

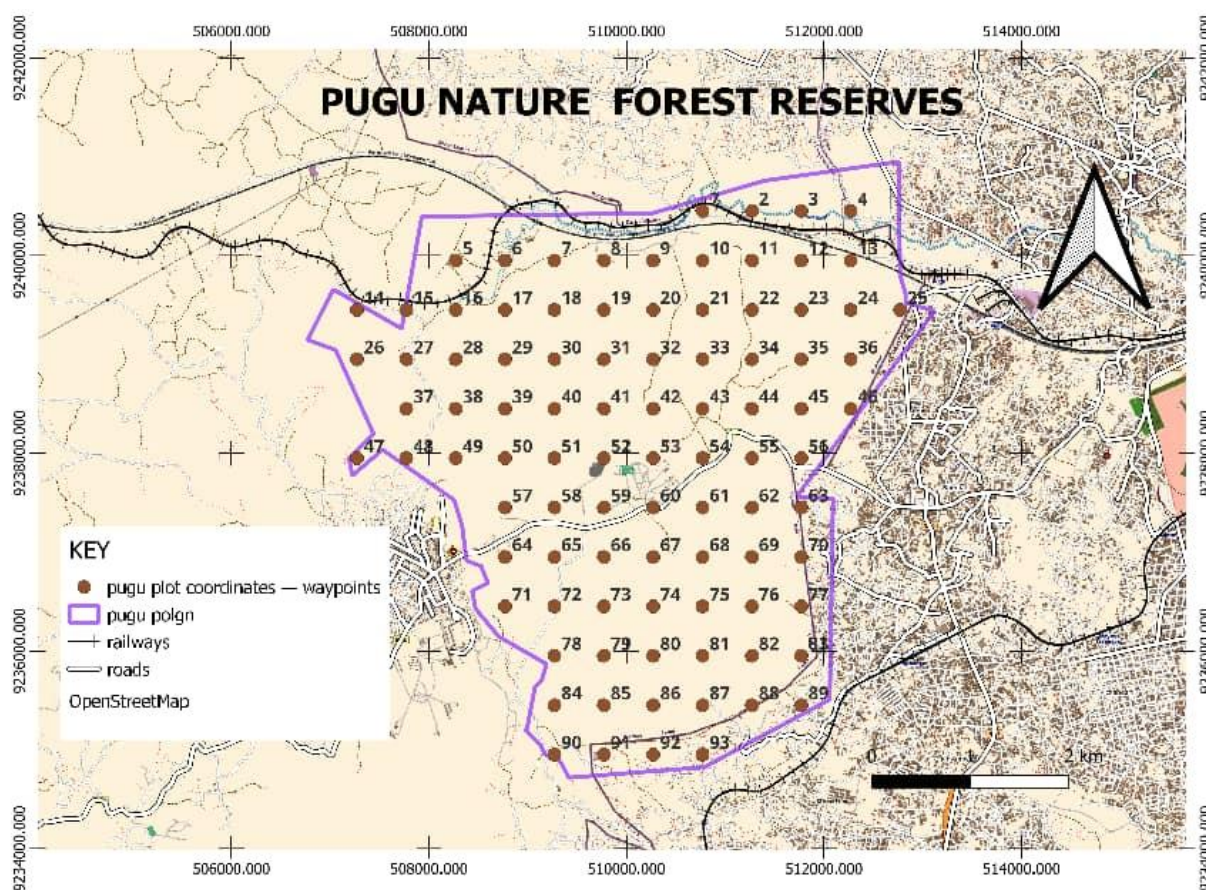
REPORT ON UVARIA PUGUENSIS PROJECT IN PUGU AND KAZIMZUMBWI
NATURE FOREST RESERVES



Photo: At the entrance of the Pugu Forest Reserve

Assessing Abundance, Distribution, and Anthropogenic Changes Threatening *Uvaria puguensis*

A survey to assess the abundance and distribution of the critically endangered *U. puguensis* was conducted with the involvement of local communities living adjacent to Pugu Forest Reserve. This approach was important because local people possess valuable knowledge on the species, also utilize the forest for various livelihood activities and use *U. puguensis* for medicinal purposes. Consequently, the survey leveraged local knowledge to identify the locations of *U. puguensis* within the forest reserve. The GPS coordinates of each location were recorded, and the number of individuals at each site was counted. Factors threatening *U. puguensis* were also identified. To avoid surveying the same areas multiple times, plots (Figure 1) were established and a systematic survey was carried out. Furthermore, to encourage local participation in the surveys and training on the conservation of *U. puguensis*, participants were compensated for their time away from farm activities with soft drinks and snacks. This incentive was intended to motivate community involvement in conservation activities and the management of the forest reserve.



