Project Update: October 2016

The first major project activity as for the May 2016 update was the primate study extended to the fifth target forest of the programme, Ndundulu forest, western Udzungwa Mountains, where data collection was successfully completed earlier in the year. Data for this forest have already been analysed and results presented in one manuscript that has recently been submitted to an international journal. More analysis that relates to the entire dataset is ongoing. The second major activity is the camera trapping sampling conducted in the southern, Uzungwa Scarp forest which is a nature reserve. This sampling, that replicates TEAM's protocol conducted in the Udzungwa Mountains National Park since 2009 (with 60 sites deployed for a month through three sequential arrays of 20 camera traps) is ongoing and started at the beginning of August 2016. Currently, the second array has been completed and the third array of 20 camera traps is due to be set in November 2016. The project PI was involved in setting of the first array, where – as expected – evidence of intense illegal poaching was reported, with over 100 snares removed during a survey of 5 days. This effort will therefore represent an important baseline assessment on the status of the mammal community in this newly gazetted nature reserve, which will hopefully be repeated over multiple years. Concomitantly, results will make an excellent comparison with those for the mammal community in the Mwanihana forest, Udzungwa Mountains National Park, where the TEAM Network project operates.

Plans ahead include completion of this sampling and analysis of data. Meanwhile, the final training workshop at national level for park ecologists on camera trapping is now scheduled for January 2017, and planning with Tanzania National Parks is ongoing.

Fieldwork during the survey for setting camera traps in Uzungwa Scarp in August 2016. Photos by Andrew Bowkett.