

## Final Evaluation Report

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We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF format**. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

**Please DO NOT fill in and submit this form until the project has been completed.**

Complete the form in English. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to [jane@rufford.org](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

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| Your Details               |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Full Name</b>           | Kevin Acha Eyos,  |
| <b>Project Title</b>       | Populations, distribution, and habitat utilization of the endangered Mount Kupe Bush-shrike and other birds of conservation concern on the Obudu Plateau, Nigeria |
| <b>Application ID</b>      | 40075-1   |
| <b>Date of this Report</b> | 23/11/2025  |

1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

| Objective  | Not achieved | Partially achieved | Fully achieved | Comments  |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------|---|
| Assessing the population of Mount Kupe Bushshrike and other birds of conservation concern on the Obudu Plateau |              |                    |                | <p>To achieve this objective, we surveyed for <i>Chlorophoneus kupeensis</i> and other bird species of global conservation concerns, such as the <i>Malaconotus gladiator</i>, <i>Kupeornis gilberti</i>, <i>Ploceus bannermani</i>, and <i>Picathartes oreas</i> in 10 forest patches with the potential to host <i>C. Kupeensis</i>, <i>M. gladiator</i>, <i>K. gilberti</i>, <i>P. bannermani</i>, and <i>P. oreas</i> on the Obudu Plateau and the Anaperange/Busi forest extension of the Cross River National Park, Okwangwo Division.</p> <p>Twenty-three (23) line transects were laid in 10 of the selected forests, measuring 28.073km and were visited between 4th August 2023 and 4 April 2024.</p> <p>Specifically, the team laid 10 transects in the CRNP Okwangwo Division, utilising existing patrol trails, 1 at Telephone Forest, also known as Onimba Forest, 1 in Megbi, Mete, Okpazange Women Woodlot Reserve (Retest) Forest, and Okpazange Community Forest. While two each were placed at IzulVacha, Emba, and Old Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR), Figure 3. The transects were subdivided into sections at every two hundred (200m) intervals using existing surveillance and patrol trails in Becheve Nature Reserve (Old BNR, Grotto, Emba, and Izul-Vacha), and Anape Range (Busi Forest Extension) of the Cross River National Park (Okwangwo Division).</p> |

