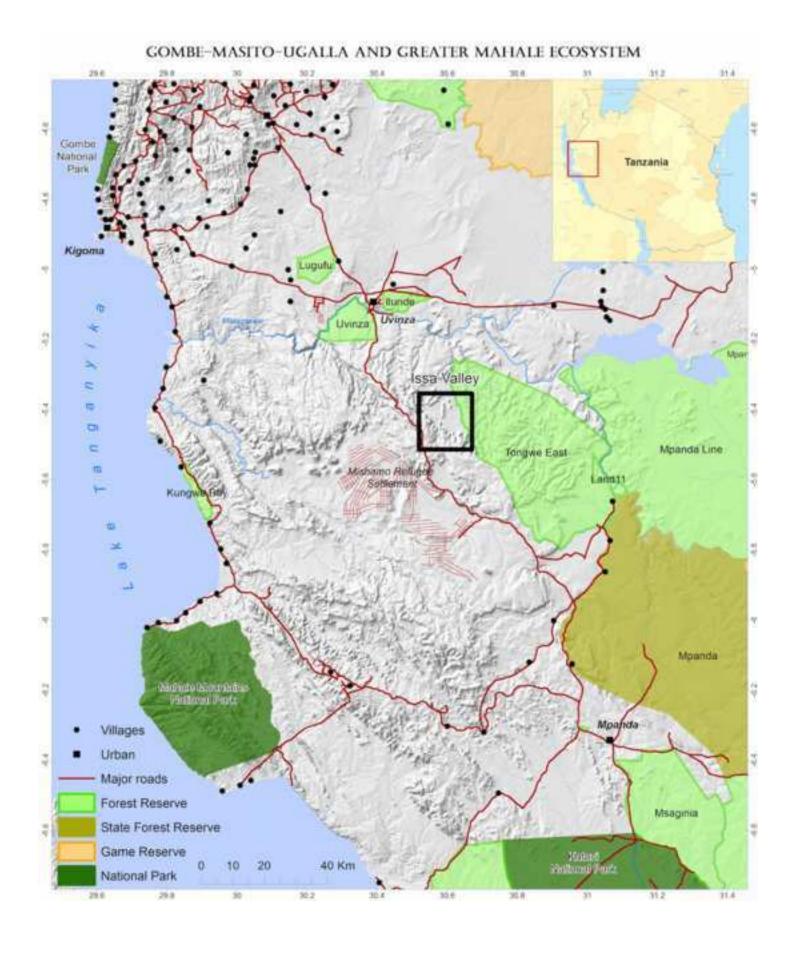
<sup>a</sup> Plants with missing values were not observed in botanical plots. The top twelve most consumed plants are in bold.

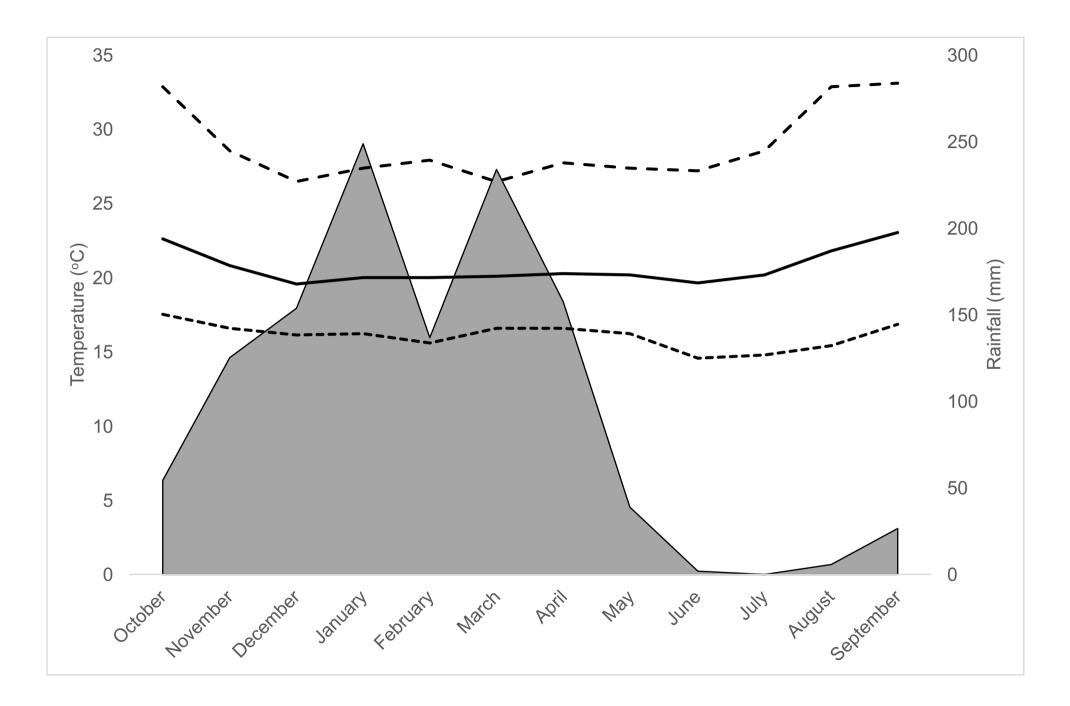
5 <sup>b</sup> From http://specimens.kew.org/herbarium/

