



TROPICAL BIOLOGY ASSOCIATION



**ANNUAL REVIEW 2019**

“We put people at the heart of conservation, giving them the skills and support they need to be effective on the ground.”



**Every one of them has a different story about how the TBA has changed their life.**

TBA trains scientists, project managers and educators, to manage and safeguard biodiversity. This ‘capacity building for conservation’ begins by inspiring people. We have helped build the careers of 2409 conservationists from 86 different countries, including 34 African countries. TBA alumni use the skills and knowledge they learn from our courses for project management, policy development, research and education.

### **What makes TBA different?**

We provide **all** of the following to **everyone** we train:

- Tailored training that is relevant and practical
- Learner-centred teaching by local and international specialists
- Follow-up support to ensure new skills are applied
- Active networks for on-going collaboration and exchange of best practice

# FIELD COURSES

157

MEMBERS JOINED  
OUR ALUMNI  
NETWORK THIS YEAR

42

COUNTRIES  
REPRESENTED BY  
OUR TRAINEES

4.8

MEAN RATING  
ON COURSES  
OUT OF 5



## GROWTH FROM 2018

30%



GROWTH IN NUMBER OF APPLICANTS TO COURSES

38%



GROWTH IN NUMBER OF AFRICAN APPLICANTS TO  
COURSES



# FIELD COURSES

MULTI-CULTURAL \* EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING \* LAUNCHING CAREERS



Two field courses  
took place in  
**Botswana  
and Borneo**



"Within just one month, I learnt more  
than in my four years at university."

TBA's field courses taught  
**48 students**

with 11  
applicants for  
every place



TBA's field courses  
were rated highly at  
**4.8 out of 5**



# FIELD COURSES

**MULTI-CULTURAL \* EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING \* LAUNCHING CAREERS**

TBA's flagship one-month field courses launched the careers of 48 young scientists in 2019.

They represented 28 African and 9 Asian countries.

This multi-cultural environment is the most effective way to create professional relationships between conservationists that span the globe.



World experts from TBA's international network share cutting-edge multi-disciplinary approaches to research and conservation. We blend an invaluable mix of practical and technical skills with the broader professional skills.



The field courses do far more than provide training. We encourage, inspire, and build confidence in bright and committed young scientists at just the right time in their careers so they are not lost to conservation.







*"This course taught me so much in such little time – the most inspiring experience of my life so far."*

*"TBA has redefined what can be possible, in my professional career and life."*



*"It was true field course experience that will set me up well for future career options. I really feel like there are so many more doors open."*

## Field Course Projects

Students learn about the practicalities of real-life research by carrying out their own projects. Over 65 papers have been published from TBA student projects.

Students from Malaysia, Poland, Sweden and Czech Republic on the 2019 Borneo course made an exciting discovery during their project, which they are now preparing for scientific publication. They found what might be a new ant-plant mutualism, and their project explored the fascinating interactions between ants and the young shoots of the *Leea aculeata* plant. The ants find and attack leaf eating insects, and in return the plant provides them with nutrients in the form of food bodies. We look forward to reading their paper.



# SPECIALIST COURSES

PRIORITY ISSUES \* INNOVATIVE LEARNING \* EXPERT-LED \* IMPACTFUL

Specialist courses are for conservation and research organisations. We provide tailor made training to fill specific skills gaps they have identified.



Courses are based in  
Africa and South East Asia

**A new training course was  
run in partnership with  
The Habitat, Malaysia.**



Specialist courses are building the capacity of individuals and strengthening conservation organisations.

All our specialist courses are taught by experts from the host region and internationally.



# TRAINING A NEW GENERATION OF CITIZEN SCIENCE MANAGERS

**The demand for our training workshops was huge: over 200 aspiring citizen science managers from across Africa applied to attend.**

**Where:** Kenya

**In partnership with:** BTO, Cambridge University Museum of Zoology, the Kenya Bird Map committee and the National Museums of Kenya.

**Funded by:** Cambridge Conservation Initiative Collaborative Fund and the National Research Fund, Kenya.



## The training

Two integrated training workshops provided training to citizen science managers from across Africa. They were taught how to analyse and present the data that their citizen scientists are collecting to improve their conservation work. The workshops also covered skills and tools for engaging and training citizen scientists, how to design rigorous protocols, and how best to communicate results to influence management and policy. The learning continues as the participants have forged a lively network which they are already using to advise each other and share results thanks to their new skills.



Citizen Science has a real potential to strengthen conservation in Africa, by generating useful data and stimulating public interest in biodiversity. Our workshop participants are now running citizen science projects on birds, dolphins, dragonflies, elephants, fungi, seahorses and turtles. They are already producing useful outputs from their data and using their results to guide conservation on the ground.



# THE IMPACT OF CITIZEN SCIENCE

Participants on this course came with large amounts of data but they told us they needed skills to analyse and present their data in a meaningful way.



