

Project Update: June 2017

Pre-field developments

The research team has managed to meet Mr Anthony Mapaura, a senior researcher and botanist based at the National Herbarium to get guidance on historically recorded sites and official statistics of currently recorded wild populations from archived documents and past research done by the National Herbarium and Botanic Gardens. The discussions helped us to come up with a pre-field conservation assessment and provided us with links to other orchid researchers who mainly liaise and share their research discoveries, plant as well as ethno-botanical studies with the national herbaria. More so the discussions have helped us to have a proper mapping of the remaining sites with the species, conduct a preliminary conservation assessment and make other arrangements for fieldwork.

Interviews with Mr A. Mapaura



The research team managed to visit a number of private plant gardens (propagation areas) and sellers of plants to: (1) get as much information as we could on the *Aeranthus Africana* plant species; (2) understand their source markets for the plants they sell, their links with orchid propagators; and (3) to possibly uncover the nature underground links with wild poachers. The research team also managed to attend, "The Aloe, Orchid, Cactus and Succulent society of Zimbabwe" plant sale day. This also helped the team to meet with orchid researchers and propagators of Orchid so as to glean more information surrounding the conservation status of this rare and fast going extinct *Aeranthus Africana* plant species.

Random photos at the Plant Sale Day in Harare





