

Project Title: Empowering Local Communities for the Conservation of the Robbins House Bat in Ghana

Project ID: 42573-D

Interim Report – June 2025

Introduction:

This Rufford Small Grant-funded project aims to advance bat conservation in rural Ghana by combining ecological research with community-based conservation efforts through citizen scientist, focusing particularly on the conservation of *Scotophilus nucella*. Although initial implementation was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances, the project is now progressing steadily with significant milestones achieved in both scientific and outreach components.

Progress Summary:

Bat Monitoring monitoring through Citizen scientists:

Bat monitoring activities have commenced with the deployment of Audiomoth acoustic detectors by citizen scientist across selected habitats. In addition, mist-netting surveys have been conducted to supplement our sample size for *Scotophilus nucella* to enhance our goal of determining its foraging ecology. Currently we have sampled five individuals of this species.

School-Based Conservation Education:

We have engaged over 150 pupils from local schools through interactive conservation education sessions. These sessions featured creative drawing activities where pupils depicted bats, forests, and biodiversity themes. Their artwork has been displayed on classroom, serving as a continuous visual reinforcement of the ecological importance of bats and forest conservation.

Community Engagement:

Community education sessions were held in villages targeting adult populations. Through visual presentations and participatory discussions, we addressed misconceptions about bats and emphasized their ecological roles. These engagements have contributed to improved perceptions and local support for bat conservation.

Challenges & Mitigation:

Initial delays were due to the project lead's new responsibilities as Faculty Examinations Officer at the University and the late acquisition of Audiomoth devices. These issues were mitigated through timeline adjustments. Additionally, community consultations are ongoing to identify suitable sites for planned reforestation activities.

Next Steps:

We plan to expand our education and outreach activities while continuing bat monitoring efforts. A key upcoming activity includes hands-on student training and a tree planting exercise. The community is currently finalizing the allocation of land for this purpose, and implementation is anticipated in the coming weeks.



Interactive Learning: Inspiring school children to Safeguard Bats and Forests



Student Artwork Advocating Bat Conservation



a). Adult Education Session: Addressing Myths and Benefits of Bat Conservation