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|  |  |  | <p>The transects were visited between 6:30hrs and 12:00hrs and 3:00 pm - 6:30 pm. In all, the team recorded a total of 184 individuals of both Mount Kupe Bushshrike.</p> <p>(<i>Chlorophoneus kupeensis</i>) and other birds of conservation concern (White-throated Mountain Babbler (<i>Kupeornis gilberti</i>), Bannerman's Weaver (<i>Ploceus bannermani</i>), grey-necked rockfowl (<i>Picathartes oreas</i>), and yellow-casqued hornbill as heard and seen within a 25m radius from the observer's standpoint and 50m in an open grassland area.</p> <p>Out of the 184 individuals of the targeted bird species recorded between August, September, October, November 2023 and March to April 2024, 77 individuals of <i>P. bannermani</i> were recorded in (CRNP, Emba, Old BNR Grotto, Izul-Vacha, Opazange, Onimba, Women's Woodlot Reserve, and Megbi forest), 84 individuals of <i>K. gilberti</i> were recorded in Emba, Old BNR and CRNP, 7 individuals of <i>C. Kupeepsis</i> were recorded during the fourth visit and 9 individuals during the fifth (last) visit making it a total 16 individuals of <i>C. kupeensis</i> recorded at Anape Range CRNP Okwangwo Division interestingly, <i>C. kupeensis</i> were recorded only in CRNP. Our team recorded the targeted species in 9 out of the 10 forest patches surveyed, with only Mete Forest where the team did not record any targeted species. See Figures 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 of the targeted species of conservation concern and their breeding activities photographed during our field survey. Interestingly, throughout this survey period, <i>M. gladiator</i> was not heard or seen in any</p> |
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|  |  |  | <p>of the surveyed forest patches during this period.</p> <p>Also, during the first visit to the sites for the field observations between July and August 2023, the team observed active nest building of <i>P. bannermani</i> at the Emba forest. The nest was monitored, and it was observed that the <i>P. Bannermani</i> nest at Emba were abandoned after a few days Figures 11 and 12. The team also identified four (4) breeding sites of <i>P. oreas</i> with 6 active nests building during the team's first visit to the CRNP. Located at this breeding site (Lat. 06.25'40N and long. 009.18'51E) (see Figure 13).</p> <p>To ascertain the status of the nest at the four breeding sites, the team utilized a tripod and attached a stick to the three-foot tripod to extend its length. A Tecno Spark 5 Pro Android device was then attached to the Tripod phone sitting to ascertain whether the nest had checks or eggs in it, and it was observed that there were no eggs or chicks in the nest during the first visit. Interestingly, during the second visit to CRNP Anape Range, in September, we also observed that the nest at the breeding site one (PON01) had two chicks in it.</p> <p>Unfortunately, during the third visit to the same site, the team observed that the <i>P. oreas</i> nests at breeding site 1 (PON01 and PON02) were destroyed. A close observation of the surroundings of the nest, the team observed human footprints around the breeding site, and it was concluded that the nest was probably destroyed by a poacher while trying to collect the chick from the nest.</p> |
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|  |  |  | <p>Furthermore, during a repeat visit on 17/09/2023 to breeding site 2 (two), the team observed that the PON03 nest had two (2) eggs in it, while site 4 (PON04) had one (1) egg in it, and 3 (three) adults were also observed flew out of the nest (cave).</p> <p>Interestingly, during the team's third visit, on the 4th October 2023, the team observed that <i>P. oreas</i> nest 3 (PON03) had two chicks in it, with the chicks being fed by the parents, while nest 4 (PON04) and nest 5 (PON05) had 2 eggs each.</p> <p>At the Old Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR) on the 2nd October 2023, the team identified an old Bannerman's weaver (BW) nest (BNR BW001) with faeces, indicating that the checks had fled. Also, an abandoned and considered an accidental Bannerman's Weaver nest (BNRBW002) at Old BNR was sighted. At Emba Forest Reserve (EF), two abandoned <i>P. bannamani</i> were observed, and EFBW003, EFBW004 and EFBW005 were observed to be a newly completed nest and were sighted on EF transect 1, section 1. Despite the team visits to the selected sites during the team's field observation survey, first, second and third visits to the 10 selected forest patches without any records of <i>Chlorophoneus kupeensis</i> and <i>Malaconotus gladiator</i>, the team adopted and introduced the playback method on the 5th November 2023 using the <i>C. kupeensis</i> calls record from the zAfrica Bird Sounds. The call of <i>C. kupeensis</i> was played at every 200m section of the trails for 60 seconds using an MP3 speaker, model: LP-V6, Input</p> |
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|   |  |  | <p>Voltage: DC5V 1A, Output power: 8wx2 with Battery Capacity: 1500mAh. Interestingly, <i>C. kupeensis</i> responded, and we recorded the first pair of <i>C. kupeensis</i> at section 1 of the Metu Waterhead transect at 7:14 hours of the Busi Extension Forest and the Anape range of the CRNP Okwangwo Division. Overall, the team recorded a total of 7 individuals of <i>C. kupeensis</i> during the fourth visit as a result of the introduction of the playback. The first pair were sighted on the 7th November 2023 at Lat. 06°27'27.5N and Long. 009°18'16.0E at 952m a.s.l. while 3 individuals were recorded at the Atul waterhead transect. The first two individuals sighted were observed to be confronted by a Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher, <i>Terpsiphone rufiventer</i>, while responding to the playback. The pair were photographed. See Figure 6. In total, the team recorded 8 individuals of <i>C. kupeensis</i> at the CRNP Atul water head transect, 4 on the Maché transect, 2 on the Ogbono/Ernest transect and 2 on the Pear tree and Leventis transect, all around the Anape range and Busi forest extension of Cross River National Park, Okwangwo Division.</p> |
| <p>Assessing habitat utilisation of <i>C. kupeensis</i> and other birds of conservation concern on the Obudu Plateau.</p> |  |  | <p>We also collected vegetation parameters such as tree type, Number of trees, tree height, perching height, and canopy cover at points where <i>C. kupeensis</i>, and other birds of conservation concerns (<i>M. gladiator</i>, <i>K. gilberti</i>, <i>P. bannermani</i>, and <i>P. Oreas</i>) were sighted or heard. The team observed that <i>C. kupeensis</i>, was only sighted and heard in pristine forest areas with taller trees in steep valleys, and they were observed seen</p>  |