*"Although we have a lot of data, we have not been able to do anything with it. I am now going to improve our protocols .... This information is very valuable for telling what is happening to the wildlife in the park".*

Lucas Pius (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Namibia)

*"I needed these skills because I want to show wildlife densities and map where the conflicts are with the local communities. This is important so we can inform where the rangers should spend more effort and time".*

Clara Cassell, Liberia

*"Before I came to the workshop I could not make sense of my data and I found producing useful outputs a real challenge. The shared network of alumni following the workshop means there is now a team of us who can analyse our citizen science results and help each other."*

Edwin Gichohi, Kenya



# CONSERVATION LEADERS AND CHANGEMAKERS BOOT CAMP

*“This is a platform that brings frontline conservationists together to share their knowledge, experience and strengths, to build an empowered, collaborative network to solve the challenges we face.”*

**Where:** Penang, Malaysia

**Participants:** 24 south-Asian early career professional and practitioners

**In partnership with:** The Habitat Foundation and South East Asia Rainforest Research Partnership



*“The bootcamp has been tremendously powerful in expanding my network and developing my skillsets, which will empower me to effect change in conservation.”*

Damon Lim Wei Da, Singapore

## Our Training

This new course taught a combination of skills that professional conservationists need to succeed in their work including communication, negotiation and leadership. We used Penang's rich biodiversity and forest habitats as our outdoor classroom to learn first hand about sustainability, natural capital and ecosystem services. Participants also learnt about engaging with stakeholders, and how to use storytelling and interpretation to connect people with nature.

## Impact

We inspired a new cohort of changemakers to work at the frontline of conservation and to ensure that our precious natural resources are maintained for generations to come.



# MEASURING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

**Training Malaysian conservation managers to evaluate ecosystem services and incorporate them into management decisions.**

**Where:** Malaysia

**Participants:** 24 south-Asian early career professional and practitioners

**Taught in Partnership with:** South East Asia Rainforest Research Partnership (SEARRP) and Birdlife international

**“By putting a price tag on nature, people are more likely to manage their resources sustainably.”**



## Our Training

We ran two integrated workshops that gave Malaysian conservationists skills and tools to understand and measure ecosystem services on the ground. The workshops focused on the TESSA toolkit that provides guidance on evaluating ecosystem services and understanding how these might change under different management scenarios.



## Impact

The managers we trained now have the skills and knowledge to counter threats to biodiversity at their sites and communicate the benefits of nature to local communities and those involved in policy. Many of them applied the TESSA toolkits at their own sites and presented their results at a final forum held in Kuala Lumpur.

# TBA MASTERCLASSES

## Providing NGO staff with the skills they need to deliver impactful projects

**Where:** Eastern African Montane hotspot and Madagascar and Indian Ocean regions

**Participants:** 38 African conservation managers

**Funded by:** Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund



## Our Training

TBA's masterclass covered practical training in designing projects and measuring impacts and essential fundraising skills for small NGO's in the Indian Ocean Region. This CEPF-funded programme combines workshop training with mentoring and site-exchange visits which allowed conservationists to spend a few days with other projects to learn new ideas and share solutions to common challenges.

## Impact

We ended this three-year programme by holding an experience-sharing forum in Madagascar with CEPF's Regional Implementation Team. This was an engaging platform where conservation managers shared their conservation impacts as a result of applying what they had learnt.

Looking ahead: we have recently launched a new capacity building project with Save Sahara Network, Nigeria, and 'Save-the-frogs! Ghana' which is funded by CEPF and will begin late 2020.



# ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

## Awards

Three alumni received the prestigious Whitley Award for Nature in 2019. **Caleb Ofori Boateng** from Ghana will use his award to advance his efforts towards protecting the Togo slippery frog in Ghana. **Vatosoa Rakotondrazafy** from Madagascar will boost her actions in safeguarding marine resources in Madagascar through the award. For **Gilbert Adum** from Ghana, the award will allow him and his 'Save the Frogs! Ghana' team to advocate for the designating a part of the Sui River Forest Reserve.

**Maijo Simula Peres** became a 2020 National Geographic Explorer, receiving funding for his project aimed at exploring how anthropogenic disturbance affects chimpanzee distribution, habitat use, abundance and their resource availability in Tongwe Forest Reserves.

**Emmanuel Amoah** is the first recipient of the 2019 EDGE-Segré Species Survival Award and is working to conserve the West African slender-snouted crocodile.

## News

The photo on the right taken at the first ever Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation conference to be held in Africa, features the TBA alumni who attended the ATBC 2019 conference in Madagascar. All of the alumni were either presenting or part of the organising team.

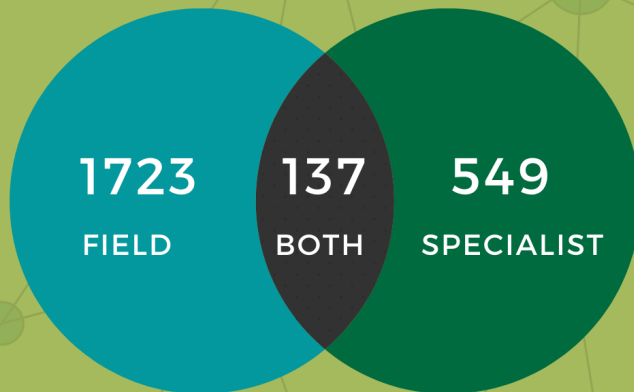


**Raymond Katebaka** is a founder and the secretary-general of the African Union of Conservationists and is helping to enhance the coordination and collaboration of conservation activities from all channels.