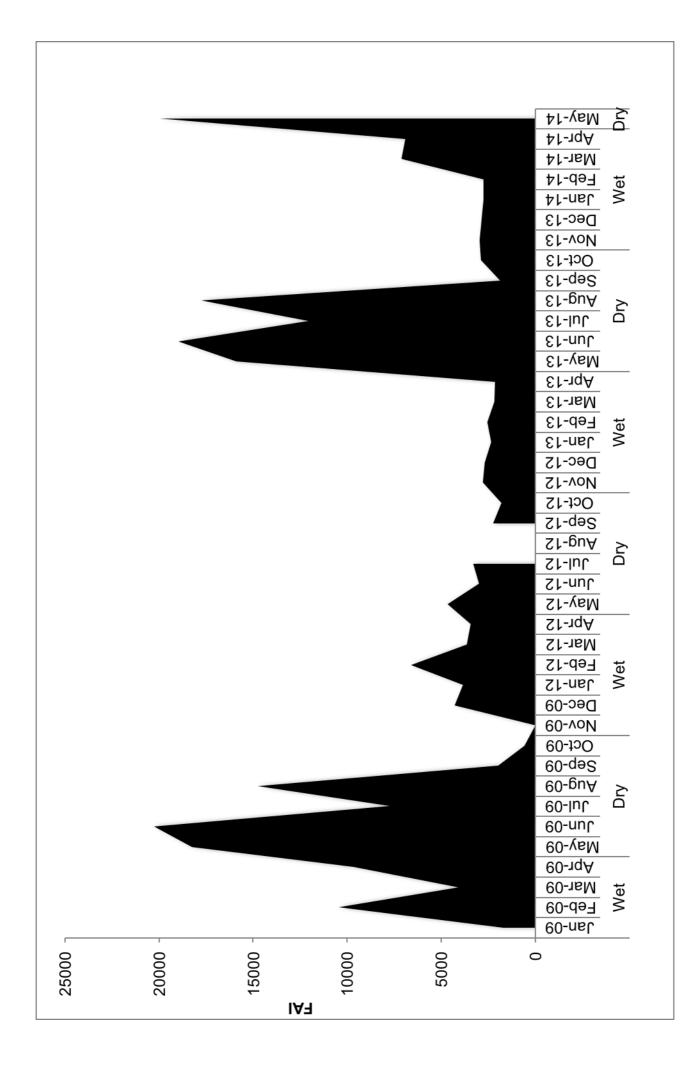
- 2 Table 4 The top 12 feeding plants and their respective ranking for chimpanzees in western Tanzania: Issa, Gombe National Park
- 3 (Kasekela) and Mahale Mountains National Park (M-group).
- 4

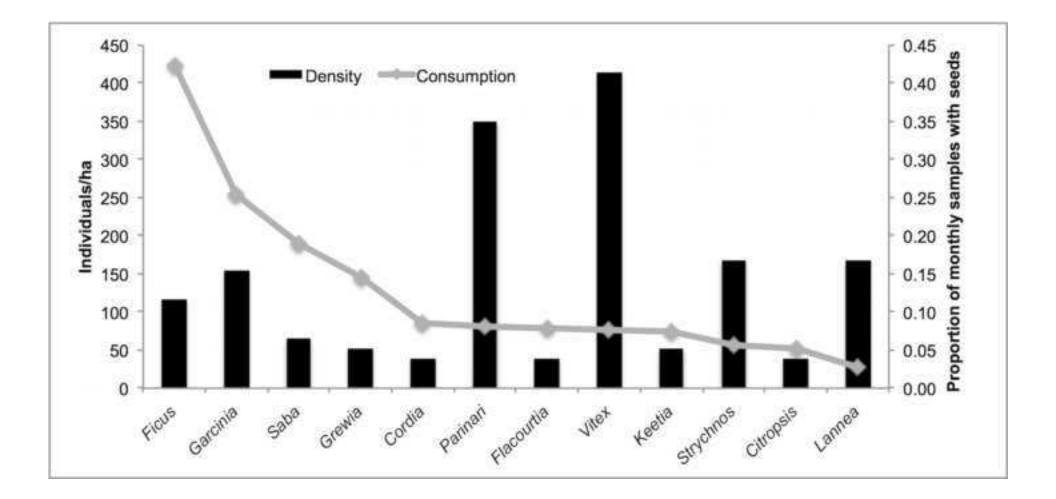
Genus	Species	Family	Site rank			
			Issa	Gombe	Mahale	
Aframomum	sp.	Zingiberaceae			7	
Baphia	capparidifolia	Fabaceae		11	4	
Brachystegia	bussei	Fabaceae			12	
Citropsis	articulata	Rutaceae	11			
Cordia	sp.	Boraginaceae	5			
Diplorhynchus	condylocarpon	Apocynaceae			9	
Elaies	guineensis	Rubiaceae		5		
Ficus	sp.	Moraceae	1	6	1	

