

Project Update: November 2008

The purpose of this project is to identify fruit bats species occurring in the Dja reserve (Southern Cameroon) and evaluate their role in fundamental ecological processes such as seed dispersal. This report discusses the progress I have made during the first six months of my study.

Activities and accomplishments

Capture, morphometric measurements, sex, age, reproductive assessment

Mist nets were mostly placed across or along rivers, creeks or other open water bodies, but also in front of caves or across presumed fly-ways in forest habitats.

Overall species composition of recorded bat species reflects the primary rainforest characterizing the Dja reserve.

Table 1. Species composition and abundance

Species	Number of ind
Pteropodidae	
<i>Eidolon helvum</i>	18
<i>Epomops franqueti</i>	15
<i>Hypsignathus monstrosus</i>	3
<i>Myonycteris torquata</i>	26
<i>Scotonycteris zenkeri</i>	4
<i>Roussetus aegyptiacus</i>	9
<i>Epomops buettikoferi</i>	1
Macroglossinae	
<i>Megaloglossus woermanni</i>	46
Hipposideridae	
<i>Hyposideros cyclops</i>	1
<i>Hyposideros caffer</i>	4
<i>Hyposideros ruber</i>	3
<i>Hipposideros beatus</i>	2
<i>Hipposideros fuliginosus</i>	1
<i>Hipposideros gigas</i>	6
Nycteridae	
<i>Nycteris arge</i>	1
<i>Nycteris grandis</i>	1
<i>Nycteris major</i>	1
<i>Nycteris hispida</i>	3
Vespertilionidae	
<i>Glauconycteris argentatus</i>	2
<i>Myotis bocagii</i>	1
<i>Pipistrellus nanulus</i>	1
<i>Pipistrellus nanus</i>	1
Molossidae	
<i>Tadarida thersites</i>	2
Rhinolophidae	
<i>Rhinolophus alcyone</i>	3
<i>Rhinolophus landeri</i>	1
Emballonuridae	

taphozous peli	1
Total	157
Net-night	42

In total, 157 bats of 26 species belonging to 8 families were captured (Tab. 1). Three species encountered during this study are of special interest.

-*Epomops buettikoferi*: This is the first record of this species in Cameroon. The distribution range of this species was restricted to Guinea from Nigeria (Hayman, 1971; Bergams, 1988, Mickleburgh & al, 1992; IUCN, 2008). This record improves the current knowledge of the species' distribution in an essential way. The individual was caught in mist net in Nsimalen; West of the Dja reserve (33N0225059, UTM: 0358006). The misidentification of *E buettikoferi* is improbable because of its third interdental palatal ridge normally divided in centre.

- *Megaloglossus woermanni*: This obligate nectivorous bat species in Africa were described as rare in Cameroon (Vivien, 1991). However this species have the highest number of individuals per species (46). Little is known about its roosting behavior, and further studies are needed into the distribution and natural history of this species (IUCN, 2008)

-*Nycteris major*: This species appears to be an extremely rare species (IUCN, 2008) and it is ranked as "data deficient» by the international redlist (IUCN, 2008).

Seed collection

- Fecal collection from mist netted individuals
- Fecal collection under day roost and feeding using plastic sheets
- Day and night fecal collection along transect at two open sites to compare seed dispersal by bats and others flying vertebrates.

Diurnal and nocturnal observations

During this period, I have spent 25 days for observations at feeding and day roosts. These observations allow me to discover 12 sites with bats colonies (4 caves & 8 trees).We will realize a GPS mapping of these sites at the end of the study

