

## Project Update: October 2014

This month, we have sent the display cabinet along with glass jars, and standing banner posters to the West Bali National Park authority as part of the campaign to raise awareness of importance of savanna ecosystem in west Bali national park in supporting biodiversities and wildlife especially the endemic bird *Leucopsar rotschildii*.

Early this month we also conducted our first fieldwork trip to Baluran National Park in east Java. This first trip objective was to conduct a study on Baluran savanna vegetation especially invasion by *Acacia nilotica*. One of woody species that is known to inhabit savanna ecosystems is *Acacia nilotica*. *Acacia nilotica* is known to be abundant in its native habitat in Africa but has been scantily studied. *Acacia nilotica indica*, was first introduced to Baluran National Park in the late 1960s, when its original purpose was to create firebreaks to prevent spread of fire from Baluran savanna into the adjacent teak forest.

However, today, based on also our observation, *A. nilotica* has spread rapidly and threatens the existence of Baluran savanna as it has been observed to cause changes from open savannas to more closed canopy in some areas. Over-dominance of the woody species *A. nilotica* could shift the savanna into another ecosystem state, i.e. secondary forest. The decrease in savanna areas will affect large mammals that used savanna as their feeding ground and this include the endangered endemic species of Java buffalo (*Bos javanicus*) in Baluran National Park.