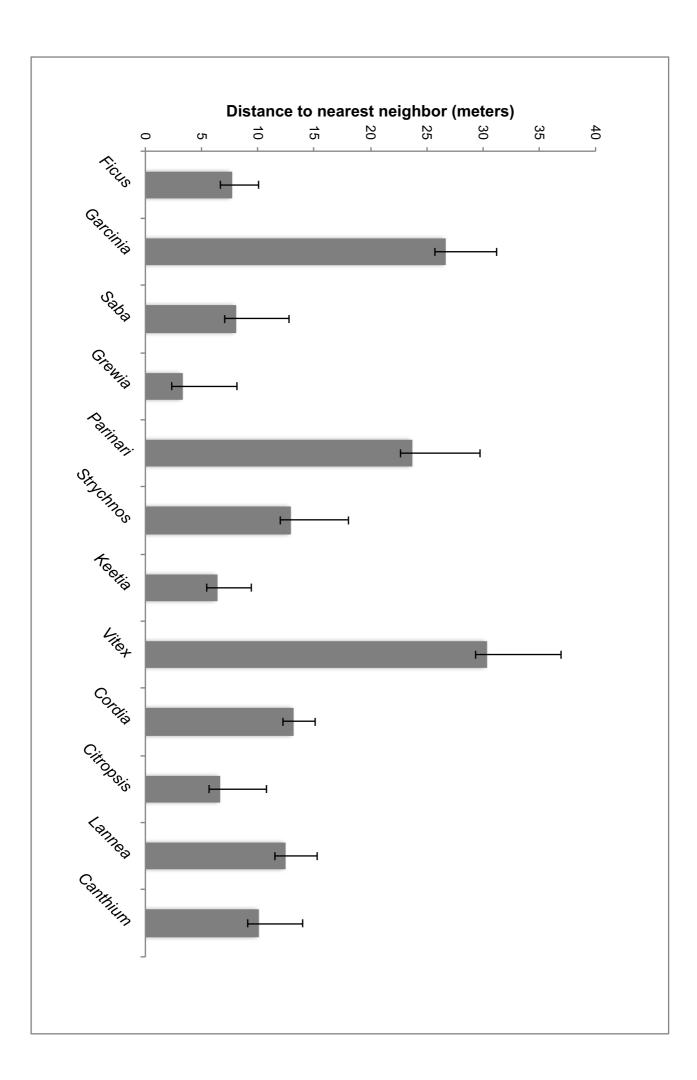
Flacourtia	indica	Flacourtiaceae	6		
Garcinia	sp.	Guttiferae	2	12	5
Glycine	sp.	Fabaceae			11
Grewia	rugosifolia	Tiliaceae	4		
Keetia	gueinzii	Rubiaceae	9		
.andolphia	lucida	Apocynaceae		3	
annea	sp.	Anacardiaceae	12		
Ionanthotaxis	poggei	Annonaceae		4	
Parinari	curatellifolia	Chrysobalanaceae	7	1	
seudospondias	microcarpa	Anacardiaceae		8	8
Iterocarpus	sp.	Fabaceae		9	2
Pyenanthus	angloensis	Rubiaceae			6
Saba	comorensis	Apocynaceae	3	2	3
Sterculia	Tragacantha	Malvaceae			10
Vitex	sp.	Verbenaceae	8	10	

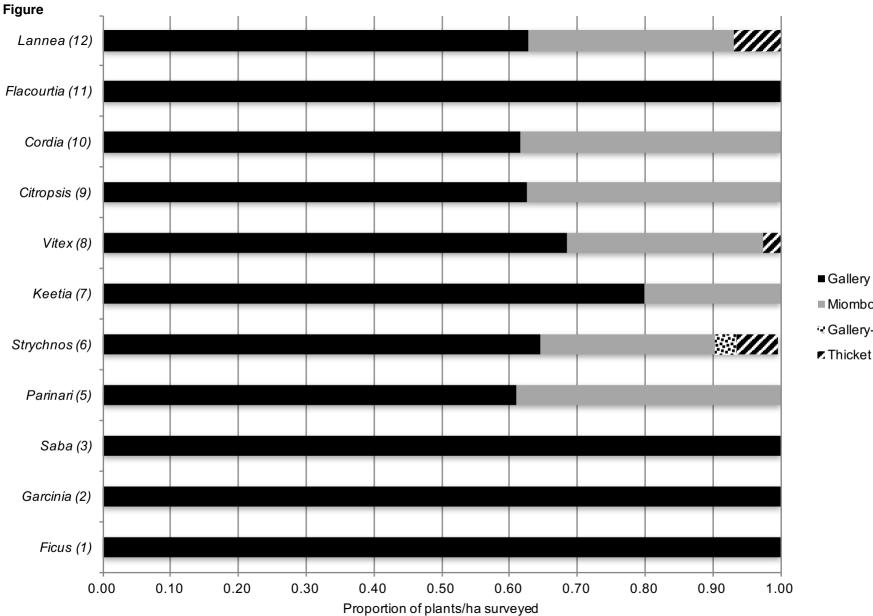












■Miombo

- Gallery-Miombo edge
- Thicket