**Radosoa Andrianaivoarivelo Andoniaina** is scientific coordinator for Biodiversity Conservation Madagascar which has the goal of ensuring Madagascar's biodiversity is restored and protected.

**Iroko Tanshi** co-founded Small Mammal Conservation Organisation and organised its first field-based workshop using skills she learnt on a TBA course. The course aimed to build skills in bat conservation.

# OUR IMPACT



OUR ALUMNI NETWORK  
HAS GROWN TO 2409  
PEOPLE.

99% OF OUR AFRICAN ALUMNI  
ARE WORKING IN  
CONSERVATION.



THERE ARE 15 ALUMNI  
GROUPS IN AFRICA, EACH  
CARRYING OUT PRIORITY  
CONSERVATION PROJECTS.

OUR COURSES HAVE A MULTIPLIER  
EFFECT. TBA TRAINEES SHARE THEIR  
NEW SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES TO  
INSPIRE MORE CONSERVATIONISTS  
AFTER THEIR COURSES.





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# OUR IMPACT

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## 1 YEAR

**Judith Miremba** is not letting the uncertainty caused by Covid-19 get in her way and remains optimistic - determined to push forward the conservation agenda. She is focusing on bird conservation with renewed skills in citizen science from her TBA course. Not only is Judith changing local Ugandan communities' approach towards the environment, but she has also played a huge role in **engaging women in conservation and enhancing livelihood activities** in Uganda.

## 3 YEARS

**Emmanuel Amoah** is working towards re-introduction programmes for the **critically endangered** West African slender-snouted crocodile. His recent award has allowed him to access funds to implement urgent conservation actions to **protect this species**.

*"The TBA field course gave me an in-depth understanding of local community involvement which is now the cornerstone of my career."*

## 10 YEARS

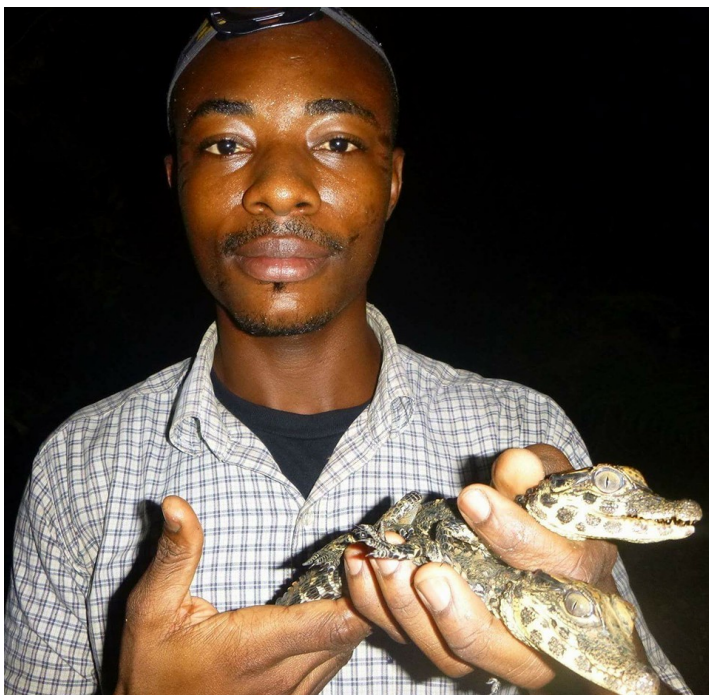
**Cynthia Awuor** is one Africa's strongest female advocates for the adoption of **climate change** strategies across Africa and beyond. Her passion has driven her to train over 1,200 project practitioners across Africa and Asia as well as **developing community-based climate adaptation** and resilience projects.

*"After attending the TBA course in 2003, I embarked on my journey with climate change. I still use the skills I learnt on the course in my research for publications."*

1 year



3 years



10 years





# A SPECIAL THANKS TO

Our generous funders:

- *A. G. Leventis Foundation*
- *British Ecological Society*
- *Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund*
- *CCI Collaborative Fund*
- *National Research Fund Kenya*
- *The Habitat Foundation*
- *The South East Asia Rainforest Research Partnership*
- *The Van Thuyne Family Foundation*
- *Yayasan Hasanah*

TBA's dedicated and inspiring trainers.

The partner organisations with whom we collaborate to tackle the complex issues of biodiversity conservation. Our partnerships are based on shared recognition that there is an urgent need for training and research in the Tropics.

Our members: universities, departments and institutes — who support the Tropical Biology Association. In return, their students have priority access to our courses, contributing to the dynamic international mix that is a hallmark of our training.





TROPICAL BIOLOGY ASSOCIATION

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