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|  |  |  | <p>and heard utilizing the middle open canopy. Interestingly, the species was observed to utilise gentle ascending branches of very tall trees with mosses and epiphytes, while skipping and hopping up and down as they responded to the playback and searching for worms and insects in the branches by pulling off the mosses while chasing one another as they responded to the playback in 60-second to 180 intervals before disappearing into the thicket.</p> <p>The White-Throated Mountain Babbler (<i>K. gilberti</i>) shares a similar habit with <i>C. kupeensis</i>. However, <i>K. gilberti</i> was observed in most cases to forage higher canopies, degraded forest areas and in closed vegetation than <i>C. kupeensis</i> in Cross River National Park, while at the Becheve Nature Reserve and Emba forest, they were observed to be foraging in habitats with thick understory and forage as low as 5m above the forest floor. Our survey also showed that WTMB were recorded more in CRNP than in any other survey sites.</p> <p>While <i>P. Oreas</i> was observed only in the CRNP Okwangwo Division, where the species was observed on the forest floor, steep slope caves and rocks, where their nest was sighted. The sites were surrounded by very tall trees in areas difficult to access by humans.</p> <p><i>P. bannermani</i> was observed mostly in degraded forest and most especially utilising the forest edge and shrubs during nest building, with an average</p> |
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|  |  |  |  | nest height of 6m above the ground floor.   |
| Raising awareness among local people and schools |  |  |  | <p>We held three joint meetings with the 6 host communities (Kigol, Anape, Okpazange, Okwamu, Keji-uku and Keyi), all in Obudu Plateau. These are the closest communities to the surveyed forest patches and the Anape range of the Cross River National Park, Okwangwo Division, where there have been previous reports and records of <i>C. kupeensis</i> and other birds of conservation concern. T-shirts, branded notebooks, and jotters were presented to His Royal Highness Chief (Onum) Ichile, S. Ozinga, and other community leaders during community engagement meetings. See Figures 1A and 1B. We visited a total of six (6) schools, three (3) secondary and three (3) primary schools (Community Secondary School, Cattle Ranch, Brilliant Academy, Okpazange Village, Godly International Primary and Secondary, Kegol Village, Government Primary School Cattle Ranch, Government Primary School Anape, Government Primary School Old Ikwette), to create awareness on bird conservation and identification. Figure 14 -17. Advocating for the monitoring and conservation of forest patches on the Obudu Plateau. We also trained pupils and students on basic external features of birds and the identification of birds of global conservation concern on the Obudu Plateau, as well as how to identify birds using mobile field guides such as the Birds of Africa and Merlin Bird ID and report sightings using Birdlasser and BirdPlus</p> |

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|  |  |  | <p>mobile applications. We reached out to a total of 248 students and pupils in all the schools.</p> <p>The train-the-trainer workshop, which lasted for a week (5 days), saw 38 participants taking part in the training. The participants for a week-long training were drawn from Anape, Okpazange, Kigol, Keyi, Okwamu, Keji-Uku, and Apah-Ajili on the Obudu plateau. Those trained included 7 farmers, 7 grazers, 7 hunters, 7 forest management committee (FMC) Members, 3 bird club members from Obudu Ranch Bird Club, 3 community eco-guards from Becheve Nature Reserve, 2 Rangers from the Cross River National Park, and 2 field assistants, see figure 16.</p> <p>We are finalising the draft of the manuscript, which will be sent out for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The findings and posters will be presented in the Nigeria Bird Atlas project's monthly webinar and conferences.</p> |
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**2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

