

Project Update: July 2015

For the last several weeks, I have been observing ungulate flight and vigilance along transects, with a total of over 1,110 observations across all study species. I plan to analyse these data to assess habituation and sensitisation to human presence in different areas of the park. We have been driving around slowly, and recording flight initiation distance (the closest distance to which we can approach an animal before it flees from the vehicle) as well as vigilance behaviour. We are also recording information about the habitat, group size, available cover, and other factors that may influence an animal's perception of risk and decision about when to flee.

We also moved our camera traps from Muaredzi to Muanza-Baixo, to examine wildlife activity and distribution around another village in the park. We also spoke to community members and park rangers stationed at each village to better understand human activity and livelihoods in each area, and its possible effects on wildlife species.

This month, I also participated in community outreach, accompanying the EcoHealth department to their mobile clinic, where they provide vaccines and family planning services. I also led tours of the park and buffer zone for African conservation students and professionals, which were visiting the park for the Lost Mountain Symposium.



Waterbuck gather on the floodplain of Lake Urema.



Women and children gather for the park's mobile health clinic in the community of M'sucossa on Mount Gorongosa.



Participants of the Lost Mountain Symposium watch the sun set at Bua Maria on the Pungue River.