

Project Update: August 2018

The fieldwork for the Rufford project kicked off mid-July 2018 and since then we have been busy sampling in different forests in southwest Ethiopia. The first place we visited was Sele-Nono where we assessed amphibian diversity and, in collaboration with the EBI (Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute), collected samples of unknown amphibians. After 3 days, we moved to Gura-Ferda forest, close to South Sudan. Here, several places within the forest were visited and vertebrate biodiversity was monitored. Camera traps were put up at wildlife trails (Fig.1) or near water sources and birds were sampled throughout. Overall, 20 camera traps were being placed in the larger forest landscape.

Fig 1: Camera traps are being set up in Gura-Ferda forest. Here, it was installed near a wildlife track at approx. 2050 m. asl. ©Ruben Foquet



Amphibians were sampled by call and active surveying whereas reptiles were assessed only opportunistically. The rains were delayed though still many amphibians were

active. Many species found are endemic to Ethiopia and several are considered “threatened with extinction” and therefore on the IUCN Red List So far, we discovered 17 amphibian species, 145 bird species and 14 large mammal species. One of them is the endemic and enigmatic *Paracassina obscura*, which was found in a variety of habitats (Fig. 2).



Fig 2: *Paracassina obscura*. ©Matthias De Beenhouwer