- a) We establish the current distribution of Mount Kupe Bushshrike on the Obudu Plateau and identify breeding sites of two threatened species (Bannerman's Weaver and Grey-headed Rockfowl). From our survey, we found that the Mount Kupe Bushshrike occurred only in the Anape Range (Bushi Forest extension) of the Cross River National Park (Okwangwo Division). The Greenbreasted Bushshrike was not recorded in any of the 10 sites surveyed.
- b) Also, during this project, we identified new sites of Mount Kupe Bushshrike and established the preferred habitat as C. Kupeensis was only sighted and heard in pristine forest with tall trees of about 20m and above, steep valleys, and open understory. interestingly, no repeat record of Mount Bushshrike in previously

reported sites recorded by Cox et al, 2011, and Eyos et al, 2023 at the Anape Range of the CRNP Okwamgwo Division .

- c) Our project has been able to engage 6 local community leaders and over 200 pupils and students from 6 schools and successfully ignite their interest in bird conservation, as well as create public awareness on the identification of threatened bird species and monitoring. Another project outcomes is building the capacity 38 locals (farmer, grazers, hunters) of igniting their passion for bird conservation and their habitat, which resulted in the formation and inauguration of the 6 pioneer executives of the Becheve Biodiversity Monitoring Group (BBMG) made up of local youths, eco-guards, hunters and sgrazers, who were trainees of our capacity building training on monitoring of threatening bird species on the Obudu plateau with Julius Keji the Pioneer president. See figure 222.

### **3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

The major unforeseen difficulty that arose during the project was the weather. As part of the project was carried out during the peak of the wet season, we were forced to delay the project by a week and some days. Another difficulty was the unavailability of rangers due to some conflict between the Cross-National Park Rangers and the Anape community, which resulted in the delay of the final visit to the Anape range of the CRNP. However, this was resolved after separate meetings between our team and the Chief and youth leader of the Anape community and another meeting with the sector officer of the Cross River National Park, and we were granted access to the park.

### **4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.**

Local communities were involved in the planning of the fieldwork, both the preliminary and actual observational survey:

1. The field assistants, who are all from the local communities were involved in the planning of both the preliminary and the actual field observation as well as contributed to data collecting throughout the project. They were also involved the designing and planning of the school visitation, and capacity training workshop.
2. Community members (farmers, herders or grazers, forest management committee members (FMC), and hunters) who are all from the local communities on the Obudu Plateau, were trained on identification of the target threatened bird species, using birds of Africa, Merlin ID Mobile application and data collection using the Birdlaser and Birdplus mobile Applications. The Becheve Biodiversity monitoring group (BBMG), a monitoring group formed with the mandate to carry out monthly monitoring activities. the group is made up both male and female all from the local communities.

3. Local support groups, community based organization such as the Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR), Obudu Ranch Bird Club (OBC), Kindness to Earth Friends Initiative (KEFI), Obudu Conservation Education Centre (OCC) and the Becheve Biodiversity Monitoring Group (BBMG) all headed by locals from the 8 communities on Obudu Plateau, and staff of Cross River National Park, all provided technical support and granting our team access to community reserve areas that served as nature classrooms during the capacity training as well data collection and survey sites.

#### **5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Yes, the team plans to seek for more funding to expand the scope of the project future to cover the other forest patches in Obudu plateau and CRNP that were not covered during this first phase of the project and expand the scope to the Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary region, where the Mount Kupe Bush-shrike has been recorded once by Cox et al (2011) at a lower altitude and the Sankwala Mountains, that share similar vegetation and weather characteristics with Obudu Plateau. We also hope to study the breeding ecology of this species (M. Kupe Bushshrike).