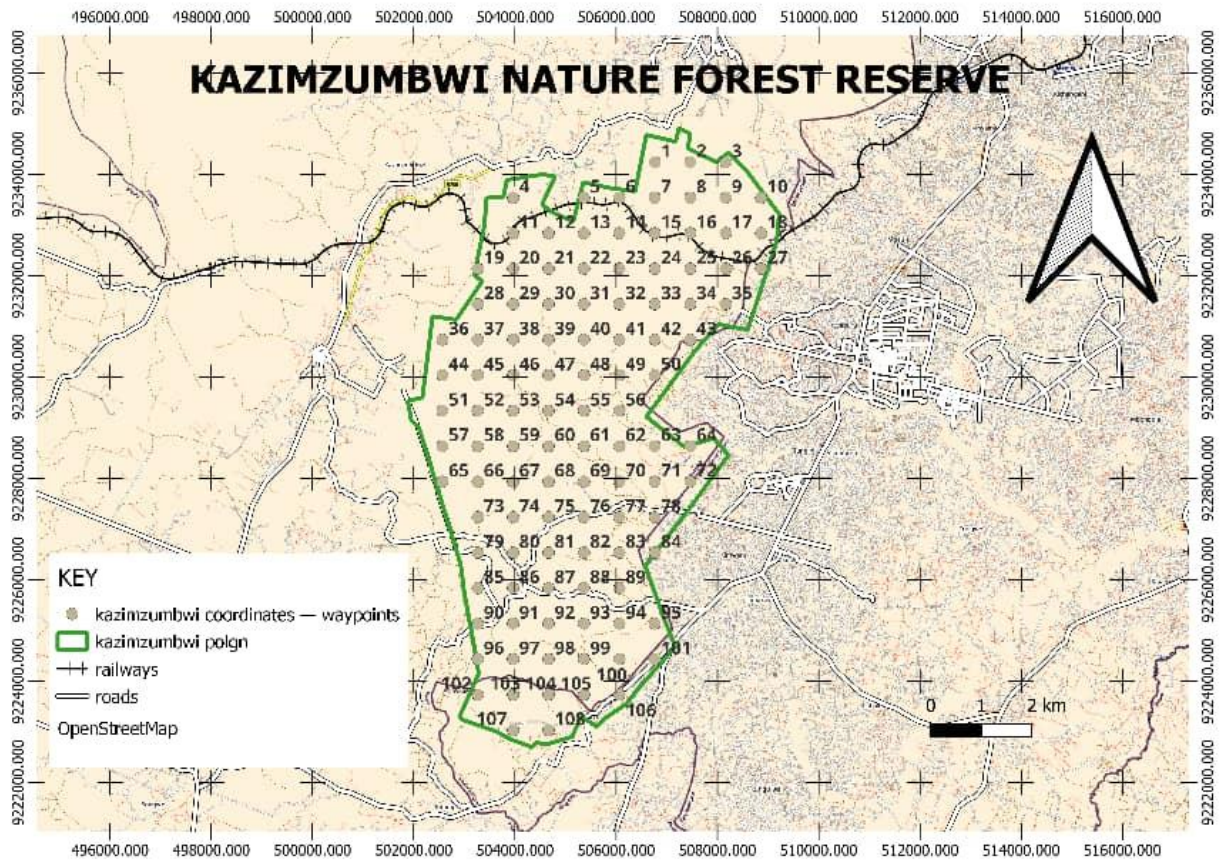


Figure 1. Number of plots surveyed in Pugu and Kazimzumbwi Nature Forest Reserves from April to June 2025.

