

Project Update: January 2009

From 20 November to 19 December 2008, we marked 87 individuals of *Rousettus madagascariensis* fruit bats at four cave roosts in the District of Anosibe An'Ala, eastern Madagascar. Each bat was individually numbered with a necklace which will allow us to determine bat movement between roosts on the next visit and estimate population size. The distance between roosts ranged from 6 to 28 km. There was no evidence of hunting at two roosts but the others were severely threatened by hunting. Hunters had visited one of the roost a few hours before our arrival and we found dead and injured bats on the cave floor. The hunting has caused the bats to abandon this roost but when we returned again three days later we found that 400 bats had recolonised the roost. This confirms the importance of my study both in learning more about the hunting and its impact on bats.



Left: Capture *Rousettus madagascariensis*. Middle: Dead *Rousettus madagascariensis*. Right: Marked *Rousettus madagascariensis*.