We intend to adopt multiple survey methods, such as Bioacoustics (Song Meter Micro 2, playback, mist net, and trail cameras in the near future to collect data on real time distribution and threats, as well as understand the species breeding season and ecology while collecting specimens for laboratory tests, to understand if a subspecies exists within the two sites and to ascertain if there is any sort of seasonal movement by the species.

We also plan to continue to engage buffer zone community members through the Becheve Biodiversity Monitoring Group (BBMG) in reaching out to farmers, hunters, grazers and other stakeholders and schools in the region. We plan to conduct a threat assessment and alternative livelihood assessment among these groups and provide sustainable livelihood options to them while also creating needed awareness. Already, some farmers, grazers and hunters are members of the Becheve Biodiversity Monitoring Group (BBMG), and we will continue to build their capacity on species identification and monitoring.

#### **6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?**

We plan to share the results of this project through presentations of the results and posters in conferences and webinars, such as the Nigeria Bird Atlas project's monthly webinar, as well as publication of these results in a high impact peer review journal. We also plan to share report of our projects (both hardcopies, softcopies and links) with Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR), A. P. Leventis Ornithological Research institute (APLORI), National Park service (NPS) and Cross river National Park (CRNP), Nigeria conservation Foundation (NCF), Obudu Conservation Education Centre (OCC), Obudu Mountain Resort (OMR), Obudu Cattle Ranch Community and Anape Community.

**7. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

The next step, looking ahead, is to continue to engage and support the Becheve Biodiversity Monitoring Group (BBMG) form during the training to continue to gather data on the endangered species, engaging other bird enthusiasts by organising field/birdwatching expeditions. Conduct a repeat survey using Bioacoustics and mist netting survey in Sankwala Mountain, Cross River National Park and Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, where the species has also been reported once. As well as conduct an assessment on the sustainable alternative livelihood options for local communities that will stop or reduce the observed threats noticed during this project, such as Egg and chick harvesting, bush burning/forest fire, forest grazing, and unsustainable expansion of cocoa/banana farms, threatening the survival of this species in communities where they have been reported.

**8. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

The Rufford Foundation logo was used in all the invitation letters served to community leaders and participants; T-shirts, branded notebooks, jotters, and banners were used for the school's visitation, outreach and training workshop.

**9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.**

1. **Kevin Acha Eyos:** Team leader (Facilitated community entry, led field observation survey, led school visitation, and training of participants during the train the trainers' workshop and data analysis and preparation of final report)
2. **Joseph Ibrahim Izang:** Team member, Lead Preparation of final report, manuscript and Data analysis and reporting.
3. **Obah, Kingsley:** Field assistant/Community Liaison assisted in community entry, field survey and data collection
4. **Keji, Julius:** assisted with field observation and data collection.
5. **Esale, Joseph:** Ranger and Field assistant
6. **Ayam, Ferdinand:** Porter/Local guide
7. **Achua, Robertson:** Porter/Local guide
8. **Awaligbe, Ronald:** Porter
9. **Endos:** porter
10. **Okoteh, Sunday:** Local Guide
11. **Samuel Anjuwe:** porter
12. **Oscar:** Porter

**10. Any other comments?**

We deeply appreciate the Rufford Foundation for the unreserved support throughout the different aspects of this project and their invaluable belief in the

project, our team and our ability to achieve this result. We are deeply grateful to the National Park Service for granting us access to the Cross River National Park (Okwangwo Division) and the knowledgeable and energetic rangers who guided us throughout the field survey duration at the park. The support and permission of the host communities, who, through their leaders, allowed us to assess their community forest and provided us with valuable local knowledge and the assistance we needed, is highly acknowledged. We are also grateful to the school's management for their cooperation and permission to engage with their students and teachers and use their facilities to create the needed awareness among their pupils, students and teachers. Indeed, we are deeply grateful to Obudu Conservation Education Centre (OCC) for granting access to its facility for free for the one-week training. Many thanks to the Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR) and the Nigeria Conservation Foundation (NCF) for granting us access to the Becheve Nature Reserve during the field survey and for practical training, as well as the host communities for allowing the team access to their community forest. and A. P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), Jos, for their technical support and guidance during the field survey.