We found *U. puguensis* in fewer than 15 locations. Approximately 23 individuals were recorded in Pugu Forest Nature Reserve and 15 individuals in Kazimzumbwi Forest Nature Reserve. These findings highlight the species' extreme limited distribution and raise concerns about its vulnerability to extinction. Below is the map showing the locations where *U. puguensis* was found.

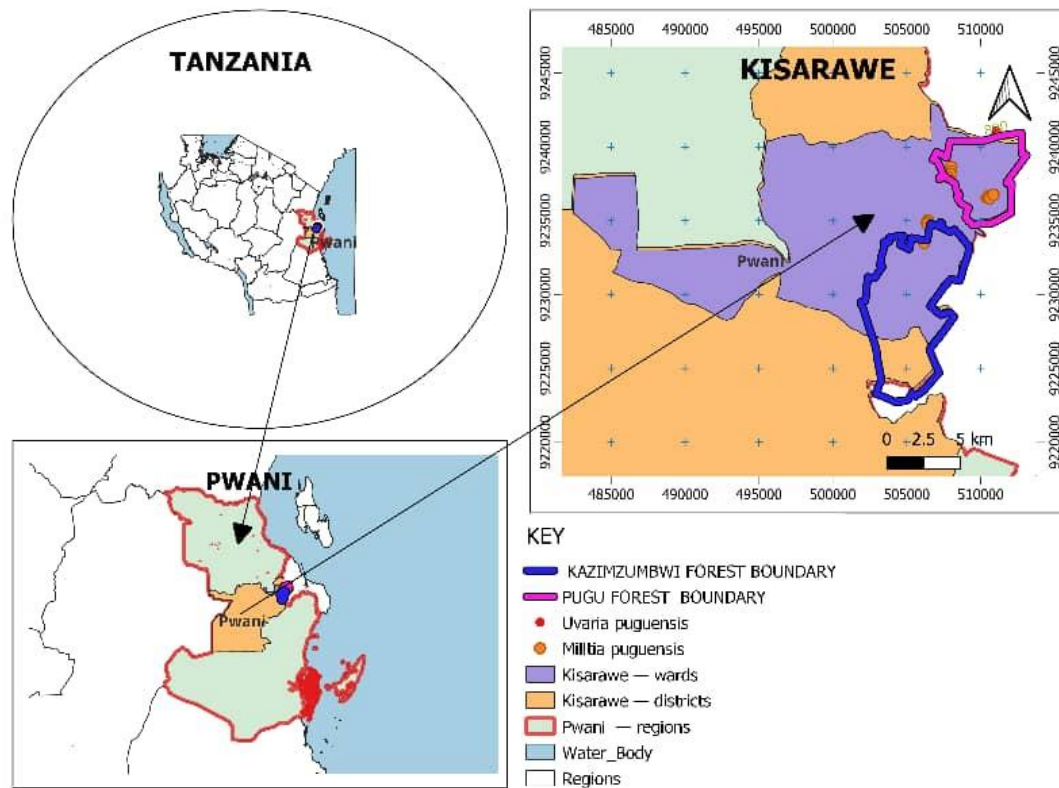


Figure 2: Map of Pugu and Kazimzumbwi Forest Reserves



Figure 3: Leaves of *Uvarian puguensis*





Figure 4: Stem of *Uvarian puguensis* and **Figure 5:** Research conducting field surveys in Pugu-Kazimzumbwi Nature Forest Reserve

Ongoing activities for project sustainability

- **Community Engagement:** Empowering community members as stewards of *U. puguensis* helps cultivate a sense of ownership that is essential for the long-term success of conservation efforts.
- **Capacity Building:** Providing training to local community members in sustainable conservation practices to enhance their skills and involvement.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Conducting regular assessments to keep the community informed and engaged while identifying and addressing emerging threats.
- **Collaboration with Local Authorities:** Building strong partnerships with local government and conservation organizations to ensure continued support for *U. puguensis* conservation initiatives.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Sustained outreach through educational workshops, community events, and other initiatives to highlight the importance of conserving *U. puguensis* and to encourage ongoing community participation.

