

Project Update: June 2023

Executive Summary:

This project aimed to promote bird and biodiversity conservation in the Tumu and environs, a farming area. The overarching goal of the project is to transform farmers into partners in conservation. The project involved various activities conducted over a period of several months (still ongoing). These activities included community engagement, social surveys, practical farm planning, bird census, tree planting, pesticide handling workshops, conservation education and media conservation education (radio broadcast). So far, the project successfully achieved many aspects of its objectives of raising awareness about the importance of bird and biodiversity conservation, implementing wildlife-friendly farming practices, creating important partnerships and generating data for analysis and publication.

- We have been able to visit the site to engage with the community, starting from stakeholder mapping and bringing together the concerned groups. We visited community elders to inform them and seek consent. Preliminary survey and Finalize survey design (1st week of February 2021).
- We carried out more reconnaissance survey of the communities around the Tumu community.
- We administered a questionnaire to assess the people's knowledge, perceptions and attitude towards conservation.
- We carried out conservation education.
- We conducted radio awareness for state-wide reach which recorded good success. We partnered with the Leventis Foundation, Nigeria and the Wacot agro company.



Fieldwork

We have been able to conduct farmland biodiversity census. Specifically, farmland birds and butterfly sampling were carried out.

Bird Survey: The Nigerian Bird Atlas Protocol was utilised for bird survey, relying on pentads but using farm plots as points for counting birds seen and heard.

Butterfly sampling: We used butterfly bait traps to sample butterflies at farmlands. We used banana and palm wine as bait. We also carried out pollard walk to identify and count Butterflies seen. Pollard walk is the most widely used method of butterfly sampling which consists of repeated transect counts of adult butterflies conducted under specific sampling conditions. Described by Ernie Pollard in 1977. Pollard walks entails counting butterflies along transects counts within 25 M on the right, left and above your head.

Vegetation studies: We counted trees on farms and identified the species.

Brief summary of various lineup of activities that have been achieved are as follows:

- **Activity: Meeting with Community Leaders to Commence Study**
Meetings were held with community leaders and security agencies to inform them about the project's readiness to commence. The purpose of these meetings was to seek permission and support for the project. In line with the Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC), this was to ensure community support that will ensure sustainability of impact of the project.



- Activity: Preliminary Survey and Finalise Survey Design

We conducted a preliminary survey in the communities surrounding. Additionally, the survey helped in adapting the experimental design to suit the field conditions.

- Activity: Orientation Agroecology Lectures for New Trainees

Orientation agroecology lectures were conducted for new trainees. The lectures focused on introducing the concept of agroecology and highlighting the importance of birds and biodiversity in the environment.

In addition to outdoor interactions, we organized a movie night where conservation education message was incorporated, and the message was successfully passed.



- Activity: Social Surveys

Social surveys were carried out to assess public perceptions of bird and biodiversity conservation. The surveys aimed to understand the local community's awareness of the importance of conserving species, the roles played by trees, and the interaction of fauna within the ecosystem. We used a semi structured questionnaire and met the local people on farms and others in the market and shops. We read out the questions and translated to local language then filled in the answers in English.

- Activity: Practical Farm activities, considering Wildlife-Friendly farm Environment

Practical farm sessions were undertaken to emphasise the importance of incorporation of wildlife-friendly practices using ecosystem services provided by biodiversity as a tool in accordance with Bako (2021).

Trainees and local community members were engaged in developing strategies that allowed for biodiversity-friendly farming. We engaged with them in terms of safety, awareness of their environment.



- Ecological survey

We engaged in bird watching activities of identifying bird species seen and heard. The locals helped to provide the local names they call the sighted and pointed bird species. This generated a wonderful conversation.



- Radio environmental conservation awareness

We conducted radio conservation education reaching the listeners within the Gombe State and beyond. This was translated into local language to reach people without western education and those in remote villages.

- Activity: Tree Planting Campaign/Erosion Control and Reclamation

We engaged in tree planting. Indigenous tree seedlings were purchased and planted, along with shrubs and cover crops, to help reclaim the lands and promote erosion control. Very important is that we partnered with the Gombe State government Ministry of environment and are now planting 1,000,000 trees within the state annually. This began in 2022.

- Other things ongoing

- We are analysing the data.
- Organising pictures of birds for production of handbook of common birds of Tumu
- We shall repeat conservation education and further engage in tree planting campaigns in collaboration with the Gombe state government.

Table 1: Butterfly species recorded.

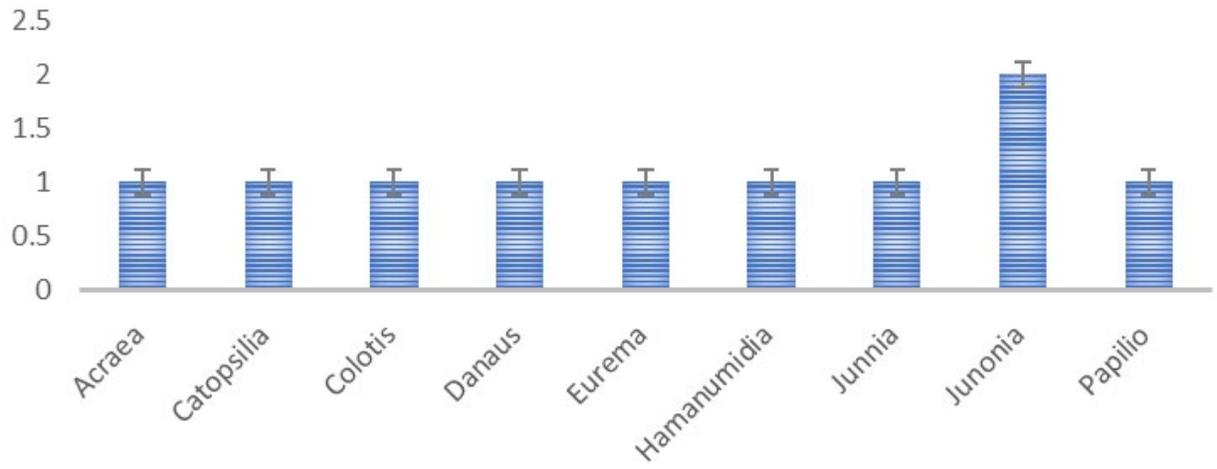
Genus	Species	Note
<i>Junonia</i>	<i>chorimene</i>	Two individuals seen close to a running water body
<i>Eurema</i>	<i>hecabe</i>	Only an individual seen at the edge of a farm
<i>Hamanumidia</i>	<i>daedalus</i>	Occur in good number both in farms and along hedgerows
<i>Acraea</i>	<i>serena</i>	Occur in good number both in farms and along hedgerows
<i>Danaus</i>	<i>chrysis</i>	Found at the edges of farmlands
<i>Junonia</i>	<i>terea</i>	Only an individual seen basking in the sun
<i>Junonia</i>	<i>chorimene</i>	few individuals seen around the streams
<i>Colotis</i>	<i>euipe</i>	An individual was observed along the hedgerow
<i>Catopsilia</i>	<i>florella</i>	Lots of individuals seen flying around
<i>Papilio</i>	<i>demodocus</i>	Few individuals seen in the main compound

Impact so far

One of the biggest impacts of this project for me so far that I don't take for granted is the way some local people now contact me to say they have sighted a certain bird and showing me pictures of bird carcasses found around farmlands. This means to me that the partnership with farmers has been built already as they are showing concerns. These are people I realised that before our contact, have never heard that birds and biodiversity need protection and it was purely a matter of lack of awareness and not willingness or interest.

Count of Genus

COUNT OF GENUS



Genus ▼