**Photos:**



**Figure 1A.** Presentation of project branded T-shirt to His Royal Highness Chief Ichile, S. Ozinga, in one of our community engagement and awareness meetings.



**Figure 1B** Presentation of project branded T-shirt to Chief Imbush Martin during one of our community engagement meetings.



**Figure: 2.** some field equipment's and training Materials used during the project

Survey Sites and Distribution of Mount Kupe Bushshrike and other Birds of Conservation Concern on Obudu Plateau.

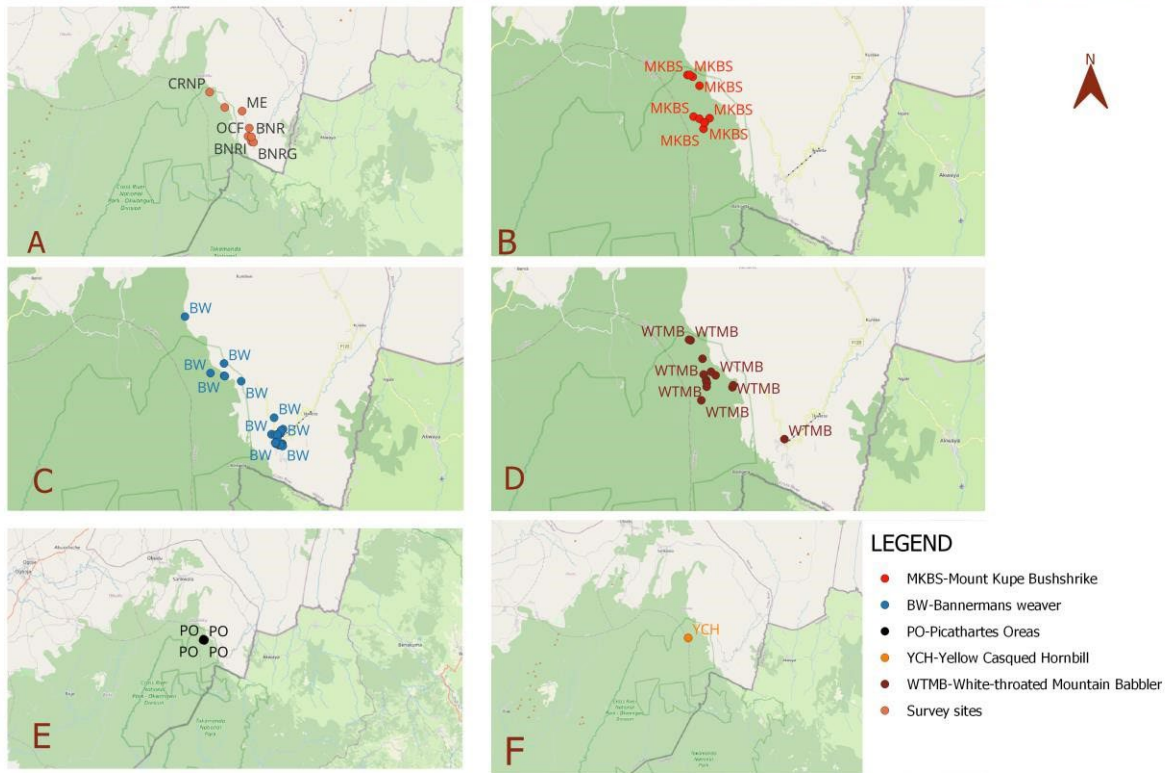


Figure **3A**. showing surveyed forest patches, Figure **3B** showing the distribution of Mount Kupe Bushshrike, and Figure **3C**. Bannerman's Weaver, Figure showing **3D**, White-throated Mountain Babbler, Figure **3E** Showing Grey-necked Rockfowl and Figure **3F** showing Yellow Casqued Hornbill distribution on the Obudu Plateau and Cross River National Park (Okwangwo Division).