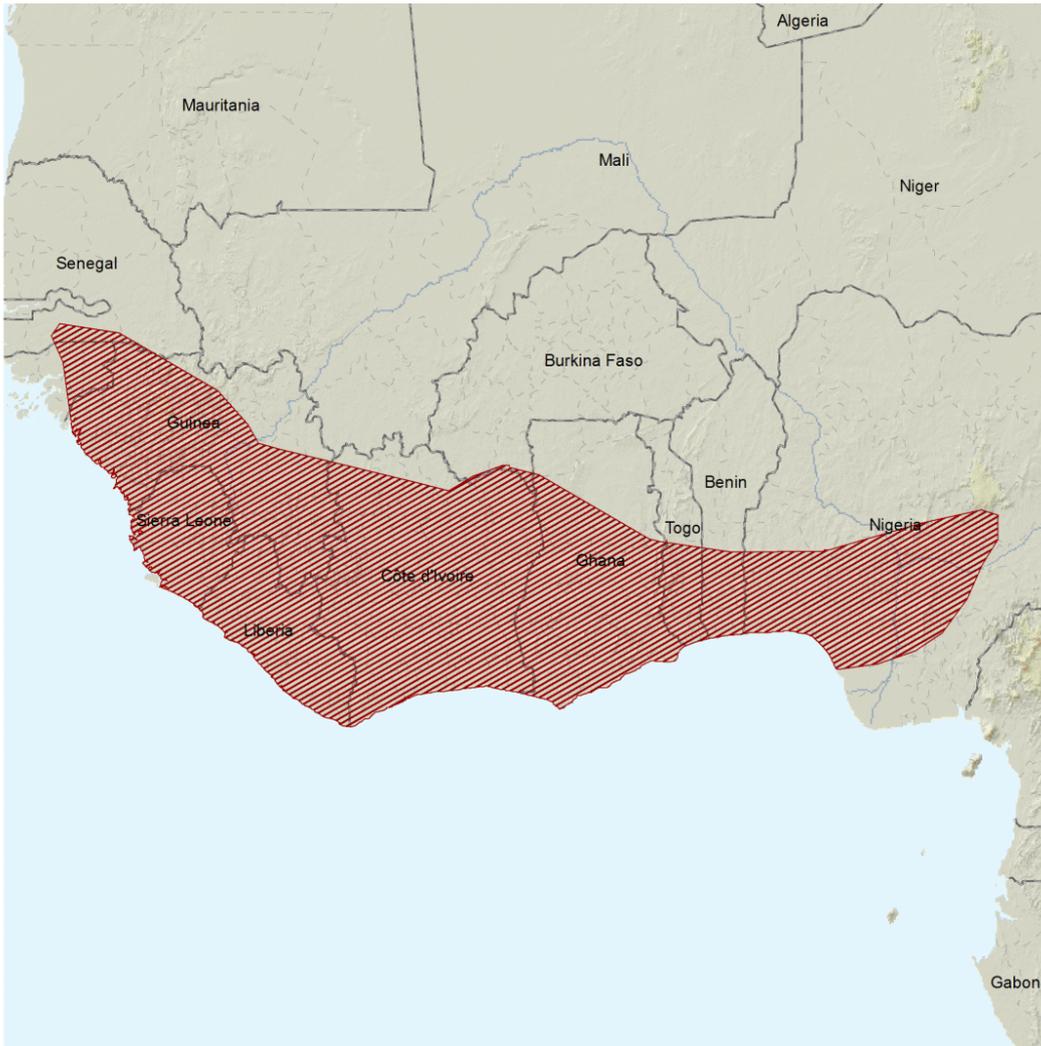
Interviews

Parallel to the bat survey, local people were interviewed to assess the exploitation of bats as bushmeat, especially in their day roosts, as well as their cultural significance. These interviews revealed a low exploitation level of bats for bush-meat in and around Dja reserve.

Two ecogards (Assomo Mathurin & Mvodo gervais) working in the Dja reserve were also trained in capture techniques and identification of species

Expected work to be carried out over the next six month period

- Inventory
- Diurnal and nocturnal observations
- Fecal collection
- Fecal analysis
- Colony sizes counting in roosts



Epomops buettikoferi

range type

-  native (resident)
-  native (breeding)
-  native (non breeding)
-  reintroduced
-  introduced
-  origin uncertain
-  possibly extinct
-  extinct

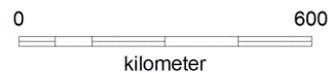
-  national boundaries
-  subnational boundaries
-  lakes, rivers, canals
-  salt pans, intermittent rivers

data source:
IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)



azimuthal equal area central point: 0°, 0°

map created 10/01/2008





Above: *Epomops buettikoferi*. Below: *Epomops franqueti*.

