

## **Project Update: September 2010**

The survey team arrived to Mkomazi National Park on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2010 and commenced setting cameras on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, a few months later than anticipated due to reasons beyond our control. The team was cordially welcome by Mkomazi park officials and to date they have finished setting all 60 cameras. The current plan is to move all cameras to a different location within the park after 21 days in order to increase the chances of trapping more species. This time of the year, the park is generally dry and animals are concentrated in shady areas during the day and move across early in the morning and at night. Whilst waiting for 2 weeks before they can visit each camera location to replace batteries and films (where appropriate), the team is now scheduled to visit communities surrounding the park to distribute leaflets and posters in order raise conservation awareness of the surrounding communities. The assumption here is that if communities are well engaged in conservation then the chances of their participation in conservation are likely to increase and hence positively affect conservation. This activity, along with questionnaire surveys is ongoing to the end of the surveys. Subsequent to this, the team is further scheduled to train park officials on the use of camera trap technique since this is a relatively new method in the country. The PI is further investigating possibilities of using Sherman's traps along with the ongoing camera traps in a few selected areas to maximise chances of trapping more small mammal species but this depends on the availability of the traps at TAWIRI (though this method is not included in the original proposal). It is our hope that this survey will reveal the most cryptic and nocturnal species that have not been thought to exist in this area before and hence enhance their conservation.