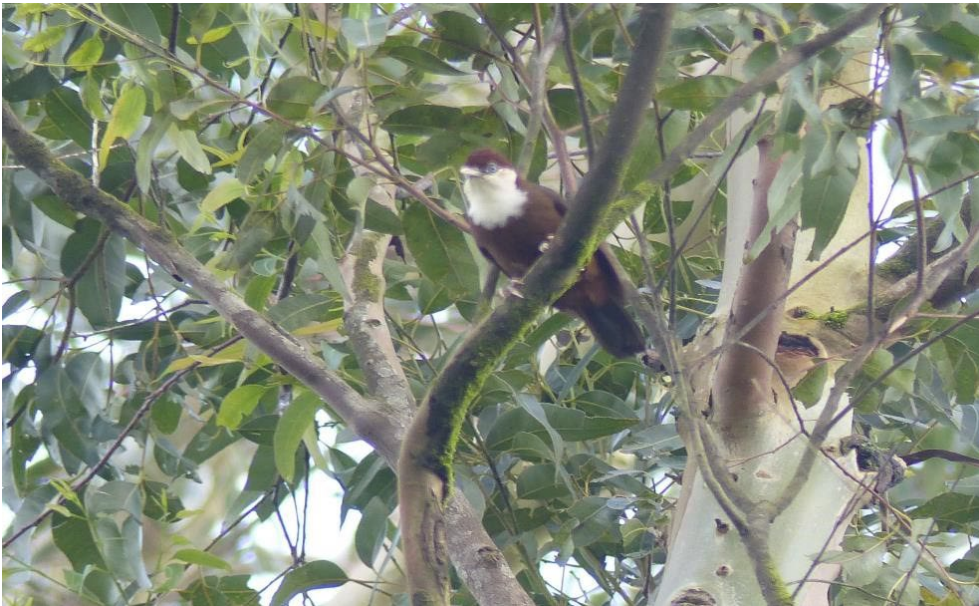
**Figure 4:** Back view of the first sighting and photograph of Mount Kupe Bush shrike during the 3<sup>rd</sup> visit to Metu water head transect responding to playback at CRNP Okwangwo Division photographed by Kevin Eyos.



**Figure 5:** Front view of a second photograph of the Mount Kupe Bushshrike during the 3<sup>rd</sup> visit to Metu Waterhead transect at CRNP



**Figure 6:** *K. gilberti*, photographed by Kevin Eyos, at Emba at transect 1, section 1



**Figure 7:** *K. gilberti*, photographed by Kevin Eyos, at Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR) at transect 1, section 1



**Figure 8:** *K. gilberti*, photographed by Kevin Eyos, at CRNP Okwangwo Division



**Fig 9**



**Figure 10**



**Figure 9, 10, & 11:** *P. bannermani*, actively building a nest, photographed by Kevin Eyos, at Okpazange Women Woodlot Reserve (OWWR) at transect 1 section



**Figure 12:** *P. oreas*, photographed at Anape Range of the CRNP Okwangwo Division, close to breeding site 2 during the second visit in October 2023 by Kevin Eyos.



**Figure 13:** New nest of *P. oreas* photographed by Kevin Eyos at one of the breeding sites 2. CRNP Okwangwo Division.



**Figure 19:** A cross section of participants during the one week train the trainer workshop on bird species of global conservation concern, monitoring, fostering citizen science engagement among locals on the Obudu Plateau.



**Figure 20:** A cross section of trainees during the capacity building train the trainer workshop



**Figure 21:** Group picture trainee during field practical on Bird Identification skills at the Becheve Nature Reserve (BNR).



**Figure 22:** a cross section of the executive of the Becheve Biodiversity Monitoring Group (BBMG) during their inauguration.

**ANNEX – Financial Report**  
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