

# **Wildlife ecology**

## **Bonobo Apes**

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## Bonobo Apes

### **Classification:**

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Mammalia

**Order:** Primates

**Family:** Hominidae

**Genus:** Pan

**Species:** Pan Paniscus

**Aim:** To analyze the similarities between human and the Bonobo species.

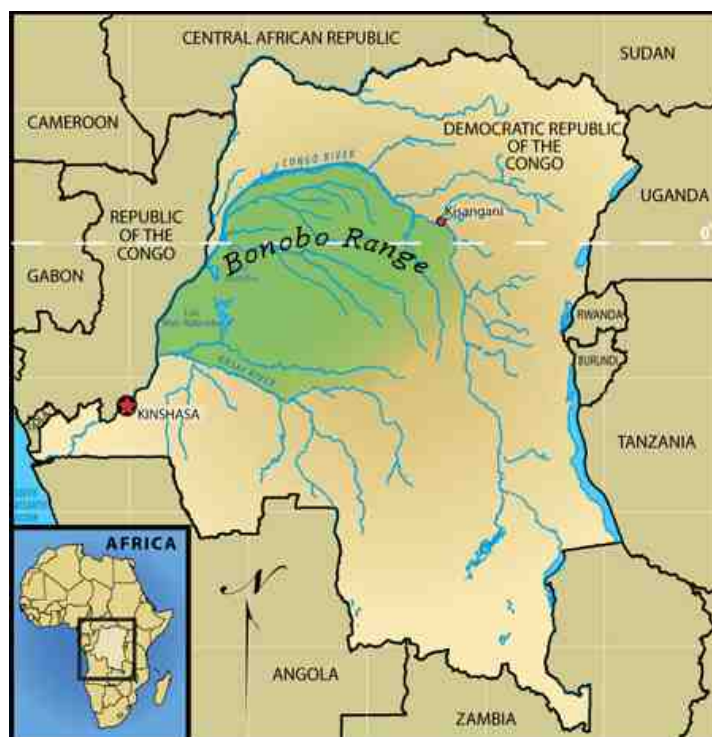


## Introduction:

The Bonobo apes are a pan species found in the Congo region in central Africa they inhabit the area around the Congo River and the Kasai River a tributary of the Congo River, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Bonobo are a population of chimpanzee sometimes knew as the Pygmy Chimpanzee, these have a significant likeness to the human species. The Bonobo species have the ability to communicate with each other, walk upright for long periods of time and to use and make tools.

The Bonobo's were discovered by a German anatomist Ernst Schwarz in 1928.



## Characteristics:

The Bonobo's are known by their long legs, pink lips, dark faces and their tail tuft throughout adulthood. They also have smaller heads to common chimps, wide nostrils, narrow shoulders and a thin neck. The females are smaller than the male but tend to have a larger dominance in society, due to their grouping. A male could overpower a single female but could not take on a group of females. The statuses of the male Bonobo depend on the status of its mother.

## **Similarities to human:**

Studies of the Bonobo's DNA shows that it is infact 98% identical to that of man.

The Bonobo's have the ability of self recognition and self awareness similar to that of humans.

## **Tool making and utilization:**

The Bonobo's have developed the ability to make and use tools just like our early hominid ancestors. For example an experiment carrier out on a 12 year old male Bonobo called Kanzi. The experiment carried out over 2 years reviled that Kanzi could make tools by striking two rocks off each other to form fragments; the fragments have sharp flat edges that can be used as cutting instruments. These fragments that Kanzi makes are the exact same as those used by our inserters 2 and a half million years ago. Kanzi can then use these tools to for cutting like our ancestors once did.

## **Walking Bipedally:**

A study on the Bonobo's in the wild show that the Bonobo's can walk bipedally. They walk bipedally for 25 % of the time in which they spend on the forest floor. The Bonobo stands every similar to our ancestors once did, though they do not stand quite as upright.

## **Communication:**

They can communicate with each other with a high pitched voice, the Bonobo also use gestures to communicate. Studies carried out between 13 Bonobo's and 31 Chimpanzee's, comparing the groups with the same 31 manual gestures and 18 facial/vocal signals, revealed that the Bonobo's showed greater flexibility in this regard than chimpanzees and were the only species in which multimodal communication (combinations of gestures and facial/vocal signals) added to behavioural impact on the recipient. This is a very similar way in which we communicate among each other.

In the Salonga National Park in the Democratic Rep. Of the Congo the Bonobo species are studied and stimulated. Here a female Bonobo called Panbinisha is studied, and has revealed that she has the ability to understand lexigrams (geometric symbols) for places and things. She can also reproduce these symbols to communicate with humans in the institute by using chalk or on the forest floor.

## **Conclusion:**

The Bonobos are very interesting animals which have a striking resemblance to human kind. They stand, walk and communicate with great

likeness to our human ancestors. They also create and use tools which are almost exactly like our ancestors once did.

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